

Date:

Thursday 12 March 2026 at 5.00 pm

Venue:

Council Chamber, Dunedin House, Columbia Drive, Thornaby, TS17 6BJ

Cllr Lisa Evans (Leader)

Cllr Pauline Beall, Cllr Clare Besford, Cllr Nigel Cooke, Cllr Richard Eglington, Cllr Paul Rowling and Cllr Norma Stephenson OBE

Agenda

1. **Evacuation Procedure** (Pages 7 - 10)
2. **Apologies for Absence**
3. **Declarations of Interest**
4. **Minutes** (Pages 11 - 16)

Cllr Pauline Beall - Cabinet Member for Health and Adult Care

5. **Scrutiny Review of Stockton-on-Tees Adult Carers Support Service - Final Report of Adult Social Care and Health Select Committee** (Pages 17 - 74)
6. **Adult Social Care Strategy 2026-2030** (Pages 75 - 86)

Cllr Richard Eglington - Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Housing

7. **Levelling Up Fund - Yarm Public Realm** (Pages 87 - 100)
8. **Accelerating affordable housing delivery ('A quality home for all') - update**(Pages 101 - 104)

Cllr Paul Rowling - Cabinet Member for Resources and Transport

9. **Revisions to the Council's Constitution** (Pages 105 - 108)
10. **Council Motion - Flying the Union Flag** (Pages 109 - 120)
11. **Council Motion - Livestreaming Meetings** (Pages 121 - 130)
12. **Social Value Annual Report** (Pages 131 - 146)
13. **Annual Procurement Plan/Higher Value Contracts** (Pages 147 - 170)

14. **Minutes of Various Bodies** (Pages 171 - 196)
Cllr Clare Besford - Cabinet Member for Children and Young People
15. **Child Poverty (2025 update report)** (Pages 197 - 208)
16. **Procedure for admission of pupils to Primary & Secondary schools in September 2027** (Pages 209 - 234)
17. **School Performance 2024 – 2025 for Vulnerable Pupils** (Pages 235 - 246)
18. **Stockton-on-Tees Best Start in Life Plan 2026-2031** (Pages 247 - 272)
19. **Local Authority School Governor Appointment** (Pages 273 - 274)
Cllr Nigel Cooke - Cabinet Member for Environment, Leisure and Culture
20. **Environmental Sustainability & Carbon Reduction Strategy (ES&CRS) 2022-32 Annual Monitoring Report** (Pages 275 - 286)
Cllr Norma Stephenson - Cabinet Member for Access, Communities and Community Safety
21. **Resolution to exclude the public from the meeting for part of agenda item - Making New Public Space Protection Orders for Stockton Town Centre and Norton Town Centre (2026-2029)**
- Officers consider that the appendices to the following item include exempt information under Schedule 12A Local Government Act 1972 and that the public should be excluded from that part of the meeting where exempt information may be considered. It is considered that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information. Cabinet is recommended to resolve to exclude the public from part of the meeting accordingly. At the time of the issuing of the agenda no objections had been made to the exclusion.
22. **Making New Public Space Protection Orders for Stockton Town Centre and Norton Town Centre (2026-2029)** (Pages 287 - 420)

Members of the Public - Rights to Attend Meeting

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

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

Contact: Democratic Services Officer, Peter Bell on email peter.bell@stockton.gov.uk

Key – Declarable interests are :-

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

Members – Declaration of Interest Guidance

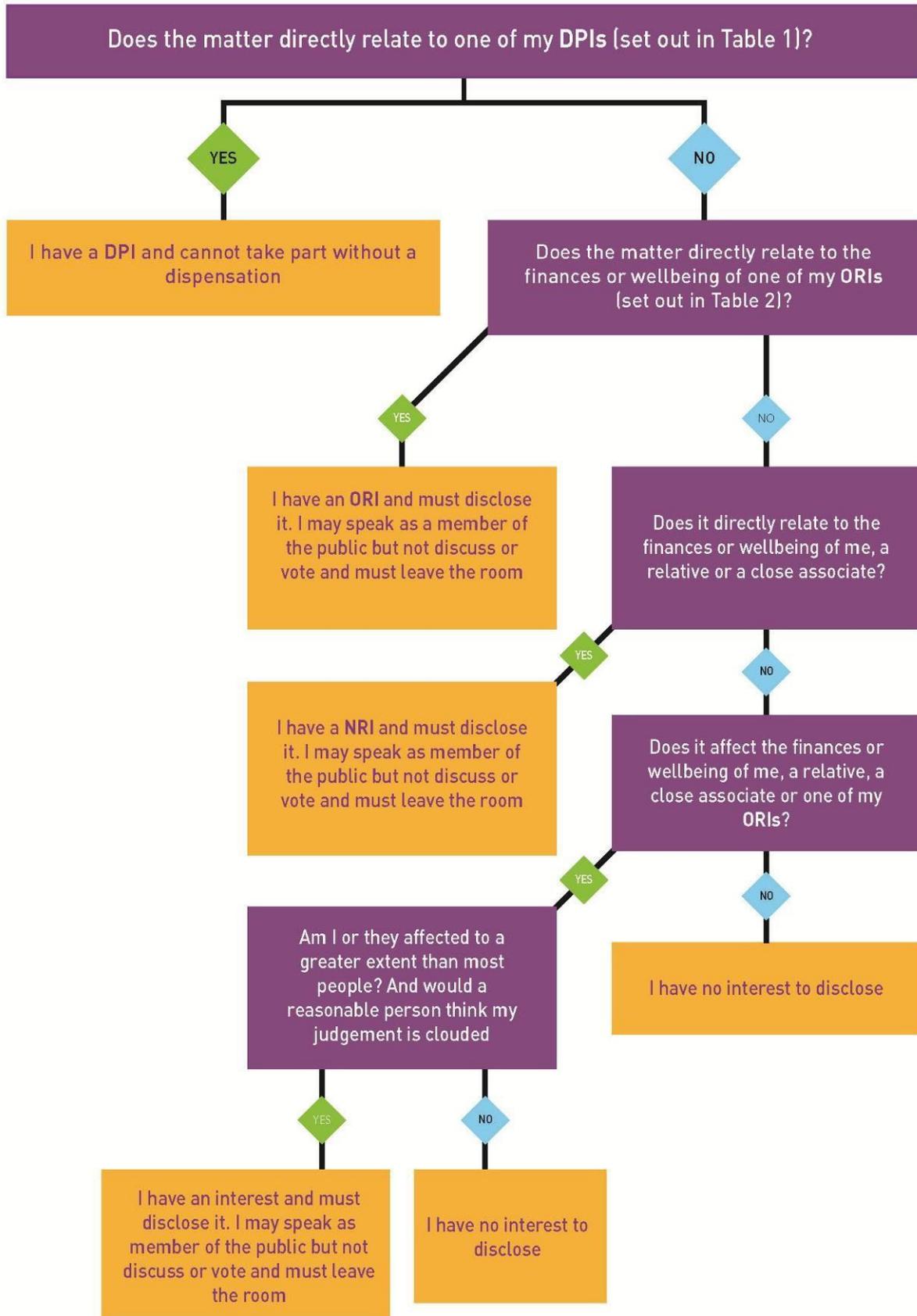


Table 1 - Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

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

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

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

Table 2 – Other Registerable Interest

You must register as an Other Registrable Interest:

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

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.
 - do not stop to collect your belongings
 - close all doors as you leave
3. **steer clear of hazards.** If evacuation becomes difficult via a chosen route because of smoke, flames or a blockage, re-enter the Chamber (if safe to do so). Continue the evacuation via the nearest safe exit route.
4. **proceed to the Evacuation Assembly Point.** Move away from the building. Once you have exited the building, proceed to the main Evacuation Assembly Point **immediately** - located in the **East Overflow Car Park**.
 - do not assemble directly outside the building or on any main roadway, to ensure access for Emergency Services.

5. await further instructions.

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

Toilets

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

Water Cooler

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

Microphones

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

This page is intentionally left blank

Cabinet

A meeting of Cabinet was held on Monday 9th February 2026.

Present: Cllr Lisa Evans (Leader of the Council), Cllr Pauline Beall (Cabinet Member), Cllr Clare Besford (Cabinet Member), Cllr Nigel Cooke (Cabinet Member), Cllr Richard Eglington (Cabinet Member), Cllr Paul Rowling (Cabinet Member) and Cllr Norma Stephenson OBE (Cabinet Member).

Officers: Mike Greene, Peter Bell, Junita Agyapong, Julie Butcher, Tracey Carter, Sam Dixon, Clare Harper, Reuben Kench, Majella McCarthy, Ged Morton, Carolyn Nice, Lisa Tague, Kirsty Grundy, Marc Stephenson and Tara Connor.

Also in attendance: Cllr Marc Besford, Cllr Lynn Hall, Cllr Tony Riordan and Cllr Sylvia Walmsley.

Apologies: None.

CAB/89/25 Evacuation Procedure

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and the evacuation procedure was noted.

CAB/90/25 Declarations of Interest

With regard to agenda item 4 - Medium Term Financial Plan Update and Strategy the meeting was advised that each Cabinet Member had been granted a dispensation for a 4-year period in respect of all decisions relating to the setting of the Council Tax and precepts and Members Allowances and did not need to individually declare those interests.

CAB/91/25 Minutes

Consideration was given to the minutes of the meeting held on 15 January 2026.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 15 January 2026 be approved.

CAB/92/25 Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) Update and Strategy

Consideration was given to a report on the Medium Term Financial Plan Update and Strategy.

This was the final report in setting the Council's 2026/27 Budget and Council Tax and outlining the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) position to 2029. The report also included an update on the financial performance for 2025/26.

The report outlined the budget for 2026/27 and indicative MTFP for future years. The provisional finance settlement was announced on 17 December 2025, and this indicated the funding for 2026/27 along with provisional allocations for 2027/28 and 2028/29, with the final allocations to be confirmed in February.

The MTFP provided an indicative financial envelope to support sustainable decision making and prioritisation over the planning period. It would be reviewed and refreshed annually to reflect updated demand, inflation, funding assumptions and delivery progress.

Like many councils across the country, the Council continued to see greater demand for council services and rising costs which had resulted in overspending against its budget. The areas that were experiencing the greatest budgetary challenges were Adults Social Care, Children's Social Care and Home to School Transport. As a result, the Council had needed to use reserves to dampen the impact; the Council needed to ensure it had healthy reserves to mitigate for future unpredicted pressures and therefore these need to be replenished. The report included a Reserves Policy outlining the plan of how this would be achieved.

Across the MTFP the Council was predicting the continued rising demand and cost pressures seen in recent years, which would exceed the increase in funding available. This had resulted in a budget gap of £6.7m in 2026/27, with a predicted budget gap of £13.8m in 2027/28 and £18.4m in 2028/29.

In response to bridging this gap, a renewed Phase 2 of the Powering Our Future programme encompassing Outcome based reviews, Council wide initiatives and efficiency reviews had been identified. This programme built on the positive progress made through the Powering our Futures Phase 1 transformation reviews already identifying £9.9m of savings by 2028/29. Residents feedback through the Let's Talk Money budget consultation had been used to help identify the areas for review.

The scale and pace of savings required, particularly in the later years of the plan, represented a significant delivery challenge. While the Council had a strong track record through Phase 1 of Powering Our Futures, Phase 2 would require early validation of assumptions, rigorous governance through the established gateway process, and regular reporting to Members. Given the low level of reserves, timely corrective action would be required where delivery risk emerges, including adjusting sequencing, scope or mitigations as necessary.

RECOMMENDED to Council that:-

1. In accordance with the Local Government Act 2003, Members note that the Section 151 Officer confirms that the following recommendations:
 - a) represent a robust budget which has been prepared in line with best practice;
 - b) provide adequate working balances;
 - c) set out that reserves and provisions are adequate for their purpose.

General Fund Budget

2. A 2026/27 Council Tax requirement for Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council of £134,206,810 be approved.
3. A 2026/27 Council Tax requirement for Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council inclusive of Parish Precepts £135,318,668 be approved.
4. The 2026/27 budget and indicative 2027/29 MTFP be approved as outlined in paragraphs 54-129 of the report, the level of General Fund Balances and the release

of reserves to balance the 2025/26 in year financial position as set out in paragraphs 13-43 of the report.

5. The outcome of the Let's Talk Money Budget Consultation be noted as set out in paragraphs 44-46 and in Appendix A to the report.

6. The reserves policy at Appendix B to the report be approved.

7. £1.428m of capital receipts be applied to the capital programme, as set out in paragraphs 39-41 of the report, for the following interventions:

- Therapeutic Children's Home
- Xentrall ICT Network
- Accommodation
- Replacement Vehicle Ramps
- Parks Improvements Programme
- Foster Carer adaptations

8. This will allow £1.428m of Council resources previously earmarked for the above schemes to be transferred into the Transformation Reserve.

9. Prudential borrowing of £6.5m be approved to fund vehicle replacement purchases over the next three years, with members noting the borrowing repayments will be variable each year reflective of annual spending requirements, described in paragraphs 61-69 of the report and call on the MTFP outlined at paragraph 99 of the report.

10. Prudential borrowing of £1m be approved to fund the resurfacing of Wellington Square Car Park with annual borrowing repayments of £80,000 per annum, provided for within the MTFP, and modify the pre-existing borrowing approvals accordingly.

Taxation

SBC

11. The Council Tax for Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council prior to Parish, Fire and Police Precepts be increased by 4.95%, which includes the Government Levy of 2% in respect of Social Care, ie to £2,139.91 at Band D (£1,426.61 at Band A).

Fire, Police & Parish

12. The Council note the Police & Crime Commissioner is yet to set their precept for 2026/27. This information will follow for Council.

13. The Council note the Fire Authority is yet to set their precept for 2026/27. This information will follow for Council.

14. The Council note the Parish precepts as set out in paragraph 143 of the budget report.

Capital

15. The Capital Programme attached at Appendix G & H to the report be approved.

Council Tax - Statutory Requirements

16. Members approve the statutory requirements for Council Tax as shown in Appendix I - to follow for Council.

17. The Council must set its Local Council Tax Reduction (CTR) scheme annually by 11 March of the preceding financial year. Cabinet therefore recommends to Council that the current Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme be retained for the financial year 2026/27 incorporating the updates for the prescribed requirements in regulations and to reflect updated income figures in the table at Schedule 1. The scheme is available here www.stockton.gov.uk/CTR.

18. The Chief Finance Officer be given delegated authority, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Resources and Transport, to make further adjustments to the income table and/or disregard additional funds should the government issue revised publications with regards to these matters after 18 February, to ensure that Government's intentions for additional support is maintained.

Capital Strategy

19. The Capital Strategy as set out at Appendix J of the report be approved, including the Flexible Use of Capital Receipts Strategy and the Minimum Revenue Provision Strategy.

Treasury Management/Prudential Code

20. The Treasury Management Strategy as set out in Appendix K to the report be approved.

Investment Strategy

21. The Investment Strategy as set out at Appendix L to the report be approved.

Organisational and HR

22. The Pay Policy Statement including the pay and grading structure at Appendix M to the report be approved.

Members Allowances

23. Members allowances be frozen for 2026/27. This will mean that these allowances have been frozen since 2013/14.

Cabinet RESOLVED that:-

24. The Fees and Charges Policy attached at Appendix C to the report be approved.

25. Cabinet recommend to Council the estimates of income generation included within the Fees and Charges Policy.

CAB/93/25 A Children's Integrated Front Door for Stockton-on-Tees (Update)

Consideration was given to a report on a Children's Integrated Front Door for Stockton-on-Tees.

The report provided an update on the disaggregation of the joint Children's Hub with Hartlepool Borough Council and the development of a new Integrated Early Help and Safeguarding Front Door for Stockton-on-Tees. Rising demand, evolving national Families First reforms, and the need for a more locally responsive service had driven the decision to bring the front door inhouse from April 2026.

The proposed model would create a single access point for early help and safeguarding, supported by multiagency triage, digital tools, and alignment with Family Hubs. The report outlined progress to date, implications for workforce, finance, and partnership working, and requested Cabinet approval to formally withdraw delegated authority from Hartlepool to enable the transition.

A comprehensive options appraisal was undertaken with input from a range of support services to ensure all decisions were lawful, feasible, affordable, and aligned with corporate and public expectations. Following this process, an 'Early Help Integrated Front Door' was identified as the preferred approach because it best met statutory safeguarding duties while offering the strongest alignment with national reform priorities, local accountability, and improved outcomes through early intervention.

Although complex to implement in the short term, this model provided enhanced support for children, families, and partners, promotes financial transparency and resource efficiency, and strengthens partnership working and demand management. It represented the most suitable solution for delivering long-term improvements.

A range of partners both statutory and non-statutory had been engaged with the process of developing the design and approach to the Children's Front Door. The approach was endorsed by the Families First Partnership Board September 2025. Partners would continue to be engaged in the development of the front door, and the multi- agency response.

RESOLVED that:-

1. The establishment of Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council's in-house Integrated Front Door arrangements (Early Help and Safeguarding) be approved to be operational from 1 April 2026, replacing the current shared front door arrangements.
2. The Council's delegation/arrangements for Hartlepool Borough Council to discharge the relevant front door functions on its behalf be withdrawn, with effect from 23:59 on 31 March 2026, and to confirm that the Council will resume full responsibility for delivery from 1 April 2026.

CAB/94/25 Tenancy Policy

Consideration was given to a report on Tenancy Policy.

The Council completed a Large-Scale Stock Transfer (LSVT) of its councils housing stock in 2010 but retained a small number of properties (as detailed in paragraph 1 of the report). Since then these properties had been leased to a local Registered Provider, who issued Assured Shorthold Tenancy Agreements when properties became available for letting. Due to recent changes in this arrangement, the Council is now responsible for issuing appropriate Tenancy Agreements to its current and new tenants. To do this the Council was required to prepare and publish a Tenancy Policy.

A Tenancy Policy sets out the types of tenancy that a landlord would issue to its tenants and the principles and processes that will be followed in granting and ending tenancies.

A copy of the Tenancy policy was attached to the report.

RESOLVED that:-

1. The proposed Tenancy Policy attached at Appendix A to the report be approved.
2. The proposed Tenancy Agreement changes for existing tenants as detailed in paragraph 9 of the report be agreed.
3. Subject to consultation with local Registered Providers as detailed in paragraphs 10 & 11 of the report, delegated authority be given to the Director of Adults, Health & Wellbeing in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Housing to make any further or necessary amendments to the Tenancy Policy.
4. Should it become necessary to amend the Tenancy Policy in response to the Renters Rights Act 2025 (as detailed in paragraph 12 of the report), delegated authority be given to the Director of Adults, Health & Wellbeing in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Housing to make any necessary amendments.

CAB/95/25 Annual report of the Independent Safety Advisory Group (ISAG) 2025

Consideration was given to a report on the Annual report of the Independent Safety Advisory Group (ISAG) 2025.

The Independent Safety Advisory Group (ISAG) brought together a range of professionals to scrutinise and advise upon event safety processes and systems for outdoor events. The ISAG looked at plans for a wide range of events and festivals in Stockton on Tees, focusing on events of a significant scale or complexity. All events of scale on Stockton Council land were subject to review by the ISAG, and where requested ISAG would review event safety plans which were hosted on private land.

The ISAG did not take decisions on whether an event should go ahead but provided specialist advice and recommended to landowners, including the Council to enable them to make informed decisions to allow an event or require changes to an event plan. The ISAG provided practical advice and guidance to event organisers and aimed to drive up the quality of event plans/safety planning.

The ISAG's independent Chair produced an annual report for information, to highlight significant findings and make recommendations for areas of further work.

The full ISAG Annual Report, including an improvement plan, was attached to the report.

RESOLVED that the ISAG's annual report 2025/26 be noted.

REPORT TO CABINET

12 MARCH 2026

REPORT OF ADULT SOCIAL CARE AND HEALTH SELECT COMMITTEE

CABINET DECISION

Health and Adult Social Care – Lead Cabinet Member – Councillor Pauline Beall

Scrutiny Review of Stockton-on-Tees Adult Carers Support Service

Summary

The attached report presents the outcomes of the Adult Social Care and Health Select Committee's review of Stockton-on-Tees Adult Carers Support Service.

Reasons for Recommendation(s) / Decision(s)

This topic was included on the Scrutiny Work Programme for 2025-2026. The review is now complete, and the recommendations have been endorsed by the Adult Social Care and Health Select Committee for submission to Cabinet.

Recommendations

The Committee recommend that:

- 1) In terms of general Stockton-on-Tees Adult Carers Support Service development, SBC should:
 - a) Ensure measures are put in place as part of the review of the Council's 'front door' to strengthen identification of carers and the promotion of the local support offer (including the Stockton-on-Tees Adult Carers Support Service).
 - b) Ascertain and consider the findings from the London School of Economics and Political Science (Care Policy and Evaluation Centre) research project on what support combinations help improve carers' lives and what works to facilitate availability of and access to this support.
 - c) Consider ways to increase the response rate for its annual carers consultation survey.

- 2) Regarding the partnership with Mobilise (the UKs digital platform for unpaid carers), SBC should:
 - a) Develop its own in-house digital support offer for local carers to build on / complement the services available through this external provider.
 - b) Ensure it has the necessary quality and performance controls in place (including the need to report on measurable targets) to monitor the effectiveness of this arrangement.
 - c) Seek to understand any separate arrangements that Council's outside the North East have with Mobilise and whether these enhance the offer to carers more than the ongoing partnership with the 10 North East Local Authorities.
- 3) In relation to the Stockton-on-Tees Adult Carers Support Service 'Time Out' element, SBC should:
 - a) Complete an internal review of the booking system to identify ways of creating more flexibility for carers when requested a break from their caring role.
 - b) Consider whether it would be appropriate to introduce a standing / means-tested charge for the service to broaden this for more carers going forward, enabling greater sustainability of its provision and importance (as identified via the LGA Peer Assurance Challenge of SBC Adult Social Care in July 2024).
- 4) Promotion of the Stockton-on-Tees Adult Carers Support Service offer to young carers should be strengthened so they are more informed about the support available to them when they reach 18.
- 5) Consideration should be given to the ways in which the Stockton-on-Tees Adult Carers Support Service can build on what appeals to young carers when they approach / reach 18 so they are more compelled to seek support in their caring role when they become young adults.
- 6) The new carers awareness e-learning module be rolled out to SBC staff, Members and external partners.
- 7) SBC further considers how the local support offer for carers can be promoted within the wider health system (including general practices and community settings).
- 8) SBC provides a response to the Committee on the carer-related commentary included within the Care Quality Commission (CQC) final report on SBC adult social care (published in October 2025).

Detail

1. The Care Act 2014 gave carers the same legal right to assessment and support as the person they care for. The most recent Census 2021 found that there were 5.8 million unpaid carers in the UK, with 1.7 million of these people providing 50 or more hours of care per week ([Key facts and figures | Carers UK](#)).

2. Carers play a substantial and vital role in meeting social care needs, with the cost of replacement care locally for Stockton-on-Tees having previously been estimated to be around £464 million annually. From an early intervention and prevention perspective, addressing the needs of carers enables Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council (SBC) to delay or possibly avert the need for complex and costly social care interventions, and by sustaining carers within their caring role, the stability of local adult health and social care services is supported. Identifying and providing support to these individuals is not just mandated by the Care Act 2014, but a sound economic and socially responsible decision (which may also prevent carers themselves needing services in their own right). Providing information, advice and support to carers ensures they promote their own wellbeing, carer breakdown is prevented, and resilient communities are established.
3. The local Adult Carers Support Service was brought in-house to SBC in January 2018 and works with adults who are providing informal care and support for adults across the Borough. Since then, the service has developed significantly, with over 5,000 referrals during this time. As of June 2025, it was working with 3,200 unpaid carers within Stockton-on-Tees, offering ongoing advice, information and support alongside statutory carers assessments, support planning, carers personal budgets, and time-out assistance. SBC are also supporting nearly 2,000 carers with a direct payment, which amounts to a projected spend of £550,000 for this provision in this financial year.
4. In related matters, the Adult Carers Support Service has also had some initial involvement with the transitions programme as part of the Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council (SBC) *Powering Our Future* (POF) initiative – a new way of operating for the Council which seeks to work with partners and communities to put in place new and innovative approaches, allowing SBC to not only save money but also reshape what it does for the better, and in the best interests, of local residents.
5. Whilst the existing offer was considered to be effective, it was felt that it would be of benefit for the service to be scrutinised to provide assurance around its current delivery. It was hoped that this review would help highlight any gaps in the service and, in turn, help shape future developments for local provision.
6. The Committee took evidence from key personnel from within the Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council (SBC) Adults, Health and Wellbeing directorate, the NHS North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board (NENC ICB), North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust (NTHFT), Mobilise (an external organisation working with SBC), and Eastern Ravens Trust. In addition, the Committee considered the recently published Care Quality Commission (CQC) report following the late-2024 inspection of SBC adult social care services, as well as other Local Authority approaches / good practice in supporting carers. Committee Members also visited the LiveWell Dementia Hub to engage with staff and carers.

Community Impact and Equality and Poverty Impact Assessment

7. As reflected in the conclusion of the Committee's final report, SBC understand that there are approximately 20,000 unpaid carers across the Borough (around 10% of the total population of Stockton-on-Tees) – however, only around 3,500 carers were open to the local Adult Carers Support Service in 2024. The Committee's recommendations aim to strengthen carer-identification, service accessibility, signposting to / promotion of support, and the transitioning of young carers into the adult service, as well as ensuring the continuation of a range of options (in-person and digital) to help those seeking assistance with their caring role (many of whom remain hidden).

An Equality and Poverty Impact Assessment (EPIA) will be completed by the Adults, Health and Wellbeing directorate when future developments and any proposed changes to the exiting Stockton-on-Tees Adult Carers Support Service are considered in response to the Committee's final report and recommendations.

Corporate Parenting Implications

8. There are no direct implications in the report.

Financial Implications

9. Committee recommendations on the development of SBCs in-house digital support offer for local carers and the call for more flexibility in relation to the existing Time Out element may have a financial / resource implication for the Council, though the latter could potentially be offset by the introduction of a standing / means-tested charge for providing individuals with a break from their caring role. It is also recognised that strengthening promotion of, and accessibility to, the service may bring challenges in meeting demand, particularly given the significant number of local carers who are not yet seeking / receiving support.

Legal Implications

10. There are no direct implications in the report.

Risk Assessment

11. The review is categorised as low to medium risk. Existing management systems and daily routine activities are sufficient to control and reduce risk.

Wards Affected and Consultation with Ward / Councillors

12. This review is relevant to residents within all Wards across the Borough.

Background Papers

13. None.

Name of Contact Officer: Gary Woods

Post Title: Senior Scrutiny Officer

Telephone Number: 01642 526187

Email Address: gary.woods@stockton.gov.uk

Our Council

Our People

Our Places

Our Economy



Scrutiny Review of Stockton-on-Tees Adult Carers Support Service

Adult Social Care and Health Select Committee
Final Report

February 2026

Adult Social Care and Health Select Committee
Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council
Dunedin House
Columbia Drive
Thornaby
Stockton-on-Tees
TS17 6BJ

Contents

Select Committee – Membership	4
Acknowledgements	4
Contact Officer	4
Foreword	5
Original Brief	6
1.0 Executive Summary	8
2.0 Introduction	13
3.0 Background	14
4.0 Findings	16
➤ Local carer landscape and impact of caring	16
➤ Development of the local Adult Carers Support Service	17
➤ Health sector considerations around carers	25
➤ Engagement with / feedback from carers	29
➤ Young carers transitioning into the adult offer	32
➤ External carer-related SBC scrutiny	34
➤ Other approaches to / good practice in supporting carers	36
5.0 Conclusion & Recommendations	39
Appendix 1: Stockton-on-Tees Adult Carers Support Service: Newsletter (Autumn 2025)	44
Appendix 2: External carer-related SBC scrutiny	48
Glossary of Terms	53

Select Committee – Membership

Councillor Marc Besford (Chair)
Councillor Nathan Gale (Vice-Chair)
Councillor Stefan Barnes
Councillor Carol Clark
Councillor John Coulson

Councillor Lynn Hall
Councillor Jack Miller
Councillor Vanessa Sewell
Councillor Sylvia Walmsley

Acknowledgements

The Committee would like to thank the following people for contributing to its work:

- Graham Lyons (Service Manager) – Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council (SBC)
- Rebecca Gray (Service Manager, Direct Services) – SBC
- Carol Malham (Service Manager, Assessment (Early Intervention)) – SBC
- Alistair Mathieson (Senior Carers Advisor) – SBC
- Paula Swindale (Head of Commissioning, Community & UEC) – NHS North East & North Cumbria Integrated Care Board (NENC ICB)
- Rebecca Warden (Head of Primary Care, Tees Valley) – NENC ICB
- Victoria Cardona (Head of Patient Flow, Out of Hospital Care) – North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust (NTHFT)
- Melanie Cambage (Associate Director of Nursing) – University Hospitals Tees (UHT)
- Tracey Hamilton (Trust Manager) – Eastern Ravens Trust
- Nicole Chiu (Account Manager) – Mobilise

Contact Officer

Gary Woods (Senior Scrutiny Officer)
Tel: 01642 526187
Email: gary.woods@stockton.gov.uk

Foreword

Unpaid carers are the backbone of our community. Every day across Stockton-on-Tees, thousands of people quietly dedicate their time, energy and compassion to supporting a loved one. Their contribution is immeasurable, and our responsibility as a Council is clear: to ensure that carers are recognised, valued and supported in ways that genuinely improve their lives.

This review has allowed the Committee to look closely at the work being done across the Borough, and I am proud to say that Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council (SBC) is delivering an offer that stands out both in quality and impact. Since bringing the Adult Carers Support Service in-house in 2018, SBC has built a service shaped around compassion, early intervention, and practical support. The growing number of carers who register with the service each year is testament not only to rising need, but to the confidence carers have in the support the Council provides.

Among the strongest examples of good practice is the LiveWell Dementia Hub. The Committee's visit reaffirmed just how vital this space has become for carers – providing a warm, welcoming environment, expert guidance, and a community of peer support that many carers described as a 'lifeline'. The Hub embodies what excellent local care should look like: accessible, humane, and centred around real people's lives. Its role in supporting families navigating the challenges of dementia cannot be overstated, and it remains one of the most valued assets within the Council's wider support system.

Our review also highlighted the importance of recognising and supporting young carers, many of whom shoulder responsibilities well beyond their years. Their transition into adult services represents a critical moment, and the evidence we received from Eastern Ravens Trust makes clear that young people need reassurance, continuity, and an offer that feels relevant and age-appropriate. SBCs close working relationship with Eastern Ravens, alongside plans to strengthen awareness and improve the pathway into adult support, demonstrates the Council's commitment to ensuring that young carers are not forgotten, but are instead empowered as they enter adulthood.

Initiatives such as the Time Out service, the partnership with Mobilise, and the commitment to continuous co-production with carers all demonstrate SBCs determination to innovate, listen, and evolve. The service is not only delivering meaningful support today, but is actively planning for the needs of tomorrow, recognising growing demand, improving identification of carers, and strengthening links with health partners. There is always more to do, and this report sets out clear recommendations to help further strengthen the support available. But the message from carers, partners, and evidence gathered is consistent: SBC is delivering high-quality, person-centred support that is making a significant difference to people's lives.

On behalf of the Adult Social Care and Health Select Committee, we would like to thank every carer, regardless of age, who shared their experiences with us, and every member of staff across the Council, NHS, VCSE sector, and the Dementia Hub who work each day to support them. Their dedication ensures that Stockton-on-Tees remains a place where carers are seen, heard, and supported.



Cllr Marc Besford
Chair
Adult Social Care and
Health Select Committee



Cllr Nathan Gale
Vice-Chair
Adult Social Care and
Health Select Committee

Original Brief

Which of our strategic corporate objectives does this topic address?

The review will contribute to the following Stockton-on-Tees Plan 2024-2028 priorities:

- *Priority 2: Healthy & Resilient Communities:* We recognise the invaluable role that carers play to support their loved ones in communities, and we will ensure they receive the support they need to maintain their own independence and wellbeing.

The Carers Support Service has also had some initial involvement with the transitions programme as part of the Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council (SBC) *Powering Our Future* (POF) initiative.

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

The Care Act 2014 gave carers the same legal right to assessment and support as the person they care for. The most recent Census 2021 found that there were 5.8 million unpaid carers in the UK (an estimate of over 20,000 of those living within Stockton-on-Tees), with 1.7 million of these people providing 50 or more hours of care per week.

In 2019, Carers UK revealed that one in seven people within employment were also in a significant caring role, and that 2.6 million had quit their job to care. This created a significant cost to the UK economy from both the loss to the labour market, the cost of recruiting and training, and the impact on benefits claims. Elsewhere, it has been reported that carers were more than twice as likely to suffer from poor physical and mental health (as well as financial hardship) than their non-caring counterparts, with one third of people in a caring role report feeling often or always lonely ([Carers UK: State of Caring 2024](#)).

Carers play a substantial and vital role in meeting social care needs. The cost of replacement care locally for Stockton-on-Tees has previously been estimated to be around £464 million annually ([Stockton JSNA: Carers](#)). From an early intervention and prevention perspective, addressing the needs of carers enables SBC to delay or possibly avert the need for complex and costly social care interventions, and by sustaining carers within their caring role, the stability of local adult health and social care services is supported. Identifying and providing support to these individuals is not just mandated by the Care Act 2014 but a sound economic and socially responsible decision (which may also prevent carers themselves needing services in their own right). By providing information, advice and support to carers we are able to ensure they promote their own wellbeing, prevent carer breakdown, and establish resilient communities.

The local Adult Carers Support Service was brought in-house to SBC in January 2018 and works with adults who are providing informal care and support for adults across the Borough. Since then, the service has developed significantly, with over 5,000 referrals during this time. As of June 2025, it was working with 3,200 unpaid carers within Stockton-on-Tees, offering ongoing advice, information and support alongside statutory carers assessments, support planning, carers personal budgets, and time-out support. SBC are also supporting nearly 2,000 carers with a direct payment which amounts to a projected spend of £550,000 for this provision in this financial year.

Whilst this offer is considered to be effective, it would be of benefit for the service to be scrutinised to provide assurance around its current delivery. It is also hoped that this review will help highlight any gaps in the service and, in turn, help shape future developments for local provision.

The Committee will undertake the following key lines of enquiry:

- What support does the local Adult Carers Support Service offer / provide? How is it resourced (funded and staffed) and what does it cost per annum (including changes over time)? How did the pre-2018 arrangements differ from the current offer (what prompted it being brought in-house)?
- How is the service promoted and how do individuals access it? Are there any restrictions (e.g. is it time-limited) and have there been any reports of barriers in receiving help?
- How many individuals does the service support and what types of support do individuals receive? How has this changed over time, and what are the predicted future demands on the service (i.e. is it sustainable)?
- How does the 'Time Out' service work?
- How does the Council and its partners identify individuals who may be eligible for support? Is this effective / consistent?
- Is feedback on the service sought from carers – if so, how / how often? What are those receiving support saying about their experience of the service and what plans are in place to develop the offer further?
- What are the benefits to being a registered carer? How are these being promoted across the Borough?
- What considerations are given to young carers transitioning into the adult carers service? How is this managed, communicated and promoted?

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

- Primary: To understand the impact of the carers service on promoting the wellbeing and needs of unpaid carers. Identifying where the service is reaching its objective and where future focus needs to be concentrated to improve service delivery and satisfaction for carers
- Secondary: To understand and identify where partnership working can be improved to promote the rights and needs of carers, ensuring they are being treated as expert partners and identified for support when required.

1.0 Executive Summary

- 1.1. This report outlines the findings and recommendations following the Adult Social Care and Health Select Committee's scrutiny review of Stockton-on-Tees Adult Carers Support Service.
- 1.2. The Care Act 2014 gave carers the same legal right to assessment and support as the person they care for. The most recent Census 2021 found that there were 5.8 million unpaid carers in the UK, with 1.7 million of these people providing 50 or more hours of care per week ([Key facts and figures | Carers UK](#)).
- 1.3. Carers play a substantial and vital role in meeting social care needs, with the cost of replacement care locally for Stockton-on-Tees having previously been estimated to be around £464 million annually. From an early intervention and prevention perspective, addressing the needs of carers enables Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council (SBC) to delay or possibly avert the need for complex and costly social care interventions, and by sustaining carers within their caring role, the stability of local adult health and social care services is supported. Identifying and providing support to these individuals is not just mandated by the Care Act 2014, but a sound economic and socially responsible decision (which may also prevent carers themselves needing services in their own right). Providing information, advice and support to carers ensures they promote their own wellbeing, carer breakdown is prevented, and resilient communities are established.
- 1.4. The local Adult Carers Support Service was brought in-house to SBC in January 2018 and works with adults who are providing informal care and support for adults across the Borough. Since then, the service has developed significantly, with over 5,000 referrals during this time. As of June 2025, it was working with 3,200 unpaid carers within Stockton-on-Tees, offering ongoing advice, information and support alongside statutory carers assessments, support planning, carers personal budgets, and time-out assistance. SBC are also supporting nearly 2,000 carers with a direct payment, which amounts to a projected spend of £550,000 for this provision in this financial year.
- 1.5. Whilst the existing offer was considered to be effective, it was felt that it would be of benefit for the service to be scrutinised to provide assurance around its current delivery. It was hoped that this review would help highlight any gaps in the service and, in turn, help shape future developments for local provision. Also, the Committee's work could lead to the following efficiencies, improvements and / or transformation:
 - **Primary:** To understand the impact of the carers service on promoting the wellbeing and needs of unpaid carers, identifying where the service was reaching its objective and where future focus needed to be concentrated to improve service delivery / satisfaction for carers.
 - **Secondary:** To understand and identify where partnership working could be improved to promote the rights and needs of carers, ensuring they were being treated as expert partners and identified for support when required.
- 1.6. Caring for someone, particularly for those with greater needs, can be incredibly hard. It has the potential to have a profound and lasting impact which can affect an individual's physical and mental health, and compromise their ability to hold down employment (previous Carers UK research found that around 600 people per day were giving up work to care) or enjoy leisure / social activities. As well as the stress and worry over supporting a person close to them, caring roles can also result in adverse financial implications for those involved.

- 1.7. The Committee found that national estimates on the number of those carrying out an unpaid caring role vary (the most recent Census 2021 suggested that there were 5.8 million unpaid carers in the UK), and it is well acknowledged that ascertaining an accurate figure is challenging given many individuals do not view their support of a loved one as 'providing care'. That said, Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council (SBC) stated that there were approximately 20,000 unpaid carers across the Borough, which represents around 10% of the total population of Stockton-on-Tees. Given there were a total of around 3,500 carers open to the local Adult Carers Support Service in 2024, there appears to be significant potential for an increase in demand for the existing offer should a proportion of these people seek help.
- 1.8. The Stockton-on-Tees Adult Carers Support Service is a key feature of the Council's offer of support for the Borough's adult carers. Annual referrals have continually escalated from around 450 in 2018 (when SBC made the decision to bring the service in-house) to nearly 700 in 2024, with a subsequent increase in associated funding to manage this demand. The service provides a range of bespoke support, is widely promoted across the Council's various print and electronic platforms, and also works with external organisations to emphasise the importance of supporting carers and how SBC can assist. A crucial and much appreciated element of the local offer is the 'Time Out' service which gives carers up to eight hours of ad-hoc support per month free-of-charge, allowing them a break from their caring role.
- 1.9. The Council's ongoing work with Mobilise (the UK's digital platform for unpaid carers) was highlighted to the Committee which had helped to provide a range of free online services, as well as identify hidden carers. Given the recent decision to extend this partnership beyond the current contract deadline of April 2026, SBC will need to ensure it has the necessary quality and performance controls in place to monitor the effectiveness of this arrangement. Moving forward, SBCs work around its digital offer for clients and their carers will provide an opportunity to review any future arrangements with external providers with regard to this support.
- 1.10. In terms of wider health considerations around carers, NHS North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board (NENC ICB) personnel drew attention to the legal requirement (under the Health and Care Act 2022) for the NHS to involve unpaid carers in decisions about the care and treatment of the individuals they supported (this included participation in the planning and delivery of care, as well as in discharge planning from hospital settings). Whilst the ICB did not have any direct responsibilities in this area, it did work collaboratively at a local level with Local Authority and 'system' partners (including operational teams to ensure clinical pathways considered carers) to support the adult carers agenda, and the NENC ICB / ICP Joint Strategy specified a key programme aim of 'working to identify and support more people who are providing unpaid care within the region'. From a general practice perspective, 4,741 individuals had been identified as a 'carer' or 'cares for a relative' – the Council should consider how best it can promote the local Adult Carers Support Service within these settings, as well as being mindful that improvements in carer-identification may ultimately result in more demand on the existing offer.
- 1.11. North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust (NTHFT) provided extensive evidence on the ways in which it considered carers (recognising them as partners in care) and promoted local support services. The recently implemented 'Carers Charter' was an encouraging development which should now be embedded and continually reinforced to staff and patients. NTHFT also highlighted the need for thinking around how the Trust's community services / teams were targeted in relation to carers, particularly given the number of people involved in a caring role was likely to continue increasing.
- 1.12. The Committee fully supports the acknowledgement from SBC of the need for an open culture to encourage engagement and listening with carers, and several examples were given demonstrating this endeavour. Whilst the response rate to the latest annual carers consultation survey was limited, important themes were nevertheless identified (including the value of peer

support), and the Committee look forward to learning more about how the actions taken in light of this feedback have enhanced the local offer.

- 1.13. The Committee undertook its own engagement with local carers by visiting the LiveWell Dementia Hub in November 2025. The importance of being able to easily access carer-related services (aided by up-to-date contact details) and having the opportunity to share experiences with those who are going through the same challenges was reiterated, and it was clear that the ability to meet in-person (within a welcoming environment which provided an excellent source of carer-related information) was hugely valued, as was the Council's Time Out service. Regarding the latter, the Committee note the request from carers for more flexibility around the booking process (currently having to give over a month's notice which could be difficult as personal appointments were not always predictable), though commends the new 'Time Out Together' element which has the potential to benefit a greater number of those in a caring role (allowing multiple carers to have a break at the same time whilst their loved one partakes in group activities / games). Ensuring the Time Out offer is as efficient and effective as possible should be a cornerstone of the future service moving forward.
- 1.14. Recognising the Borough's young carers and the importance of their transition into adult support services, the Committee was pleased to receive a very informative contribution from Eastern Ravens Trust (a local charity supporting young carers within Stockton-on-Tees). Feedback from young carers highlighted concerns about dealing with change, how appropriate the local Adult Carers Support Service was for young adults, and a lack of knowledge of such an offer after they had reached adulthood – this suggests there is work to do to promote the options available to them once they reach the end of their time with Eastern Ravens (this should be helped through the already established relationships between the young carers and adult carers services), as well as making this offer as appealing as possible for those transitioning into it. The creation of some form of dedicated 'young adult' carers service / element may be more justifiable if there is an increase in the number of individuals aged 18-24 requesting / accessing support (as of early-November 2025, just 38 out of the 3,100+ carers open to the Stockton-on-Tees Adult Carers Support Service were in this age bracket).
- 1.15. In October 2025, the Care Quality Commission (CQC) published its final report following the late-2024 inspection of SBC adult social care services, and carer-related commentary was shared with the Committee for the purposes of this review (as was relevant feedback from the Local Government Association (LGA) peer assurance challenge of SBC Adult Social Care that was undertaken in July 2024 in preparation for the anticipated CQC inspection). The regulator's findings, whilst broadly positive, did highlight some concerns around the availability of information on support for unpaid carers, as well as the Council's own acknowledgement of the need for further work to both identify these individuals and fully understand their needs. Clarity around improvements to the information and advice offer for people who were funding their own care, and in relation to the ongoing work to reshape the Council's 'front door', was also noted.
- 1.16. The CQC report also referenced national data from the Survey of Adult Carers in England (SACE, June 2024) which showed that:
 - 90.7% of carers found information and advice from SBC helpful (better than the England average of 85.22%)
 - 75% of carers engaged with the Local Authority said they found it easy to access information and advice (significantly better than the England average of 59.06%)
 - more carers in Stockton-on-Tees (47.83%) were satisfied with support they received than the England average (36.83%)

However, there were also areas to work on, with outcomes from the same survey indicating:

- more could be done to improve the respite offer to unpaid carers
- more carers locally (34%) were unable to maintain paid employment because of their caring duties compared to the England average (26.7%)
- only 25.19% of carers said they were accessing a support group or someone to talk to in confidence (which was worse than the England average of 32.98%)

Encouragingly, the CQC concluded that the Council had 'a clear vision and strategy for adult social care which sought to improve outcomes for people with care and support needs, unpaid carers and reduce inequalities of experience and outcomes for people in the local area'. The Committee is therefore keen to understand how SBC proposes to respond to the regulator's feedback and, in related matters, encourages the Council to continue efforts to raise the profile of those staff working on the frontline / 'front door' of these support services.

- 1.17. Wider research demonstrated a range of approaches and initiatives regarding support for adult carers across the UK, some of which are already a feature of the local offer. Several carer-related good practice guides were also brought to the attention of the Committee, with the Council's Time Out service highlighted by the Carers Trust as a positive example in providing short breaks for carers. Increasing acknowledgement of the importance and role of unpaid carers will likely encourage the publication of further material which SBC should seek and consider as part of the ongoing development of the local support service.
- 1.18. The Stockton-on-Tees Adult Carers Support Service is clearly a highly valued and crucial element within the Council's adult social care offer, attracting wider recognition and appreciation for what it provides. That said, evidence collected as part of this review has flagged areas for attention in relation to carer-identification, signposting to / promotion of support, transitioning of young carers into the adult service, the ability to meet demand as more carers request / require help, and the need for continuous evaluation of the local offer. Unpaid carers save local organisations a vast amount of money – as such, despite the ongoing financial limitations on the Council, they must be supported as much as possible. Those accessing the service have reported very positive experiences – the challenge is ensuring this can be of benefit to a greater number of carers, many of whom remain hidden.

Recommendations

The Committee recommend that:

- 1) In terms of general Stockton-on-Tees Adult Carers Support Service development, SBC should:**
 - a) Ensure measures are put in place as part of the review of the Council's 'front door' to strengthen identification of carers and the promotion of the local support offer (including the Stockton-on-Tees Adult Carers Support Service).**
 - b) Ascertain and consider the findings from the London School of Economics and Political Science (Care Policy and Evaluation Centre) research project on what support combinations help improve carers' lives and what works to facilitate availability of and access to this support.**
 - c) Consider ways to increase the response rate for its annual carers consultation survey.**

(continued overleaf...)

Recommendations (continued)

The Committee recommend that:

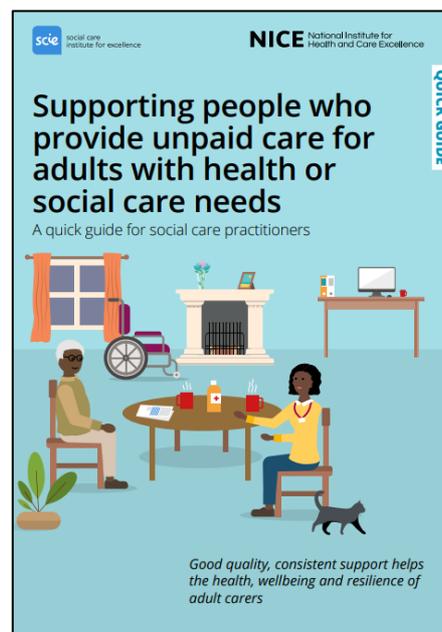
- 2) Regarding the partnership with Mobilise (the UK's digital platform for unpaid carers), SBC should:**
 - a) Develop its own in-house digital support offer for local carers to build on / complement the services available through this external provider.**
 - b) Ensure it has the necessary quality and performance controls in place (including the need to report on measurable targets) to monitor the effectiveness of this arrangement.**
 - c) Seek to understand any separate arrangements that Council's outside the North East have with Mobilise and whether these enhance the offer to carers more than the ongoing partnership with the 10 North East Local Authorities.**
- 3) In relation to the Stockton-on-Tees Adult Carers Support Service 'Time Out' element, SBC should:**
 - a) Complete an internal review of the booking system to identify ways of creating more flexibility for carers when requested a break from their caring role.**
 - b) Consider whether it would be appropriate to introduce a standing / means-tested charge for the service to broaden this for more carers going forward, enabling greater sustainability of its provision and importance (as identified via the LGA Peer Assurance Challenge of SBC Adult Social Care in July 2024).**
- 4) Promotion of the Stockton-on-Tees Adult Carers Support Service offer to young carers should be strengthened so they are more informed about the support available to them when they reach 18.**
- 5) Consideration should be given to the ways in which the Stockton-on-Tees Adult Carers Support Service can build on what appeals to young carers when they approach / reach 18 so they are more compelled to seek support in their caring role when they become young adults.**
- 6) The new carers awareness e-learning module be rolled out to SBC staff, Members and external partners.**
- 7) SBC further considers how the local support offer for carers can be promoted within the wider health system (including general practices and community settings).**
- 8) SBC provides a response to the Committee on the carer-related commentary included within the Care Quality Commission (CQC) final report on SBC adult social care (published in October 2025).**

2.0 Introduction

- 2.1. This report outlines the findings and recommendations following the Adult Social Care and Health Select Committee's scrutiny review of Stockton-on-Tees Adult Carers Support Service.
- 2.2. Whilst the existing offer was considered to be effective, it was felt that it would be of benefit for the service to be scrutinised to provide assurance around its current delivery. It was hoped that this review would help highlight any gaps in the service and, in turn, help shape future developments for local provision. Also, the Committee's work could lead to the following efficiencies, improvements and / or transformation:
 - **Primary:** To understand the impact of the carers service on promoting the wellbeing and needs of unpaid carers, identifying where the service was reaching its objective and where future focus needed to be concentrated to improve service delivery / satisfaction for carers.
 - **Secondary:** To understand and identify where partnership working could be improved to promote the rights and needs of carers, ensuring they were being treated as expert partners and identified for support when required.
- 2.3. The Committee identified the following key lines of enquiry:
 - What support does the local Adult Carers Support Service offer / provide? How is it resourced (funded and staffed) and what does it cost per annum (including changes over time)? How did the pre-2018 arrangements differ from the current offer?
 - How is the service promoted and how do individuals access it? Are there any restrictions (e.g. is it time-limited) and have there been any reports of barriers in receiving help?
 - How many individuals does the service support and what types of support do individuals receive? How has this changed over time; what are the predicted future service demands?
 - How does the 'Time Out' service work?
 - How does the Council and its partners identify individuals who may be eligible for support? Is this effective / consistent?
 - Is feedback on the service sought from carers – if so, how / how often? What are those receiving support saying about their experience of the service and what plans are in place to develop the offer further?
 - What are the benefits to being a registered carer? How are these being promoted?
 - What considerations are given to young carers transitioning into the adult carers service? How is this managed, communicated and promoted?
- 2.4. The Committee took evidence from key personnel from within the Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council (SBC) Adults, Health and Wellbeing directorate, the NHS North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board (NENC ICB), North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust (NTHFT), Mobilise (an external organisation working with SBC), and Eastern Ravens Trust. In addition, the Committee considered the recently published Care Quality Commission (CQC) report following the late-2024 inspection of SBC adult social care services, as well as other Local Authority approaches / good practice in supporting carers. Committee Members also visited the LiveWell Dementia Hub to engage with staff and carers.

3.0 Background

- 3.1 The Care Act 2014 gave carers the same legal right to assessment and support as the person they care for. The most recent Census 2021 found that there were 5.8 million unpaid carers in the UK, with 1.7 million of these people providing 50 or more hours of care per week ([Key facts and figures | Carers UK](#)).
- 3.2 Carers, the caring role, and the impact of caring has gained increased recognition over time:
- **2019:** Carers UK revealed that one in seven people within employment were also in a significant caring role, and that 2.6 million had quit their job to care. This created a significant cost to the UK economy from both the loss to the labour market, the cost of recruiting and training, and the impact on benefits claims ([Research: More than 600 people quit work to look after older and disabled relatives every day | Carers UK](#)). A more recent report found that unpaid carers were finding it increasingly difficult to afford day-to-day living costs, with the worry and anxiety of this further affecting their mental health and wellbeing. Most carers were now cutting back on social connections, which often provide a vital lifeline helping people to balance caring responsibilities with their own wellbeing ([Carers UK: State of Caring 2024](#)).
 - **2020:** National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) published [Supporting adult carers](#) guidelines covering support for adults (aged 18 and over) who provide unpaid care for anyone aged 16 or over with health or social care needs. It aimed to improve the lives of carers by helping health and social care practitioners identify people who were caring for someone and give them the right information and support. It covered carers' assessments, practical, emotional and social support and training, and support for carers providing end-of-life care. In 2022, NICE / Social Care Institute for Excellence (SCIE) issued a quick guide for social care practitioners titled [Supporting people who provide unpaid care for adults with health or social care needs](#).
 - **2022:** On the 74th anniversary of the National Health Service (NHS), Carers UK highlighted [new rights for unpaid carers following the introduction of the Health and Care Act 2022](#).
 - **2025:** A resource for health and social care professionals was developed by the Carers Partnership (Carers UK and Carers Trust) as part of the Voluntary Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) Health and Wellbeing Alliance to support health and care systems in England to improve the inclusion, support, and involvement of unpaid carers. [Identifying and supporting unpaid carers in England to improve integrated system working](#) brought together statutory duties and best practice resources developed by the Carers Partnership (2022-2025) to help health and care professionals reduce the health inequalities carers face, better identify unpaid carers, and drive transformative change.
 - **2025:** Carers UK published its [A fresh approach to supporting unpaid carers](#) report detailing unpaid carers' experiences of the NHS in England, along with a vision for transforming how the NHS interacts with and supports unpaid carers through the delivery of the NHS 10-Year Plan.



- 3.3 Carers play a substantial and vital role in meeting social care needs, with the cost of replacement care locally for Stockton-on-Tees having previously been estimated to be around £464 million annually. From an early intervention and prevention perspective, addressing the needs of carers enables Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council (SBC) to delay or possibly avert the need for complex and costly social care interventions, and by sustaining carers within their caring role, the stability of local adult health and social care services is supported. Identifying and providing support to these individuals is not just mandated by the Care Act 2014, but a sound economic and socially responsible decision (which may also prevent carers themselves needing services in their own right). Providing information, advice and support to carers ensures they promote their own wellbeing, carer breakdown is prevented, and resilient communities are established.
- 3.4 The local Adult Carers Support Service was brought in-house to SBC in January 2018 and works with adults who are providing informal care and support for adults across the Borough. Since then, the service has developed significantly, with over 5,000 referrals during this time. As of June 2025, it was working with 3,200 unpaid carers within Stockton-on-Tees, offering ongoing advice, information and support alongside statutory carers assessments, support planning, carers personal budgets, and time-out assistance. SBC are also supporting nearly 2,000 carers with a direct payment, which amounts to a projected spend of £550,000 for this provision in this financial year.
- 3.5 In related matters, the Adult Carers Support Service has also had some initial involvement with the transitions programme as part of the Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council (SBC) *Powering Our Future* (POF) initiative – a new way of operating for the Council which seeks to work with partners and communities to put in place new and innovative approaches, allowing SBC to not only save money but also reshape what it does for the better, and in the best interests, of local residents.

4.0 Findings

Local carer landscape and impact of caring

4.1. In September 2025, the Committee heard that there were approximately 20,000 unpaid carers across Stockton-on-Tees out of a population of around 200,000. Whilst not everyone would identify as a carer, any person might find themselves in a position of having to support a family member, friend, neighbour, colleague or, as part of their employment, a service-user. It was therefore important for everyone to be mindful of this eventuality, have conversations around this topic, and help identify those people in need of support.



- 4.2. A host of well-known issues were associated with unpaid caring, ranging from financial hardship and social isolation to poor physical and / or mental health, and stress, worry and feelings of anger, guilt and frustration. Difficulties in accessing primary care / other universal services and challenges in getting information / support were further experiences. As such, local carers had identified several elements which they would find helpful, including access to mental health support and counselling, health and wellbeing support, information and signposting, regular 'check-ins', practical assistance, and visible communications and support from senior leaders. Being able to work flexibly in order to facilitate their caring role was also highlighted, as was raising awareness with managers on carer tools / guidance, the creation of a Virtual Carers Network, and focusing on outcomes rather than presence.
- 4.3. Continuing the theme of working carers, it was noted that, nationally, one-in-five employees was a carer, 90% of whom were over the age of 30. One-in-six people would leave their employment due to the pressure of the caring role, resulting in a knock-on annual cost to the UK economy of £5.3 billion. In light of this, Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council (SBC) had a Staff Carers Network which met online bi-monthly, provided peer support, advice and signposting, and played a role in steering the plans / objectives of the local Adult Carers Support Service.

Identifying Carers

- 4.4. All the Council's social care staff had a duty to identify and support carers to access help where appropriate. The Carers Team regularly promoted the support offered to internal teams and they were all made aware of how to refer.
- 4.5. SBC had close working partnerships with other organisations, including health, GPs, pharmacies, Cleveland Fire Brigade, Citizens Advice, Welfare Hub, Age UK, Catalyst, Memory Clinic, Eastern Ravens, and many others. The Carers Team provided support and carers awareness training to many third-parties to help them identify and support carers. SBC also assisted businesses on request to help them improve their support to carers in their employment, and had worked closely with the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) and Job Centre Plus in the past to help them support their own staff (and individuals who utilised their services who may be in a caring role).
- 4.6. SBC used / attended events and activities in the community to promote carer services, and regularly hosted its own events during Carers Week, Carers Rights Day, Happy Hippy Shake, etc. SBC used social media, the Council website, Stockton Information Directory (SID) and its own email bulletin and newsletter to try and spread information / advice for carers and also identify new carers where appropriate. Work was also undertaken with the SBC Communications

Team to ensure promotional materials such as pull-up banners, posters and leaflets were regularly distributed throughout the Borough, including in libraries, leisure centres and other community hubs. Parking tickets and electronic screens throughout the Borough had previously been used to promote the service.

- 4.7. Work took place with the Council's libraries teams, learning and skills, health and wellbeing librarian, customer service and First Contact teams, Hartlepool and Stockton Health (HASH), Tees Active, and other partners to promote carer services. There was also a hospital-based Carers Advisor at the University Hospital of North Tees whose role was to engage carers within the hospital environment, ensuring they were accessing support where required, supporting carers through the discharge process, and raising awareness of carers and their needs with hospital staff / wards.
- 4.8. The Committee highlighted the significant increase in the number of identified carers across the Borough which the updated SBC Adult Social Care Strategy needed to acknowledge / plan for.

Benefits to being a Registered Carer

- 4.9. The benefit of being a registered carer was being able to access support throughout an individual's caring journey and beyond in a way that was meaningful to them. This could be from accessing information, advice and guidance in a format that was suitable to them (in-person, via post, online, email, etc.), accessing peer support, respite, carers budgets and carers emergency cards, and also just having someone who was there to listen to them as a carer and ensure they were prioritising their own wellbeing and needs, enabling them to continue in their caring role.
- 4.10. Being recognised as a carer could also help with other aspects as the Carers Team would assist with access to other services, providing referrals to organisations and teams (including therapy and psychological services), technological support from places like SBC OneCall, Occupational Therapy, the Falls Team, debt advice, and benefits advice (amongst many other things).
- 4.11. In addition, the Carers Team would help carers to plan for contingencies and emergencies, and often supported with future planning and through the end of the caring role. It assisted carers to enter or remain in employment, volunteering or training. Carers education courses / carers awareness was provided to help carers develop their skills to support in their caring role (and develop this into an employment opportunity should they wish), as well as their hobbies and interests. Other support was offered in areas such as menopause, caring for someone else's dental hygiene, lifting and handling, first aid, transition support, finances, dementia awareness, IT support, and more general things such as reiki, seated yoga, reflexology, wreath-making, meditation, one-pot cooking, and many more.

Development of the local Adult Carers Support Service

- 4.12. Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council (SBC) had developed an online 'Carers' Hub' to support all informal / unpaid carers and cared-for people across the Borough. The hub provided access to a range of options for those undertaking a caring role, including:
 - Carer's assessment
 - Join our carers' register
 - Apply for a carers' emergency card
 - Carers' Connect (free friendship service)
 - Support for carers
 - Information for carers on our directory (Stockton Information Directory)

Stockton-on-Tees
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Create a My Council account Sign in to My Council

Our Council **Our People** **Our Places** **Our Economy**

Home • Our People • Health and Social Care

Carers' Hub

We are here to support all informal and unpaid carers and cared-for people in our Borough.

An informal carer is someone who supports or looks after a friend, family member or neighbour due to illness, frailty, physical disability, learning disability, mental health problem or drug or alcohol misuse. If you provide (or intend to provide) physical, practical or emotional support to someone on a regular basis then you can be considered a carer.

You may have become an unpaid carer suddenly. For example, if someone you love has had an accident or becomes ill. For some people the caring role develops over time. For example, your parents might start to struggle to do things for themselves or the mental health of someone you love may stop them being able to care for themselves or their children.

Many people do not see themselves as a carer. They think of themselves as a friend or family member and do not realise that there may support available to them and the person they are caring for. You might not like the term 'carer' and that's fine too, we can still offer you support. You do not need to live with the person you care for or be in receipt of carer's allowance in order to access support.

When you start supporting a loved one, your role and the role of the person you are supporting may change. This can be difficult at first, as your relationship may need to adjust. Becoming a carer can come with emotions that could be difficult to accept and understand. It is not unusual to feel a sense of loss for your past life or even bitterness towards your new situation. Caring for a loved one can be hugely rewarding but many carers tell us they sometimes feel lonely and frustrated. These are natural feelings that you do not have to feel guilty about.

Our Adult Carers' Support Service can offer support and help without judgement. They will help you to find things that can make your life easier or to think about your own needs too, for more information:

- phone 01642 524494
- email carerssupport@stockton.gov.uk
- visit our [Adult Carers Support Service Facebook](#)
- follow us on our [Adult Carers Twitter account](#)

Background

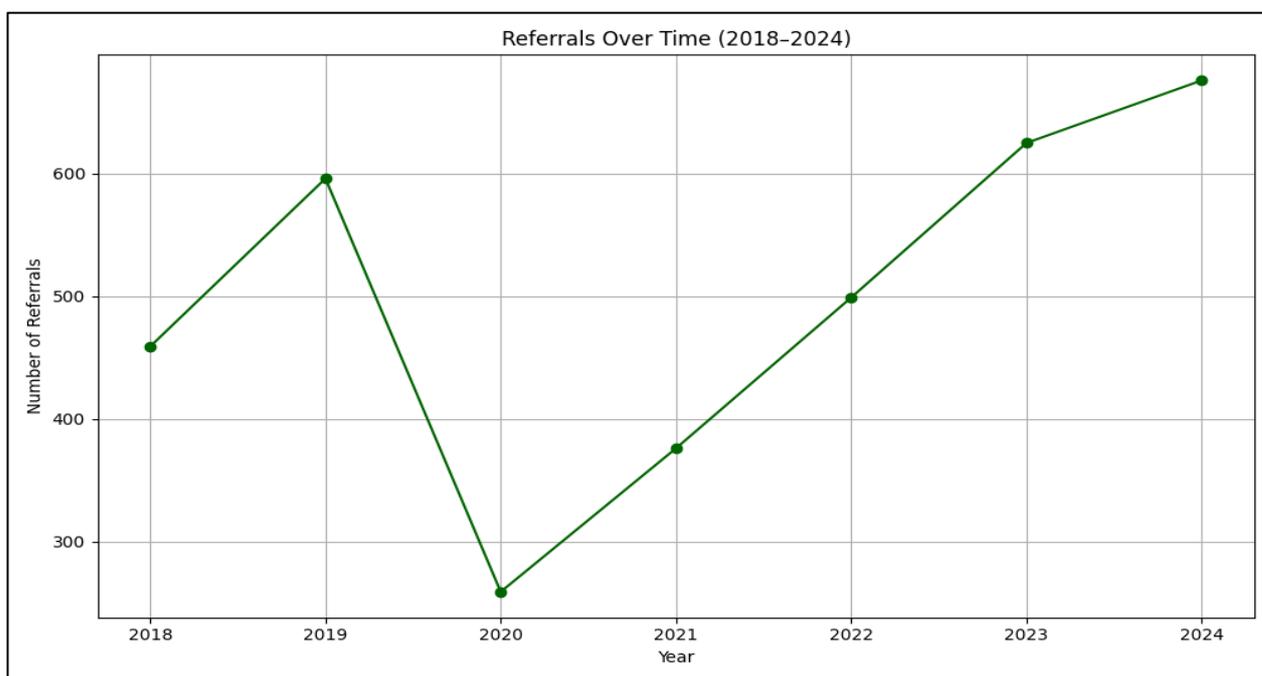
- 4.13. The Stockton-on-Tees Adult Carers Support Service was a key part of the support offer for local carers (see <https://www.stockton.gov.uk/support-for-carers>) and was brought in-house by SBC in 2018. Previously provided by a commissioned organisation (Sanctuary), the service was not meeting its objectives, and carers, generally, were reporting that they were unhappy with the level of support given. The organisation was also not commissioned to provide statutory carer's assessments, so these were done by SBCs social work teams (creating additional internal pressures).
- 4.14. SBC went out to consultation with carers when the contract was due for renewal. Feedback indicated a desire for all services to be provided by one organisation / team and for a commitment from the Local Authority to continue supporting carers. The Council then took the decision to bring the service in-house (due, in part, to the success of the direct payment service which had done the same thing previously), and this was subsequently brought into SBC Adult Social Care for significantly less budget. The numbers of carers registered went from 104 to the present figure of 3,300 (although there have been around 6,000 carers registered throughout the years since it came in-house), with the existing offer benefitting from close links with adult social care and other support services, as well as providing employment and training opportunities for the Borough's carers.

Referrals

- 4.15. The Stockton-on-Tees Adult Carers Support Service had an open referrals system – approaches could be through self-referrals, from third-party professionals or organisations, or via social care. Referrals were made via phone, email or online, and carers could also access the Livewell Hub in-person.
- 4.16. Being a carer was self-determined (in line with the Care Act 2014), so if someone believed themselves to be a carer then they could access support from the Local Authority. This included

getting information, advice and guidance, attending peer support and carers awareness sessions, accessing a carers emergency card, and various other options. The Care Act assessment could be accessed by anyone who believed themselves to be a carer, however, the level of carers budget they generated via this would differ depending on the impact of the caring role on the carer's everyday life and wellbeing. This was similar for accessing the Time Out service.

- 4.17. All services were bespoke to the carer and what they wanted or needed at the time, so not all referrals would result in a carer's assessment as this may not be the choice or need of the carer. They may choose just to access information and support (i.e. attend peer support or go onto the Council's mailing lists) – they do not need an assessment to do this.
- 4.18. Referrals to the service totalled around 450 in 2018, dipped to below 300 during 2020 (COVID-impacted), but then continually escalated to nearly 700 in 2024 (see below graphic).



The cumulative number of carers open to the service, meanwhile, had continually increased from almost 500 in 2018 to 3,500 in 2024 (those accessing it remained open to the service and could come back at any time).

- 4.19. In November 2025, demographics in relation to those using the service (as of 7 November 2025) were provided to the Committee (see below graphic).

	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65-74	75+	Total
Male	11	111	197	397	214	158	228	1316
Female	27	45	82	126	714	478	375	1847
White British	33	147	260	477	886	613	585	3001
Asian/ Asian British	4	5	14	29	25	13	6	96
Black/African/Caribbean/Black British	0	0	1	1	1	0	1	4
Mixed/Multiple Ethnic Groups	0	1	1	1	1	0	1	5
Pakistani/British	0	0	1	0	0	0		1
Other	1	2	1	6	3	6	1	20
Prefer Not To Say	0	0	1	0	1	0		2
Not specified	0	1	0	9	11	3	9	33
Total	38	156	279	523	928	636	603	3163

Finances

- 4.20. In terms of finance, the service budget increased from £319,109 in 2022-2023 to £394,207 in 2023-2024 following the introduction of the 'Shared Lives' (<https://www.stockton.gov.uk/shared-lives>) element – this then rose to £396,522 for 2024-2025. An associated Carers Personal Budget fund had increased from £479,716 in 2022-2023 to £495,490 in 2024-2025.

Service Offer

- 4.21. A wide range of support was provided by the Stockton-on-Tees Adult Carers Support Service, including statutory carer's assessments, person-centred support planning, one-to-one support, carers education sessions, welfare calls, a hospital-based Carers Advisor, and support for external organisations to increase their support for adult carers. Other communication and engagement mechanisms existed via online services, newsletter and email bulletins, social media presence, drop-in sessions, weekly / monthly peer support groups, and the Carers Connect service (<https://www.stockton.gov.uk/carers-connect>).

- 4.22. Further detail was given on several of the service's key aspects, including statutory assessment (carers had a legal right to an assessment of need, support to meet that need, and access to information and advice) and personal budgets (it was noted that the previous use of pre-payment cards had created issues – SBC was now looking at direct payments into individual accounts). The Carers Emergency Card (helping to prepare / plan for emergencies) was also highlighted, as was the Time Out offer, which gave carers up to eight hours of ad-hoc support per month free-of-charge, allowing them a break from their caring role.



- 4.23. Attention was drawn to the Council's work with Mobilise, the UK's digital platform for unpaid carers. This partnership was in its second year and helped to provide a range of free online services, as well as identify hidden carers. Thus far, carers had engaged over 2,000 times through Mobilise's actions or tools (such as its e-support subscription), been supported over 1,000 times with deeper actions like its Personalised Guide to Caring, and been enabled to apply for over £363,550 in eligible Carer's Allowance support. Developments in relation to a mapping exercise of carers across the Borough (potentially aiding targeted support) were ongoing.
- 4.24. Responding to the submission from the SBC Adults, Health and Wellbeing directorate, the Committee emphasised the importance of enabling carers to have some occasional time to themselves, including the facilitation of access to community groups (where desired). Members felt it would be useful for the Council to seek the views of carers on the benefits of providing this relief from their caring duties.
- 4.25. Regarding the help given to external organisations to increase their support for adult carers, the Committee was informed that this was happening across all locations within the Borough, and that raising awareness of carers and the caring role was a key part of the local service.
- 4.26. Returning to the theme of respite, Members praised the ad-hoc nature of the Time Out support and asked about take-up. It was confirmed that around 120 people accessed this offer, though there were only nine support workers (providing up to 75 hours per week) to facilitate demand. Positive feedback had been received from those using this element of the overall service, with the Council having success in employing current and ex-carers to deliver it in the home and community (it was noted that this was not domiciliary support, though).

4.27. Acknowledging the financial challenges that carers often endured, the Committee queried whether the local Adult Carers Support Service liaised with the Council's A Fairer Stockton-on-Tees department. SBC officers stated that there was an established link between these two entities (including The Bread and Butter Thing initiative), and that the former also worked with the in-house Welfare Rights Team to ensure carers were aware of the support available to them. A number of carers were reluctant to admit to financial hardship – the established newsletter was therefore a useful resource to promote assistance for carers without the need for them to physically approach the service.

Mobilise

4.28. Mobilise was an online business led by carers, for carers, which provided weekly digests of carers' top tips, community support, and a space to connect with people in similar positions. It had been working with SBC since 2024 to provide a range of free online services to support local carers and was therefore approached to provide views on this scrutiny topic. In November 2025, the respective Account Manager presented the organisation's submission, key features of which included:

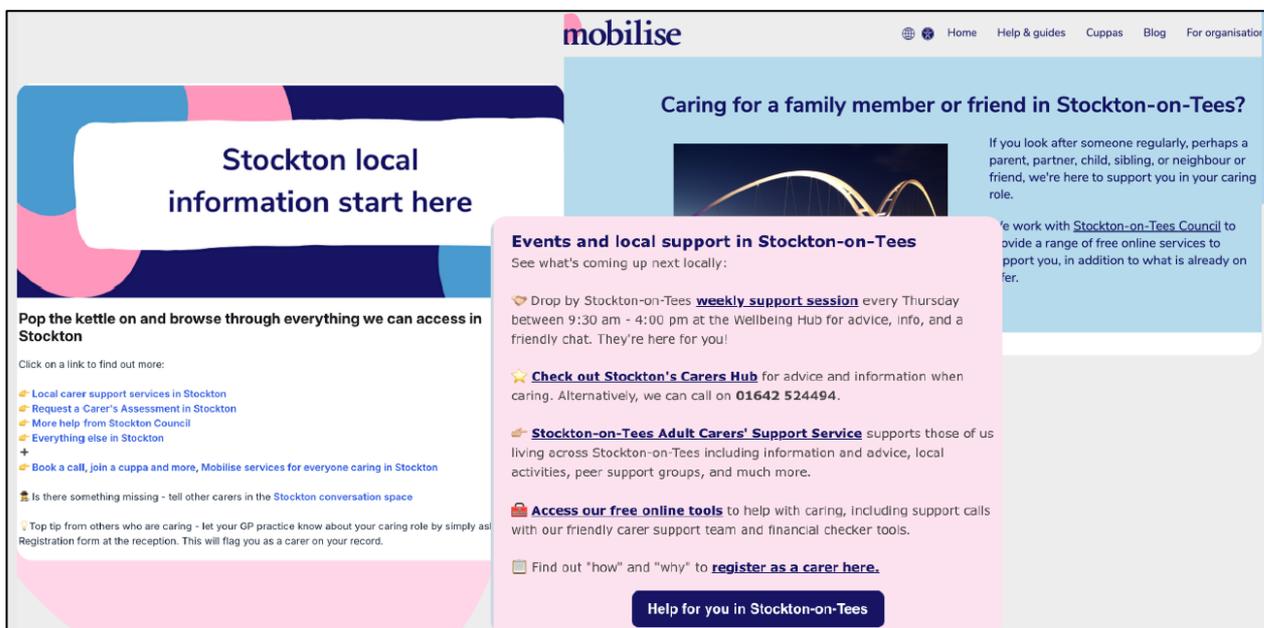
4.29. **About Mobilise:** Mobilise helped Councils engage unpaid carers (aged 18+) earlier and more effectively – preventing, reducing and delaying the need for intensive adult social care. It did this through digital innovation (AI tools, targeted web ads, and a 24/7 online peer community), scalable / light-touch support (information, advice and guidance available anytime), and human connection (lived experience carer support team for one-to-one help). The Mobilise offer complemented existing services, reached / identified hidden carers, addressed Care Quality Commission (CQC) priorities, and supported the NHS plan for community-focused preventative carer support.

4.30. **Core principles:** The organisation had three core principles – focusing on upstream prevention (finding carers early and giving them support / guidance as and when they needed it), technology to bring people together, and mobilising carer knowledge / wisdom / expertise.

4.31. **Identification and initial engagement:** Online adverts allowed carers to sign-up to Mobilise's personalised guide to caring (Facebook), whilst a variety of caring topics and the Carer's Allowance tool was accessible via internet searches. The Mobilise app had a range of features to help carers, including the Mobilise Assistant (answering questions and signposting), an online community (safe and moderated space for emotional and peer support), online events, data and insight (understanding needs / trends of carers within the Borough), and digital resources. Alongside these online options, the Carer Support Team was also available if a person-to-person conversation was required / preferred.



- 4.32. **Mobilise and ARF:** The North East and North Cumbria Mobilise Digital Carer Service was developed through the Accelerating Reform Fund (ARF) to address the gap in accessible and proactive support for unpaid carers. Many carers across the 13 Local Authorities reported limited knowledge of available services, with 81% having never accessed support for their caring role before.
- 4.33. **Mobilise and the North East:** During the November 2022 – March 2024 period, successful pilots were completed across four North East Local Authorities (Durham, Middlesbrough, Northumberland, and South Tyneside). After this, directors of 13 Local Authorities committed to a strategic digital carer service through a partnership with Mobilise and £990,000 of ARF money – this was a two-year (April 2024 – March 2026) regional initiative for identification and support of unreached carers across the Integrated Care Board (ICB) region, with a view to business-as-usual sustainability post-ARF. The North East Councils supported by Mobilise would exceed targets and reach over 150,000 carers, with 30,000+ new carers registered by March 2026.
- 4.34. **So far in Stockton:** Mobilise had engaged carers 2,667 times through actions or tools (e.g. e-support subscription), supported carers 1,507 times with deeper actions like its Personalised Guide to Caring, and enabled unpaid carers to apply for over £500,000 in eligible Carer's Allowance support (via the online calculator). Mobilise had also developed heat-maps of identified carers across the Borough to potentially assist targeted support / action.
- 4.35. **In Stockton-on-Tees we know:** During engagement with local carers, Mobilise had found that 82% had not previously accessed support before, 79% cared for over 35 hours a week, 66% were of working age, 64% used Mobilise services outside of working hours, and 29% of Mobilise users were male.
- 4.36. **Signposting to local support:** The Mobilise website (<https://support.mobiliseonline.co.uk/stockton-on-tees>), its social media platforms, and its newsletter all highlighted and provided links to the local Adult Carers Support Service.



- 4.37. **Future in Stockton-on-Tees:** Currently, the future of Mobilise across the North East ICB region was being discussed at director, commissioner and carers lead level within each Local Authority. Mobilise had presented a discounted model to each Local Authority based on population size, and was committed to working closely with adult social care teams to ensure that carers were informed and empowered to choose the support they needed at the right time. Using paid digital

marketing techniques, Mobilise had been able to register nearly 2,000 carers in 18 months (using carer-led data to target carers at home) and, over the past 18 months, had provided detailed insights and impact from real carers across Stockton-on-Tees.

- 4.38. **Existing challenges to be considered:** Identifying carers earlier in their journey (particularly those who did not self-identify or who were balancing work, family and caring responsibilities) remained a key challenge, with early identification allowing for lighter-touch, preventative support before carers reached crisis. In addition, Mobilise would welcome opportunities to collaborate on measuring outcomes for carers, not only in terms of service uptake, but also wellbeing, confidence and sustainability in caring roles.

In terms of the future service, developing a hybrid offer (which balanced digital accessibility with in-person intensity where needed) would benefit carers who felt empowered through community, peer-learning and having access to knowledge they could control, as well as those requiring structured, face-to-face interventions (particularly those in crisis or with complex caring situations). Mobilise's national experience showed that a blended model enhanced choice, increased reach, and promoted self-sustaining carer networks.

With one-in-seven employees juggling work and care, there was also a need to support carers in less traditional ways. Mobilise's 24/7 digital carers service could support Stockton-on-Tees' ambitions to help carers remain in work – this was particularly important given the local economic cost of carers leaving employment. Furthermore, using a co-production approach (involving carers in shaping what 'good' looked like) would ensure that future developments in the Borough's carers offer remained meaningful and data-informed.

- 4.39. **Summary:** Since May 2024, Mobilise had supported 1,780 unpaid carers in Stockton-on-Tees with 4,174 actions, 82% of whom had not accessed support before. This had been done through paid media advertisement to allow carers to receive 24/7 digital support. Mobilise was working closely with SBC Adult Social Care to create a seamless transition of the carers most in need, giving carers the choice to access more formal in-person support. Whilst the contract was set to end in April 2026, Mobilise celebrated the successes in partnership with SBC, and endeavoured to support the Council's strategic priorities around unpaid carers.
- 4.40. Regarding the data provided on the number of Stockton-on-Tees carers that Mobilise had engaged with thus far (2,667), it was stated that further detail could be provided around engagement (if required) following a Committee query on whether this represented the amount of individual carers or the total number of times Mobilise's services had been used (i.e. a single individual may have accessed the offer on multiple occasions).
- 4.41. Whilst being a digitalised service, Members asked if Mobilise was able to support individuals on a face-to-face basis. It was confirmed that Mobilise was fundamentally a digital offer, though the organisation did work with in-person services and could go into these to highlight its own support platforms. Although some people were cautious around using technology, Mobilise was able to help them access its services where required.
- 4.42. Continuing the theme of digital reluctance / exclusion, the Committee drew attention to those carers not accessing information online and questioned how contact with the local Adult Carers Support Service was being promoted. Members heard that a portal had been developed where a carer could get in touch with the Council's offer – assurance was given that the portal was secure / data protected.
- 4.43. Switching focus back to those who preferred digital means of support, the Committee felt that services such as Mobilise's were vital for assisting those carers who did not want to reveal themselves to social care at this point. When thinking about future provision in relation to local carers, it therefore seemed prudent to ensure both digital and in-person help was available.

Update (January 2026)

- 4.44. Further to Mobilise's presentation to the Committee in November 2025, SBC officers relayed an update on the situation regarding Mobilise in January 2026 which noted the Council's very recent move to renew its contract with this external organisation:

'The decision to extend the use of Mobilise into 2026-2027 had been influenced by recent decisions and work to digitally enabled adult social care front door and ensure technology-driven entry point for people, including carers, seeking information, advice, or access to adult social care services that complement our traditional phone or face-to-face contact.'

'Mobilise would be used across 10 of the North East Local Authorities and the SBC commissioning team would progress the contract to ensure the Council had the relevant quality and performance controls in place.'

- 4.45. Reflecting upon this development, the Committee requested confirmation on when the extended contract with Mobilise was now due to expire, as well as the cost to SBC of this decision. A subsequent SBC statement was provided as follows:

'Stockton-on-Tees, as part of North East Association of Directors of Adult Social Services (ADASS), has collaborated with the other Local Authorities in the North East to renew the contract with Mobilise for a further year (commencing 1 April 2026). This joint approach has provided a more cost-effective outcome for this contract (£27,000).'

'We will continue to work with Mobilise to ensure that we get the best outcomes for our carers in Stockton-on-Tees. Mobilise forms only a part of the overall offer we provide to our carers and we continue to work with our partners and carers to develop and improve these services. It is important that we have a range of service types and offers available to reach the maximum number of carers and ensure they are able to access the support they need.'

- 4.46. It was also subsequently clarified that 11 of the 12 North East Local Authorities had now collectively signed up to Mobilise for 2026-2027 (the exception being Newcastle City Council).

Future Service Demand

- 4.47. SBC knew that there were approximately 20,000 carers in the Borough. However, referral levels to the Stockton-on-Tees Adult Carers Support Service had remained fairly consistent for a number of years. The service continued to promote itself to carers in a variety of ways to ensure that carers could access support as early in their caring journey as they needed it – this included online systems (Facebook, X, Instagram, Council website, SID, online Carers' Hub, etc.), via drop-in activities in the community (i.e. GP surgeries, community hubs, events and activities), and through creating links with community organisations, health and social care, and the voluntary, community and social enterprise (VCSE) sector.
- 4.48. As an early intervention and prevention service, the aim was to reach as many carers as possible to offer support and prevent carer breakdown. SBC knew that each carer who was caring for over 35 hours per week saved the Local Authority in the region of £24,000 per annum. If this was scaled up, the cost of replacement care in Stockton-on-Tees would be around £480 million. Even if just the current registered carers were to experience breakdown, this could cost the Local Authority approximately £79.2 million per annum in replacement care.

Health sector considerations around carers

NHS North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board (NENC ICB)

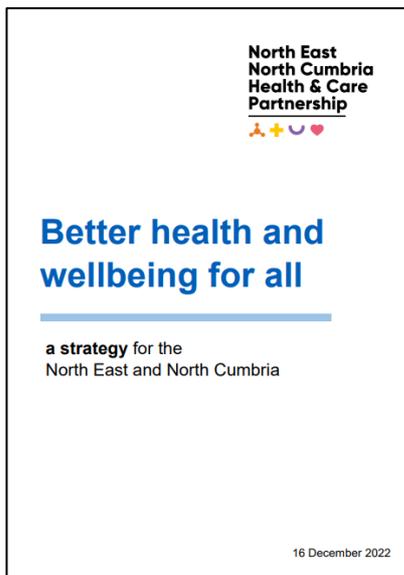
- 4.49. Responding to the Committee's lines of enquiry, a report was presented by the NENC ICB Head of Commissioning, Community & UEC in October 2025 containing the following:
- 4.50. The NHS, under the Health and Care Act 2022, was legally required to involve unpaid carers in decisions about the care and treatment of the individuals they supported. This included participation in the planning and delivery of care, as well as in discharge planning from hospital settings.

The current NHS long-term plan highlighted best practice in identifying carers and providing them with appropriate support (including encouragement to record whether someone was a carer in their GP record). For primary care (general practice), the Care Quality Commission (CQC), as part of its inspection framework, looked at how effectively carers were supported (including involving people in decisions about their care and that this was responsive and personalised to their needs).

- 4.51. Whilst NENC ICB did not have any direct responsibilities in this area (there was no ICB strategy as such, as it did not have direct responsibility for the commissioning of services), it could demonstrate collaborative work at a local level with Local Authority and 'system' partners to support the adult carers agenda.

The ICB Local Delivery Teams worked in collaboration with Local Authorities in the development of Better Care Fund (BCF) plans, which specifically included reflections on, and services for, carers. These plans were developed based on local need across each Local Authority and the ICB collaborated to support the design of these plans. The ICB was a member of each Health and Wellbeing Board, plus it held Place Sub-Committees where there was the ability to discuss health and social care challenges and opportunities (acting as a forum for partnership working).

- 4.52. Locally, the NENC ICB / ICP Joint Strategy ([integrated-care-strategy-better-health-and-wellbeing.pdf](#)) specified a key programme aim of 'working to identify and support more people who are providing unpaid care within the region' (see below graphic). This was a challenge as some individuals often did not see themselves as a carer / fulfilling a caring role.



8.1.5 Supporting unpaid carers

Unpaid carers are a very diverse group. It includes Young Carers - children and young people who support family members, usually one or both of their parents or their siblings, who have additional caring needs. This might result from a long-term disability, long term condition or an acute illness. It also often relates to social circumstance, for example children of drug or alcohol dependent parents. Young carers often experience multiple disadvantage, through reduced time available to focus on their education, or to build peer social groups, and often also experience other features of socio-economic deprivation.

Adult Carers include parents providing support to their children and adult children, including those with physical care needs, learning disabilities or severe and enduring mental illness. It also includes carers providing support for older adults, particularly elderly family members who need support for the normal functions of daily living, for example due to a significant cognitive impairment or dementia. Carers themselves often experience poorer health outcomes, and consistently report that the experience of care for their loved one, and indeed for themselves, could be improved.

We will become better at identifying carers and provide more support to them in terms of their own health and wellbeing, and to the people for whom they care.

- 4.53. Looking ahead, carers, and their role across health, would be picked up in emerging Neighbourhood Health Plans which were being led by Local Authorities. The ICB would again collaborate and contribute towards these plans, and had a requirement to pull together a population health improvement plan which would reflect local Neighbourhood Health priorities amongst a range of other ICB priority areas. For now, from a NENC ICB perspective, it was felt that Stockton-on-Tees did a superb job around the whole carers' agenda.
- 4.54. Reflecting on the report, the Committee considered the influence of the NENC ICB in relation to those providing unpaid care and wondered whether the organisation was somewhat detached from patients / carers. Members were reminded that the ICB did not commission carer services, nor did it have a regulatory capacity. However, it was able to promote / encourage the promotion of carers (e.g. noticeboard displays in general practices) and did work collaboratively with operational teams to ensure clinical pathways included considerations around carers.
- 4.55. Noting a shared 'We Care You Care' link (which highlighted Newlands Medical Centre in Middlesbrough achieving carer-friendly status – see <https://wecareyoucare.info/articles/newlands-medical-centre-becomes-first-in-middlesbrough-to-achieve-carer-friendly-status>), the Committee queried if any data existed for primary care services within the Borough which demonstrated how many carers had been identified (as a proportion of its patient list) by a particular practice. This was followed up with relevant NENC ICB personnel after the meeting who provided the following:

'There are national 'SNOMED' codes agreed which practices use. These codes allow clinical information, such as a diagnosis, finding, or procedure, to be recorded consistently and accurately. In relation to carers, the following SNOMED codes exist:

- 224484003 – Carer
- 302767002 – Cares for a relative
- 199361000000101 – Is no longer a carer

Across Stockton-on-Tees, 4,741 individuals have been identified as being coded with 'carer' or 'cares for a relative' which is 2.3% of the total registered population in Stockton [203,574], and 930 individuals have been coded as 'is no longer a carer' which represents 0.5% of the total registered population for Stockton.'

- 4.56. Given some of the Committee's lines of enquiry did not appear to be addressed within its submission, examples / links on how the NENC ICB had highlighted / raised awareness of support for adult carers (either to the public or the organisations within its umbrella) was requested, along with any examples / knowledge of good practice within the NENC ICB footprint around adult carers support (outside Stockton-on-Tees). The NENC ICB Head of Commissioning, Community & UEC subsequently responded as follows...

'We don't generally hold this information as an ICB and given that there will be significant variation as to the commissioning of services across NENC. In order to respond to the questions in relation to carers I would suggest using an FOI approach – this will ensure a co-ordinated response.'

- 4.57. Whilst not included within the NENC ICB submission, its May 2024 promotion of a new strategy launching a vision to improve lives of Gateshead caregivers was highlighted to the Committee (see <https://northeastnorthcumbria.nhs.uk/news/new-strategy-launches-vision-to-improve-lives-of-gateshead-caregivers/>).

North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust (NTHFT)

4.58. In October 2025, the NTHFT Head of Patient Flow, supported by the NTHFT Associate Director of Nursing Experience & Involvement, gave a presentation which addressed several lines of enquiry it had received from the Committee. This included:

4.59. **What roles / responsibilities in relation to adult carers?:** Under the Care Act 2014 (England), NTHFT had specific responsibilities in supporting the identification of adult carers when providing short-term treatment to patients (i.e. people who provided unpaid care to someone with identified care needs). These were met through communication with / involvement of carers at every stage of the journey (with the patients' consent), recognising carers as partners in care, and through education and training (e.g. moving and handling / medication administration). Discharge planning (a line had been added to the 'assessment of need' document to recognise carers) and supporting carers within the hospital environment (e.g. signposting / referral for further assistance (including to the Adult Carers Support Service), meal vouchers, John's Campaign) were also important features.

A 'Carers Charter' (visible in the main University Hospital of North Tees entrance) had also been developed by University Hospitals Tees (UHT) (partnership between NTHFT and neighbours South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust (STHFT)) to demonstrate its commitment to carers of all ages (see above graphic) – this was being reinforced with staff and patients.



4.60. **How does the Trust identify carers?:** This was achieved via the nursing admission process, involvement / discussion in discharge planning, and during inpatient care episodes. However, people did not always recognise themselves as carers, and the Trust needed to keep asking this throughout contact with services as an individual's situation may change.

4.61. **How aware are Trust staff of the local Adult Carers Support Service offer?:** Awareness of the local offer was aided / promoted through the Integrated Discharge Team, as well as the Frailty front-of-house service and staff operating within the Trust's elderly care wards.

4.62. **Feedback regarding Stockton Carers service:** Positive feedback from the Home First Team, the Discharge Clinical Care Co-ordinator, and the Frailty Co-ordinator was relayed. It was noted that, for some individuals, the local carers service had prevented additional care packages from having to be implemented.

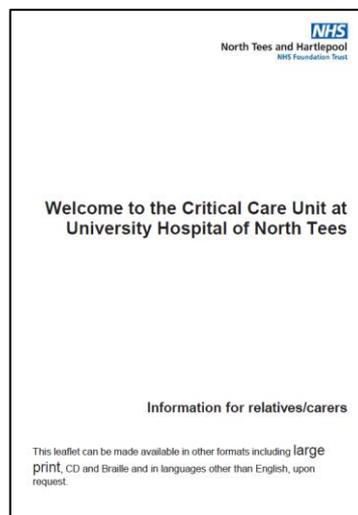
4.63. **Working with SBC with regards the local carers support offer – how does this operate; is this effective; is there anything that could strengthen current arrangements?:** Partnership working included carer identification and liaison, the supply and promotion of information / advice / guidance, education and training for hospital teams (staff forums, team meetings, preceptorships), and transition and discharge support (involving regular liaison with team leads). Trust staff had given positive feedback about existing arrangements with Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council (SBC), and some had benefitted personally from the local service (recognising that they needed to look after themselves in order to carry out their own role). Moving forward,

continuous education around the local offer was required, as was a need to think about how the Trust's community services / teams were targeted in relation to carers, particularly given the number of people involved in a caring role was likely to continue increasing.

- 4.64. **What are the implications for NTHFT of the new 10-Year Health Plan for England in relation to support for carers? What plans are / will have to be in place to fulfil any obligations?:** The new 'Fit for the Future: 10-Year Health Plan for England' advocated stronger NHS support for unpaid carers, although there were no specific targets. From a local standpoint, future planning would be undertaken across the UHT footprint (as opposed to an individual Trust perspective), with promotion of the Carers Charter, input from those with lived experience, and a tightening-up on the identification of carers to be developed. Assurance was given that the NTHFT Director of Nursing was well sighted on carer-related issues.
- 4.65. **Any views on key areas of future focus relating to this scrutiny topic (e.g. existing challenges that need to be?:** Continued promotion across all health and care services, including primary care, to promote the identification of carers and signposting to available support.
- 4.66. The Committee began its response by focusing on the Carers Charter and the need to embed this across the Trust (particularly given carers knew much more about the person they cared for than professionals). NTHFT officers gave assurance that this was promoted widely via the Trust's various communications mechanisms and was highlighted as part of staff inductions. It was intended for the charter to also be included within future workforce training.
- 4.67. Continuing with the communications theme, the Committee was pleased to hear that the Trust was listening to carers and expressed interest in seeing any public-facing literature that NTHFT was using to raise the profile of carers within hospital settings. NTHFT subsequently shared a number of leaflets / guidance / photos (see examples below), and noted the following...

'In terms of Stockton carers...

- *Carers info leaflets are displayed in outpatient reception areas, discharge lounge, EAU, outside ward 40, on small table near retail carts and in security office.*
- *Posters are displayed on ward patient information boards, toilet doors near main entrance, EAU, A&E, Macmillan cancer support office, car park office.*
- *Pop-up banner is in main entrance by car park pay machine.*
- *Hopefully we will get more literature and information on the TVs too.*
- *Feedback is the budget for literature is very small.'*



- 4.68. To maintain staff awareness of the help available for local carers, Members also suggested increased presence from Stockton-on-Tees Adult Carers Support Service personnel on wards.
- 4.69. NTHFT was asked how it would go about incorporating lived experience into its carers-related work. Members heard that a Patient Involvement Facilitator was working across University Hospitals Tees, and that an 'Involvement Bank' was giving patients and carers an opportunity to contribute to the future development of services. 'Experience of Care' meetings (involving local Healthwatch) also enabled input and reflection from patients and carers.

Engagement with / feedback from carers

4.70. In September 2025, officers from the Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council (SBC) Adults, Health and Wellbeing directorate provided an overview of how the Council involved carers themselves in shaping future service delivery, emphasising the importance of a warm and open culture which encouraged engagement and listening. Several subsequent quotes demonstrated very positive carer views on the existing offer:

'I hardly know how to thank you for your kindness and help today. You have lifted a burden and I no longer feel that I am on my own with this. Thank you seems so inadequate.'

'Having someone else visit my mum so that I can have a couple of afternoons a month to myself to focus on my own children and grandchildren and catch up with my own household tasks is an absolute lifesaver.'

'I don't think I could do without it now.'

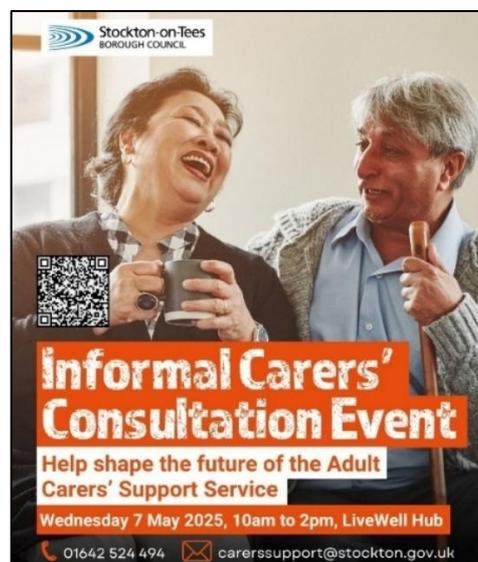
'Marvellous service – can't fault the staff and how friendly, kind and considerate they all are.'

'He's like one of the family. He treats Joe as his friend and it's as if they have known each other for years.'

4.71. SBC officers were asked to provide further detail on the results of recent consultation with carers regarding the local support offer. Led by a SBC Development Officer, and supported by the relevant SBC Service Manager and SBC Service Manager – Direct Services, a presentation was given in December 2025 which included the following:

4.72. **Carers Consultation (Spring 2025):** SBC received 70 responses to its Carers Consultation Survey 2025. Three key themes were identified (carers requiring information and communication earlier; hospital and healthcare support; carer support groups and peer connection), with a number of actions already taken in light of carer feedback.

4.73. **Open communication channels:** A range of mechanisms were in place to engage with carers, including social media platforms, fortnightly email bulletins, a quarterly carers newsletter, an online feedback form (which was also handed out during groups / events), and requests for carers to volunteer with recruitment. Carers were also involved during the late-2024 CQC assessment of SBC adult social care services.



- 4.74. **LiveWell Hub Activities:** Numerous sessions were held at the LiveWell Dementia Hub to support carers and those living with dementia, and there was close working with Stockton Libraries and Stockton Learning and Skills, Age UK, and Young at Heart to facilitate workshops and groups. Each group provided a welcoming space for carers to connect and participate in enriching activities, as well as access the Stockton-on-Tees Adult Carers Support Service and Dementia Service.
- 4.75. **In the community:** Carers consistently told SBC what was helpful, what needed improving and what made caring easier. The Council responded by adding new activities, signposting or arranging links with other services, and developing new resources when carers highlighted gaps.
- 4.76. **Staff Carer Peer Support Group:** SBC staff who were carers themselves were supported by the Council in several ways. By recognising their vital role in providing unpaid care, staff could benefit from access to advice, guidance and wellbeing resources, balance caring responsibilities by working flexibly, access peer support and networks, and undertake a Carer's Assessment to discuss their role and its impact upon them. SBC had also introduced a Carers Passport for staff (included within the papers for this meeting) which recorded their caring responsibilities and agreed workplace adjustments – this helped ensure consistent support if they moved roles or managers, promoted understanding, and reduced the need to repeat their story.
- 4.77. **Carer involvement in the CQC assessment:** Carers were actively involved in the co-production process for the recent CQC inspection. They supported the self-assessment document by sharing their experiences and feedback, gave honest reflections about the support services they received, shared lived experience to demonstrate impact, and highlighted strengths and areas of development. They also attended a session with CQC assessors during the on-site visit to talk about their experiences of co-producing with the Council, with their voices helping to demonstrate how the service valued partnership-working and continued improvement.
- 4.78. **Making It Real Board:** SBC actively promoted the Making It Real Board with carers and shared updates about any involvement opportunities in the carers newsletters.
- 4.79. **Co-Production Champions:** Monthly update meetings were held with the SBC Co-Production Champions (who also joined the Co-Production Week celebration in June 2025).
- 4.80. The Committee welcomed the information provided and was particularly encouraged by the support offer for SBC staff who were involved in giving unpaid care. With reference to the recently published CQC report on SBC adult social care services, Members asked if there had been any carer-related developments in response to the CQCs findings. SBC officers stated that contact lists had been simplified (depending on a carer's requirements), and links had been reinforced with the health sector (including hospitals, GPs and pharmacies), as well as internal SBC teams, to promote the carers agenda.
- 4.81. Members praised the Carers Passport concept and queried how many staff had taken this up – officers have since confirmed that this cannot be ascertained as this is a confidential document between manager / employee.
- 4.82. Noting the Committee's recent visit to the LiveWell Dementia Hub as part of this ongoing review, Members spoke of how highly the carers they met valued informal peer support (e.g. WhatsApp groups), but also the need for better bereavement services. Regarding the latter, it was stated that a carer whose partner had passed away was now running a support group for those who had suffered the loss of a loved one.
- 4.83. Discussion ensued around the concept and composition of the Making It Real Board, with the Committee encouraging the Council to ensure it was as representative of clients and carers across the Borough as it could be. Members heard that, whilst there was never the intention for

the Board to have a large membership, it was an evolving entity which could be developed further now it was established. Importantly, several co-production groups (involving a host of other individuals) fed into the Board which meant a greater number of people with lived experience and expertise were helping shape local services. In related matters, efforts had also been made to ensure an item about the Board was always included in Stockton News.

- 4.84. Finally, the Committee noted the reference within the Teeswide Safeguarding Adults Board (TSAB) Annual Report 2024-2025 (considered earlier in the December 2025 meeting) to a local Lived Experience Forum, and felt that care was needed to avoid too many groups being initiated with similar purposes (potentially causing confusion). Regarding carers, it was stated that SBC was trying to be smarter with how it communicated with these individuals and did not want to bombard them with information.

Committee Visit: LiveWell Dementia Hub

- 4.85. The LiveWell Dementia Hub was a community-based service that provided dementia information, support and training for anyone living in Stockton-on-Tees. This included people with dementia, their families, their carers, and anyone who would like to learn more about the condition. To carry out their own engagement with carers, Committee Members undertook a visit to the Hub in November 2025.

4.86. Observations

- Bright, airy reception area and spacious meeting rooms that were warm and inviting.
- Very helpful and friendly reception staff.
- Large amount of printed information on display (included leaflets / booklets on various health conditions and wider local / national support services that could be taken away).
- Pack of carers-related information provided – included:
 - a weekly Hub timetable detailing sessions held within the Hub and in the community
 - posters regarding forthcoming events at the Hub
 - Adult Carers Support Service leaflets
 - Adult Carers Support Service newsletter (see **Appendix 1**) – included two supplements on Time Out Service (FAQs) and the Carers' Connect Service

4.87. Feedback from engagement with carers

- Bereavement support group for carers and a chat group both held at the Hub, and hugely helpful.
- Important to be able to share experiences with those who are going through the same challenges.
- Hub is a lifeline for carers.
- Alison Watson-Shields of Young at Heart is 'brilliant'!
- Busy schedule of events at the Hub – also have speakers coming in on specific topics.
- Age UK uses the Hub for dementia support session (attracts the largest attendance).
- Adult carers training really useful and informative.
- Would be helpful if the Time Out Service was more flexible – have to book over a month in advance, and personal appointments not always predictable / given much notice.



4.88. Other

- Specific link within SBC Communications Team to promote the Hub / Carers Support Service.
- Adult Carers Support Service currently has a waiting list (will indicate to anyone wishing to access it what the waiting time is likely to be as part of the initial response).

- Time Out Service is initiating a 'Time Out Together' element (starting later in November 2025) – based at the Hub, this will allow multiple carers to have a break at the same time whilst their loved one partakes in group activities / games).
- Can be wasted appointments within the Time Out Service (e.g. carers booking a slot and then not cancelling it if they are unable to use it) – could this be more efficient (e.g. call / text the day before to remind them of their booking or to cancel it)?
- Discussion around feasibility of incorporating volunteers within the Time Out Service to potentially expand its capacity.

Young carers transitioning into the adult offer

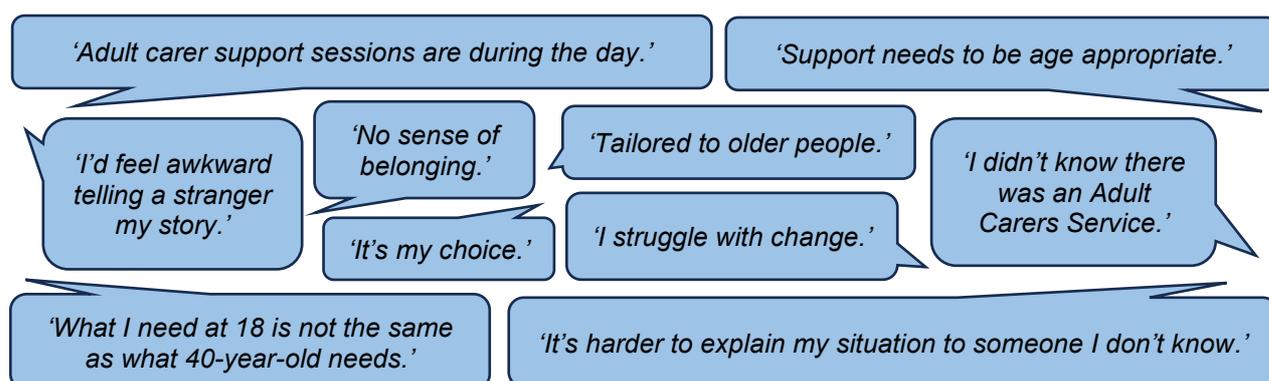
Eastern Ravens Trust

- 4.89. Recognising the Borough's young carers and the importance of their transition into adult support services, Eastern Ravens Trust (a local charity supporting young carers within Stockton-on-Tees) was asked to contribute to this review. In November 2025, the Trust Manager gave a presentation which covered the following:
- 4.90. **Eastern Ravens Trust – Supporting Young Carers (timeline):** Following the commencement of action research within the Borough in 1998, the first young carers group was launched on 1 April 2000, with Eastern Ravens Trust commissioned to work with 30 young carers per year. In October 2023, the Trust became a strategic partner to Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council (SBC) for young carers support, and between November 2024 and October 2025, assisted nearly 300 young carers.
- 4.91. **Young Carers Definition:** The term 'young carer' included children and young people under 18 who provided regular and ongoing care and emotional support to a family member who was physically or mentally ill, disabled, or misused substances.
- 4.92. **Stockton-on-Tees Context – Unpaid Care:** 2021 census data indicated that there were 1,500 young carers under the age of 25 locally – of these, 725 carried out their caring role for under 19 hours per week, 350 for 20-49 hours per week, and 175 for 50 hours or more per week (the remainder did not specify the time). It was felt that the number of young carers identified via the census did not reflect the actual total (which could potentially be four times as many) as some were hidden and others did not want to identify themselves as a carer.
- 4.93. **Reasons for Caring Roles:** The main factors leading to the onset of caring responsibilities were physical illness and / or disability, mental health illness, sensory / hearing loss, alcohol / drug dependency, and learning difficulties. Young people were sometimes carrying out multiple caring roles, taking on numerous additional tasks that went beyond what was considered 'normal' for their age-range.
- 4.94. **What do Young Carers do?:** Young carers were involved in practical tasks (e.g. cooking, housework, shopping), providing emotional support, giving / reminding about medication and collecting prescriptions / accompanying to medical appointments, managing finances (e.g. family budgeting, collecting benefits, banking), and interpreting. Assistance with physical (lifting, transferring) and personal (dressing, washing, toileting) care was also given, and there was sometimes a need to look after a younger sibling. All things considered, it was remarkable what some young people were doing across the Borough.
- 4.95. **Impacts of Caring:** Young people could be adversely affected as a result of their caring roles in a variety of ways. In terms of education, reduced attendance, lateness, struggling to cope within lessons and / or completing homework, worry, not having the correct uniform, and lower

attainment (decreasing future life chances) were potential possibilities. Socially, young carers could experience loneliness and isolation, become victims of bullying, and have increased risk of criminal and child sexual exploitation. Personally, their wellbeing may suffer (e.g. poor mental health, worry, stress and anxiety, lack of sleep, reduced time for exercise, shame, challenging behaviour), as might their physical health (injury, illness, developmental delay, lack of opportunities for exercise, healthy eating).

However, whilst the impact of having caring responsibilities tended to be negative, there were some positives in relation to enhanced family belonging / relationships and personal resilience. Indeed, young carers across Stockton-on-Tees had very strong characters, with the older cohort currently supported by Eastern Ravens all in either education, employment or training (a trend that had been observed for some time).

- 4.96. **Current Service Provision:** Currently supporting 141 young carers aged between five and 18 years-old (and, on occasion, beyond 18), Eastern Ravens offered a flexible / bespoke approach which covered whole family working, one-to-one assistance, respite breaks, and school holiday programmes. Referrals were received from a variety of sources including family members, schools, social workers, the SBC Early Help service, and other charities, and it was vitally important to have a 'no wrong door' policy to ensure timely access to the service. Eastern Ravens was also trying to build capacity and raise awareness of the importance of identifying and supporting young carers with schools (something that had become an Ofsted requirement).
- 4.97. **Young Carers Transitions:** The 2014 Care Act placed a duty on Local Authorities to provide young carers with a 'transition assessment' before they turned 18 years-old (this duty was delegated to Eastern Ravens in the service specification in 2023). The Trust's transition assessments involved conversations with young carers to obtain their views, wishes and feelings (as opposed to form-filling / paperwork), though this approach may change moving forward.
- 4.98. **Stockton Adult Carers Service & Stockton Young Carers Service:** Eastern Ravens had a very positive working relationship with the local Adult Carers Support Service which involved regular communication and the exchange of carer-related information and good practice. The Trust undertook an initial whole family assessment when support was requested for a young carer, with a referral made to the adult service should an adult within a household also be identified as having a caring role. Transition discussions took place between the two services, with targeted awareness-raising initiatives, joint events (e.g. Carers Week), and co-production of a forthcoming e-learning staff training module on carers further examples of this partnership.
- 4.99. **Young Carers Feedback:** Young carers who were coming up to, or had just turned, 18 years-old were asked for their views on the cessation of support from Eastern Ravens and the use of the adult service. Feedback highlighted concerns about dealing with change, how appropriate the local Adult Carers Support Service was for young adults, and a lack of knowledge of such an offer after they had reached adulthood. Ultimately, it was an individual's choice to be referred to the adult service.



- 4.100. **The Future:** Several factors were proposed when considering future provision for those transitioning into adult carer services, including the creation of a dedicated young adult carers service for 18-25 year-olds, and an offer that was open to all irrespective of caring for a sibling or an adult. Other important features were the inclusion of social opportunities at appropriate times, life-skill projects (e.g. managing money / cooking on a budget), and wellbeing support. Identifying unknown young adult carers should be a further priority.
- 4.101. Concluding the presentation, a video was shown to the Committee which demonstrated the support provided by Eastern Ravens and the extent to which young carers across the Borough valued its offer.
- 4.102. Welcoming the information provided by Eastern Ravens, the Committee queried why a change in the approach to transition assessments was being considered, particularly given the stated reluctance for young people to complete paperwork. In response, Members were informed of the need to establish a framework around carer identification / referrals.
- 4.103. The Committee asked what could be implemented to further strengthen the partnership between the young carers and adult carers services. The Trust Manager highlighted the ongoing development of the co-produced e-learning training module for staff – this would be made available to both the adults and children’s workforce, and needed to be promoted to increase awareness of carers and the caring role (SBC officers stated that this training would be part of future staff induction requirements). Members requested that the e-learning package be rolled out to all Councillors, too.
- 4.104. Emphasising the importance of selling the local Adult Carers Support Service offer to young carers (something relevant SBC managers could promote by going along to Trust events to engage with young people), the Committee noted the appreciation from young people within the video (which followed the presentation) of the ‘fun’ / ‘exciting’ service provided by Eastern Ravens – it was therefore clear that the adult carers offer needed to foster similar feelings / enthusiasm.
- 4.105. A final question was raised on the number of referrals received by Eastern Ravens from schools. The Trust Manager commented that schools were currently the fourth-highest referrer (this changed from year-to-year), though it was anticipated that referral rates would increase given the work being undertaken to support schools with their responsibilities around young carers. The Committee was informed that young people with caring roles often had exemplary school attendance records as their educational setting offered a safe space and a break from their home environment (they also had a tendency to ‘coast’ and were reluctant to ‘raise their head above the parapet’).

External carer-related SBC scrutiny

- 4.106. The Care Quality Commission (CQC) published its final report in October 2025 following the late-2024 inspection of SBC adult social care services. For the purposes of this review, commentary relating to ‘carer’ / ‘carers’ was highlighted for the Committee’s attention, as were any carer/s-related references from the preceding Local Government Association (LGA) peer review that was conducted and reported on prior to the CQCs visit (see **Appendix 2**).

LGA: Peer Assurance Challenge of SBC Adult Social Care (July 2024)

- 4.107. Undertaken in preparation for the anticipated CQC inspection of SBC adult social care services, the final report was published in August 2024 and considered by SBC Cabinet in October 2024 (<https://moderngov.stockton.gov.uk/documents/s8762/Peer%20Assurance%20Challenge%20of%20Adult%20Social%20Care%20by%20the%20LGA%20and%20CQC%20Assurance%20Update.pdf>). Comments from the peer review team included:

Case File Audit

- 'The voice of the person and the carer was apparent throughout.'
- 'There is good engagement with carers, but a limited reference to offer of carers assessment or other carers support services. Often carers are not recorded formally, despite being evident in notes.'

Lived Experience Feedback

- 'Staff were described as supportive, understanding and wanted to work together with people and carers.'

Theme 1: Working with People

- 'Carers support service has good uptake and provides meaningful, person-centred intervention for carers that they have a voice in.'
- 'The peer team were very impressed by the range and quality of these services and agreed with a staff member of the carers team – "what we do is real early intervention!"'

Theme 4: Leadership

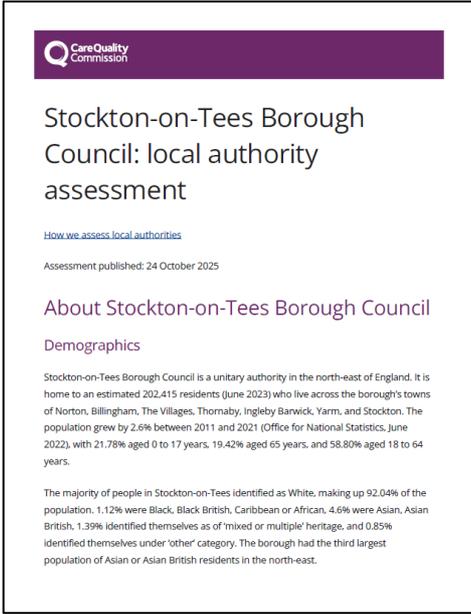
- '...the peer team felt that there were opportunities to charge for some services that are currently provided free of charge to the public and therefore create a further income stream. In particular, the provision of carers 'Time-Out' service was felt to have opportunity in this area, either with a 'standard charging model applied or 'means tested'. This may create opportunity to broaden this for more carers going forward enabling greater sustainability of its provision and importance.'

CQC: Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council Local Authority Assessment (late-2024)

- 4.108. In late-2024, the CQC undertook an inspection to look at how SBC was meeting its duties under [Part 1 of the Care Act \(2014\)](#). Its final report was published in October 2025 (see <https://www.cqc.org.uk/care-services/local-authority-assessment-reports/stocktonontees-1025>), with the summary section including the following carer-related observations:

Summary of people's experiences

- 'The needs of unpaid carers were recognised as distinct from the needs of the person they cared for and assessment and support options were available. Carer's feedback was mixed. Some carers gave positive examples of support, for example, some said they had an allocated local authority worker they could contact. However, others said they would have found more information about the support available useful. People spoke highly of the timeout service, and said it supported them in their caring role. The local authority acknowledged that further work was needed to fully understand unpaid carers' needs and maximising support opportunities to support carers was a priority.'



The screenshot shows the cover of a CQC report. At the top left is the Care Quality Commission logo. The main title is 'Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council: local authority assessment'. Below this is a link 'How we assess local authorities' and the date 'Assessment published: 24 October 2025'. There are two sub-sections: 'About Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council' and 'Demographics'. The 'Demographics' section contains text about the borough's population and ethnic diversity.

Summary of strengths, areas for development and next steps

- ‘Assessment and support arrangements were in place for unpaid carers, but the local authority acknowledged the need to improve this and to improve ways to identify unpaid carers, particularly younger carers. The local authority was also seeking to improve the information and advice offer for people who were funding their own care. Some work had been undertaken to reshape the front door, but this was a work in progress and the impact had not yet come to fruition. There was a lack of clarity amongst the staff we spoke with about the next steps or timescales for the work.’

Other approaches to / good practice in supporting carers

4.109. Examples of carer-related support offers elsewhere across the UK were identified for the Committee’s information:

- **East Riding of Yorkshire Council:** Newsletter for Carers (Winter 2025)
<https://downloads.eastriding.org.uk/ersab/carers-and-cared-for/we-care-newsletter/We%20Care%20Newsletter%20-%20Winter%202025.pdf>
- **Action for Carers Surrey:** Adult Carers (featuring carers stories)
<https://www.actionforcarers.org.uk/who-we-help/adult-carers/>
- **Swindon Carers Centre:** Adult Carers (featuring ‘Frequently asked questions’ and an ‘Events and activities’ section)
<https://www.swindoncarers.org.uk/support-for-unpaid-carers/adult-carers/>
- **Gateshead Council:** Support for adult caregivers (includes carers stories and a ‘carers passport’ initiative)
<https://www.gateshead.gov.uk/article/15878/Support-for-adult-caregivers>
- **Devon County Council:** Supporting you to look after someone (includes free training courses available to training and a ‘Carer Ambassador’ concept)
<https://www.devon.gov.uk/adult-social-care/carers-support/>
- **Suffolk Family Carers:** Adult Carers (includes ‘technology to help your caring role’ section)
<https://suffolkfamilycarers.org/who-do-we-support/adult-carers/>



4.110. Carer-related ‘good practice’ guidance was also shared with the Committee, with attention drawn to the Care Quality Commission (CQC) update given to the National Scrutiny Officer Network in March 2025 on its two-year programme of baselining to determine how well Local Authorities were meeting their social care duties under part 1 of the Care Act – this included an emerging theme around a need for improvement in supporting unpaid carers, particularly the personalisation of support in differing needs dependent on age and needs of the person being carer for (i.e. adult carer of a young person, children caring for adults):

- **National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE):** Supporting adult carers (Jan 20) <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng150>
- **Association of Directors of Adult Social Services (ADASS):** Supporting Carers Hub (including 'Explore great practice from across the UK' section) <https://www.adass.org.uk/supporting-carers-hub-homepage/>
- **CQC Local Authority Assessments:** Update to National Scrutiny Officer Network on two-year programme of baselining to determine how well Local Authorities are meeting their social care duties under part 1 of the Care Act (Mar 25)
- **Carers Trust:** Time away from caring: Good practice in carer breaks (2023) (note: includes section on SBC Time Out service (page 23-24). <https://carers.org/downloads/carers-trust-carer-breaks-hwa-report2.pdf>

Emerging themes



- **Support for unpaid carers** is an area where there is a need for improvement including:
 - better identification,
 - improved range and capacity of services,
 - more timely assessments
 - personalisation of support in differing needs dependent on age and needs of the person being cared for (i.e. adult carer of a young person, children caring for adults)



4.111. Further to considerations around young carers transitioning into the adult carers support services, a number of related documents / links were highlighted to the Committee:

- **The Children's Society:** Young carers' transition to adulthood – a pathway for all practitioners (revised 2023) https://www.childrenssociety.org.uk/sites/default/files/2023-12/MCB315_Young-Carers-Pathway_Linked.pdf
- **South Tyneside Young Carers:** Carers in Transition <https://www.southtynesideyoungcarers.org/young-carers-in-transition-16-24/>
- **Durham County Council:** During 2022-2023, Durham County Council undertook and completed a strategic review of its support offer for all unpaid carers. Following engagement and consultation with young carers and young adult carers, it was clear this cohort required and wanted bespoke support that helped them reach their aspirations and goals, and that they were supported to ensure their caring role(s) did not impact on their future. https://www.adass.org.uk/campaign_articles/young-adult-carer-support-service/
- **Carers Trust:** Developing young adult carer services – a practical guide (2024) <https://carers.org/downloads/good-practice-guided-developing-young-adult-carer-services--a-practical-guidehr.pdf>



Developing young adult carer services – a practical guide



CARERS TRUST



4.112. From an academic perspective, a 2025 [London School of Economics and Political Science \(Care Policy and Evaluation Centre\)](#) research project sought to identify what support combinations helped improve carers' lives and what works to facilitate availability of and access to this support (see https://www.lse.ac.uk/cpec/research/projects/unpaid-care/COSAC-Combinations-of-Support-for-Adult-Carers?utm_source=Dynamics%20365%20Customer%20Insights%20-%20Journeys&utm_medium=email&utm_term=N%2FA&utm_campaign=Health%2C%20adult%20social%20care%20and%20ageing%20bulletin%3A%20December%202025&utm_content=Health%2C%20adult%20social%20care%20and%20ageing%20bulletin%3A%20December%202025#msdynmkt_trackingcontext=e043fe42-db07-49e5-b006-bcace5260300).

4.113. Finally, complementing the [CQCs](#) findings following its late-2024 inspection of SBC adult social care services, the Committee was informed of the regulator's view on the eleven characteristics of 'good' and 'outstanding' Local Authorities in adult social care (see [CQC: What good and outstanding looks like in adult social care | Local Government Association](#)). Based solely on analysis of CQC-published Local Authority assessment reports, carers was one of the key areas outlined:

<p>7. Carers and families</p> <p>Carers are recognised as partners and system stabilisers. Co-produced strategies, discharge toolkits, rapid assessments, flexible breaks, financial and wellbeing advice, and primary care liaison are in place. Authorities track and improve carers' wellbeing and employment outcomes year on year.</p>
<p>F. Carers</p> <p>Design features:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Co-produced carers strategy linked to local wellbeing plans. • Standardised carers' discharge toolkit in all hospital pathways. • Rapid assessments and flexible breaks available on demand. • GP liaison roles embedded in every neighbourhood. • Carers' wellbeing, employment, and inclusion data reviewed quarterly. <p>Illustrative Good/Outstanding thresholds:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No/limited waiting lists for carers' assessments. • Improved year-on-year outcomes in carer wellbeing, financial resilience, and employment.

5.0 Conclusion & Recommendations

- 5.1. This review focused on the Stockton-on-Tees Adult Carers Support Service which offers local help for those providing unpaid care and support to a family member, partner, friend, or neighbour who is disabled, has an illness or long-term condition, or who needs extra help as they get older. Although the current service is considered to be effective, there was a desire to establish any potential areas for improvement to further strengthen support for the Borough's much-valued carers.
- 5.2. Caring for someone, particularly for those with greater needs, can be incredibly hard. It has the potential to have a profound and lasting impact which can affect an individual's physical and mental health, and compromise their ability to hold down employment (previous Carers UK research found that around 600 people per day were giving up work to care) or enjoy leisure / social activities. As well as the stress and worry over supporting a person close to them, caring roles can also result in adverse financial implications for those involved.
- 5.3. National estimates on the number of those carrying out an unpaid caring role vary (the most recent Census 2021 suggested that there were 5.8 million unpaid carers in the UK), and it is well acknowledged that ascertaining an accurate figure is challenging given many individuals do not view their support of a loved one as 'providing care'. That said, Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council (SBC) stated that there were approximately 20,000 unpaid carers across the Borough, which represents around 10% of the total population of Stockton-on-Tees. Given there were a total of around 3,500 carers open to the local Adult Carers Support Service in 2024, there appears to be significant potential for an increase in demand for the existing offer should a proportion of these people seek help.
- 5.4. The Stockton-on-Tees Adult Carers Support Service is a key feature of the Council's offer of support for the Borough's adult carers. Annual referrals have continually escalated from around 450 in 2018 (when SBC made the decision to bring the service in-house) to nearly 700 in 2024, with a subsequent increase in associated funding to manage this demand. The service provides a range of bespoke support, is widely promoted across the Council's various print and electronic platforms, and also works with external organisations to emphasise the importance of supporting carers and how SBC can assist. A crucial and much appreciated element of the local offer is the 'Time Out' service which gives carers up to eight hours of ad-hoc support per month free-of-charge, allowing them a break from their caring role.
- 5.5. The Council's ongoing work with Mobilise (the UK's digital platform for unpaid carers) was highlighted to the Committee which had helped to provide a range of free online services, as well as identify hidden carers. Given the recent decision to extend this partnership beyond the current contract deadline of April 2026, SBC will need to ensure it has the necessary quality and performance controls in place to monitor the effectiveness of this arrangement. Moving forward, SBCs work around its digital offer for clients and their carers will provide an opportunity to review any future arrangements with external providers with regard to this support.
- 5.6. In terms of wider health considerations around carers, NHS North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board (NENC ICB) personnel drew attention to the legal requirement (under the Health and Care Act 2022) for the NHS to involve unpaid carers in decisions about the care and treatment of the individuals they supported (this included participation in the planning and delivery of care, as well as in discharge planning from hospital settings). Whilst the ICB did not have any direct responsibilities in this area, it did work collaboratively at a local level with Local Authority and 'system' partners (including operational teams to ensure clinical pathways considered carers) to support the adult carers agenda, and the NENC ICB / ICP Joint Strategy specified a key programme aim of 'working to identify and support more people who are providing unpaid care within the region'. From a general practice perspective, 4,741 individuals had been

identified as a 'carer' or 'cares for a relative' – the Council should consider how best it can promote the local Adult Carers Support Service within these settings, as well as being mindful that improvements in carer-identification may ultimately result in more demand on the existing offer.

- 5.7. North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust (NTHFT) provided extensive evidence on the ways in which it considered carers (recognising them as partners in care) and promoted local support services. The recently implemented 'Carers Charter' was an encouraging development which should now be embedded and continually reinforced to staff and patients. NTHFT also highlighted the need for thinking around how the Trust's community services / teams were targeted in relation to carers, particularly given the number of people involved in a caring role was likely to continue increasing.
- 5.8. The Committee fully supports the acknowledgement from SBC of the need for an open culture to encourage engagement and listening with carers, and several examples were given demonstrating this endeavour. Whilst the response rate to the latest annual carers consultation survey was limited, important themes were nevertheless identified (including the value of peer support), and the Committee look forward to learning more about how the actions taken in light of this feedback have enhanced the local offer.
- 5.9. The Committee undertook its own engagement with local carers by visiting the LiveWell Dementia Hub in November 2025. The importance of being able to easily access carer-related services (aided by up-to-date contact details) and having the opportunity to share experiences with those who are going through the same challenges was reiterated, and it was clear that the ability to meet in-person (within a welcoming environment which provided an excellent source of carer-related information) was hugely valued, as was the Council's Time Out service. Regarding the latter, the Committee note the request from carers for more flexibility around the booking process (currently having to give over a month's notice which could be difficult as personal appointments were not always predictable), though commends the new 'Time Out Together' element which has the potential to benefit a greater number of those in a caring role (allowing multiple carers to have a break at the same time whilst their loved one partakes in group activities / games). Ensuring the Time Out offer is as efficient and effective as possible should be a cornerstone of the future service moving forward.
- 5.10. Recognising the Borough's young carers and the importance of their transition into adult support services, the Committee was pleased to receive a very informative contribution from Eastern Ravens Trust (a local charity supporting young carers within Stockton-on-Tees). Feedback from young carers highlighted concerns about dealing with change, how appropriate the local Adult Carers Support Service was for young adults, and a lack of knowledge of such an offer after they had reached adulthood – this suggests there is work to do to promote the options available to them once they reach the end of their time with Eastern Ravens (this should be helped through the already established relationships between the young carers and adult carers services), as well as making this offer as appealing as possible for those transitioning into it. The creation of some form of dedicated 'young adult' carers service / element may be more justifiable if there is an increase in the number of individuals aged 18-24 requesting / accessing support (as of early-November 2025, just 38 out of the 3,100+ carers open to the Stockton-on-Tees Adult Carers Support Service were in this age bracket).
- 5.11. In October 2025, the Care Quality Commission (CQC) published its final report following the late-2024 inspection of SBC adult social care services, and carer-related commentary was shared with the Committee for the purposes of this review (as was relevant feedback from the Local Government Association (LGA) peer assurance challenge of SBC Adult Social Care that was undertaken in July 2024 in preparation for the anticipated CQC inspection). The regulator's findings, whilst broadly positive, did highlight some concerns around the availability of information on support for unpaid carers, as well as the Council's own acknowledgement of the need for

further work to both identify these individuals and fully understand their needs. Clarity around improvements to the information and advice offer for people who were funding their own care, and in relation to the ongoing work to reshape the Council's 'front door', was also noted.

5.12. The CQC report also referenced national data from the Survey of Adult Carers in England (SACE, June 2024) which showed that:

- 90.7% of carers found information and advice from SBC helpful (better than the England average of 85.22%)
- 75% of carers engaged with the Local Authority said they found it easy to access information and advice (significantly better than the England average of 59.06%)
- more carers in Stockton-on-Tees (47.83%) were satisfied with support they received than the England average (36.83%)

However, there were also areas to work on, with outcomes from the same survey indicating:

- more could be done to improve the respite offer to unpaid carers
- more carers locally (34%) were unable to maintain paid employment because of their caring duties compared to the England average (26.7%)
- only 25.19% of carers said they were accessing a support group or someone to talk to in confidence (which was worse than the England average of 32.98%)

Encouragingly, the CQC concluded that the Council had 'a clear vision and strategy for adult social care which sought to improve outcomes for people with care and support needs, unpaid carers and reduce inequalities of experience and outcomes for people in the local area'. The Committee is therefore keen to understand how SBC proposes to respond to the regulator's feedback and, in related matters, encourages the Council to continue efforts to raise the profile of those staff working on the frontline / 'front door' of these support services.

5.13. Wider research demonstrated a range of approaches and initiatives regarding support for adult carers across the UK, some of which are already a feature of the local offer. Several carer-related good practice guides were also brought to the attention of the Committee, with the Council's Time Out service highlighted by the Carers Trust as a positive example in providing short breaks for carers. Increasing acknowledgement of the importance and role of unpaid carers will likely encourage the publication of further material which SBC should seek and consider as part of the ongoing development of the local support service.

5.14. The Stockton-on-Tees Adult Carers Support Service is clearly a highly valued and crucial element within the Council's adult social care offer, attracting wider recognition and appreciation for what it provides. That said, evidence collected as part of this review has flagged areas for attention in relation to carer-identification, signposting to / promotion of support, transitioning of young carers into the adult service, the ability to meet demand as more carers request / require help, and the need for continuous evaluation of the local offer. Unpaid carers save local organisations a vast amount of money – as such, despite the ongoing financial limitations on the Council, they must be supported as much as possible. Those accessing the service have reported very positive experiences – the challenge is ensuring this can be of benefit to a greater number of carers, many of whom remain hidden.

Recommendations

The Committee recommend that:

- 1) **In terms of general Stockton-on-Tees Adult Carers Support Service development, SBC should:**
 - a) **Ensure measures are put in place as part of the review of the Council's 'front door' to strengthen identification of carers and the promotion of the local support offer (including the Stockton-on-Tees Adult Carers Support Service).**
 - b) **Ascertain and consider the findings from the London School of Economics and Political Science (Care Policy and Evaluation Centre) research project on what support combinations help improve carers' lives and what works to facilitate availability of and access to this support.**
 - c) **Consider ways to increase the response rate for its annual carers consultation survey.**
- 2) **Regarding the partnership with Mobilise (the UK's digital platform for unpaid carers), SBC should:**
 - a) **Develop its own in-house digital support offer for local carers to build on / complement the services available through this external provider.**
 - b) **Ensure it has the necessary quality and performance controls in place (including the need to report on measurable targets) to monitor the effectiveness of this arrangement.**
 - c) **Seek to understand any separate arrangements that Council's outside the North East have with Mobilise and whether these enhance the offer to carers more than the ongoing partnership with the 10 North East Local Authorities.**
- 3) **In relation to the Stockton-on-Tees Adult Carers Support Service 'Time Out' element, SBC should:**
 - a) **Complete an internal review of the booking system to identify ways of creating more flexibility for carers when requested a break from their caring role.**
 - b) **Consider whether it would be appropriate to introduce a standing / means-tested charge for the service to broaden this for more carers going forward, enabling greater sustainability of its provision and importance (as identified via the LGA Peer Assurance Challenge of SBC Adult Social Care in July 2024).**
- 4) **Promotion of the Stockton-on-Tees Adult Carers Support Service offer to young carers should be strengthened so they are more informed about the support available to them when they reach 18.**
- 5) **Consideration should be given to the ways in which the Stockton-on-Tees Adult Carers Support Service can build on what appeals to young carers when they approach / reach 18 so they are more compelled to seek support in their caring role when they become young adults.**

(continued overleaf...)

Recommendations (continued)

The Committee recommend that:

- 6) The new carers awareness e-learning module be rolled out to SBC staff, Members and external partners.**
- 7) SBC further considers how the local support offer for carers can be promoted within the wider health system (including general practices and community settings).**
- 8) SBC provides a response to the Committee on the carer-related commentary included within the Care Quality Commission (CQC) final report on SBC adult social care (published in October 2025).**

Appendix 1

Stockton-on-Tees Adult Carers Support Service: Newsletter (Autumn 2025)

Stockton-on-Tees Adult Carers' Support Service Newsletter

Autumn 2025 | Issue 20

Welcome to the Autumn edition of the Stockton-on-Tees Adult Carers Support Service Newsletter

As the leaves turn and the nights draw in, we'd like to take a moment to thank you for everything you do in your caring role. Autumn is often a busy time, but it also brings opportunities to pause, reflect, and connect.

In this edition, you'll find updates on new groups and events, practical tips to support you through the colder months, and information about where to find advice, support and wellbeing activities. We've also included some dates for your diary, so you don't miss out on what's happening locally. We hope this newsletter gives you helpful ideas, reminders, and a sense of connection with other carers across Stockton-on-Tees. Remember, you are not alone, and support is always here when you need it.

New Carers Group - Time Out Together

We're excited to launch a brand-new group for Time Out carers only, giving you the chance to take a well-earned break while your loved one enjoys a safe, friendly space.

Time Out Together will run on the last Wednesday of every month (excluding December 2025) at the LiveWell Hub, starting on Wednesday 26 November 2025.

This is a relaxed session in a welcoming space. We'll have music, activities, and plenty to keep everyone engaged to give you a break. You are more than welcome to stay at the LiveWell Hub and have a refreshment!

Spaces must be booked from 9am on the first working day of each month for the following month, so please make a note in your diary.

This is your time to recharge, connect with others, and take a well-deserved breather.

For more details or to book, please contact the Adult Carers Support Service on **01642 524494**.



Time Out Together
A welcoming space with music and activities to enable carer respite

1:30pm to 3:30pm - last Wednesday of the month
The LiveWell Hub, Thornaby, TS17 8AP

For Time Out carers only
Get more information
☎ 01642 524494

Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council

You said, we did - strengthening our community presence

In our spring carers consultation survey, many of you told us that you'd like the Adult Carers Support Service to be more visible in your local community, at places and events you already attend.

We listened to your views and, going forward, we'll be strengthening our presence at local community venues and events across Stockton-on-Tees. This means you'll be able to find us more easily, ask questions face-to-face and connect with support without needing to travel far. Whether it's a local community event, a drop-in session, we want to make sure carers have more opportunities to meet us in person, get information and feel supported right where you are.

Upcoming events and activities

- Adult Carers Support Service drop-in at the Wellbeing Hub in Wellington Square, Stockton, 9:30am to 4pm every Thursday. Pop in for support and information, or simply a chat about your caring role.

- Winter Health and Wellbeing Festival at Thornaby Pavillion, 10am to 2pm on Thursday 23 October. The Adult Carers Support Service, Dementia Service and Shared Lives Service will be hosting a stall. Pop along and see us!
- The LiveWell Hub is open 9am to 4:30pm Monday to Friday. If you need a welcoming space for any support or advice, our team are always on hand.

Thank you to everyone who shared their views. Your feedback is helping us shape the Stockton-on-Tees Adult Carers Support Service.



Carers Rights Day 2025

This year, Carers Rights Day takes place on Thursday 20 November 2025 - a national awareness day that shines a light on the vital role of unpaid carers. It's an important reminder that every carer is entitled to know their rights and access the support available to them. Here in Stockton-on-Tees, we'll be marking the day with information, advice, and resources to help carers feel informed and supported in their caring role. Keep an eye on our social media pages and the Carers Bulletin for details on our market stalls in Stockton Hight Street and

Thornaby Town Centre, drop-in at the Wellbeing Hub, and activities you can get involved in.

Carers Rights Day is about making sure no one misses out on help they're entitled to - whether that's financial support, practical advice, or simply knowing where to turn when you need a listening ear.

For more information on Carers Rights Day, visit www.carersuk.org/news-and-campaigns/our-campaigns/carers-rights-day/



Appendix 1

(continued)

Be wise, immunise with a free flu vaccine!

The NHS recommends the flu vaccine to those at highest risk from severe illness and to help reduce the spread of flu. Make sure you and your loved ones stay safe this winter.

The flu virus changes every year, so a new flu vaccine is needed each year.

From 1 October, the free vaccine will be offered to everyone aged 65 and over, and those who turn 65 years by 31 March 2026, people aged 18 to 65 with certain health conditions, carers, and close contacts of people with weak immune systems.

You can book a flu vaccine by using the NHS App, visiting www.nhs.uk/live-well/seasonal-health/keep-warm-keep-well, or calling 119 for free. If you're eligible, you'll also get an invitation.

The NHS is also visiting housebound patients and people in care homes to give the vaccine.

COVID-19 vaccines will be available from 1 October for:

- adults aged 75 years and over (including those who will be 75 by 31 January 2026)
- residents in a care home for older adults
- people aged 6 months and over who are immunosuppressed

You may also be eligible for other vaccinations, including the:

- pneumococcal vaccine (if you're aged 65 or over)
- RSV vaccine (if you're pregnant, aged 75 to 79, or turned 80 after 1 September 2024)

These vaccinations help protect against serious illnesses that are more common in the winter, including pneumonia.

Don't get caught out this winter - Be wise, immunise.



Service in the Spotlight - Stockton Mobile Library Services

The Stockton Mobile Library Team offer a wide range of services designed to bring books, information, and wellbeing support into the heart of our communities. From mobile libraries visiting schools and local organisations, to the popular home delivery service for people who can't easily get to a branch, the service helps make reading and resources accessible to everyone.

The team also support national health campaigns and provide specialist services such as reminiscence collections, dementia cafés, and health information resources - all aimed at helping people connect, learn, and thrive.

To find out more about what Stockton Mobile Library Services can offer you:

- ☎ 01642 528045
- ✉ mobilelibrary.services@stockton.gov.uk
- 🌐 www.stockton.gov.uk/mobile-library



Appendix 1

(continued)

Here to help



We know it can be even more difficult over the winter months, so want you to know about the support available across the Borough. Our 'Here to Help' guide gives an overview of the support available, including:

- Fuel, energy and housing
- Money and debt
- Food insecurity and poverty
- Winter wellbeing
- Community activities and support such as our Warm Welcome socials

The Here to Help guide is free to pick up from your local library and many community centres and organisations across the Borough.

You can also email FSOT@stockton.gov.uk to request a copy or visit www.stockton.gov.uk/here-to-help-hub

Stay in the loop - sign up to the Carers Bulletin!

Are you a carer in Stockton-on-Tees? Don't miss out on news, support and local events designed just for you!

Our Carers Bulletin is packed with useful updates, upcoming events, wellbeing tips and stories from carers like you.

Email us at carerssupport@stockton.gov.uk and ask to be added.

We're on social media too! Follow us:

 www.facebook.com/stocktononteesadultcarers

 www.instagram.com/sotadultcarers

 www.x.com/sotadultcarers



Priority Service Register

This free support service makes sure extra energy help is there for people in vulnerable situations and offers priority support in emergencies, power cuts and more.

Contact your energy supplier and ask to be added to their register or visit:

www.thepsr.co.uk

Carers' Emergency Card

It's important to keep details like emergency contacts updated so we can support you when you need it most. If your details have changed get in touch.

 **01642 524494**

Appendix 2

External carer-related SBC scrutiny

EXTERNAL SCRUTINY OF SBC ADULT SOCIAL CARE

Local Government Association (LGA): Peer Assurance Challenge of SBC Adult Social Care (July 2024)

<https://moderngov.stockton.gov.uk/documents/s8762/Peer%20Assurance%20Challenge%20of%20Adult%20Social%20Care%20by%20the%20LGA%20and%20CQC%20Assurance%20Update.pdf>

- Undertaken in preparation for anticipated CQC inspection of SBC adult social care services
- Final report published in August 2024
- Considered by SBC Cabinet in October 2024 (see link above)

Case File Audit

- [Page 12](#): 'The voice of the person and the carer was apparent throughout.'
- [Page 13](#): 'There is good engagement with carers, but a limited reference to offer of carers assessment or other carers support services. Often carers are not recorded formally, despite being evident in notes.'

Lived Experience Feedback

- [Page 13](#): 'Staff were described as supportive, understanding and wanted to work together with people and carers.'

Theme 1: Working with People

- [Page 15](#): 'Carers support service has good uptake and provides meaningful, person centred intervention for carers that they have a voice in.'
- [Page 22-23](#): 'As referenced within the Self-Assessment the Adult Carers Support Service was brought in-house in 2018 and supports adult carers (over 18) in Stockton on Tees who care for another adult. At the point of this transfer there were 103 carers registered with the service. In 2024, this is now recorded at 2436 which is seen as an estimated support to 12% of the unpaid carer's population in the Borough. 100% of carers receiving a service have a direct payment compared to the England average of 76.8%. Whilst support can vary from advice, support and signposting, there are others who have a range of practical levels of support such as the 'Time Out' service which offers up to 8 hours of support per month free of charge for carers to have a break from their caring role. The peer team were very impressed by the range and quality of these services and agreed with a staff member of the carers team – "what we do is real early intervention!"'

Theme 4: Leadership

- [Page 37](#): 'The peer team observed that there is strong oversight of the financial position of the service and a savings target of £1.893m for the council overall to reach a balanced budget position for 2024/25, primarily led through the work of the 'Powering Our Futures' programme. It is clear from what was observed and discussed with the leadership team that there is

Appendix 2

(continued)

External carer-related SBC scrutiny

increased scrutiny and forward planning being applied to the financial position, but the peer team felt that there were opportunities to charge for some services that are currently provided free of charge to the public and therefore create a further income stream. In particular, the provision of carers 'Time-Out' service was felt to have opportunity in this area, either with a 'standard charging model applied or 'means tested'. This may create opportunity to broaden this for more carers going forward enabling greater sustainability of its provision and importance.'

Lessons learned from other peer challenges

- **Page 40:** 'Councils need an authentic narrative for their adult social care service driven by data and personal experience. The narrative needs to be shared with those with a lived experience, carers, frontline staff, team leaders, middle managers, senior staff, corporate centre, politicians, partners in health, third sector and elsewhere. Ideally this story is told consistently and is supported by data and personal experience - don't hide poor services.'

Care Quality Commission (CQC): Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council Local Authority Assessment (late-2024)

<https://www.cqc.org.uk/care-services/local-authority-assessment-reports/stocktonontees-1025>

- Inspection to look at how SBC meets its duties under [Part 1 of the Care Act \(2014\)](#).
- Final report published in October 2025

Summary of people's experiences

- **Page 6:** 'The needs of unpaid carers were recognised as distinct from the needs of the person they cared for and assessment and support options were available. Carer's feedback was mixed. Some carers gave positive examples of support, for example, some said they had an allocated local authority worker they could contact. However, others said they would have found more information about the support available useful. People spoke highly of the timeout service, and said it supported them in their caring role. The local authority acknowledged that further work was needed to fully understand unpaid carers' needs and maximising support opportunities to support carers was a priority.'

Summary of strengths, areas for development and next steps

- **Page 8:** 'Assessment and support arrangements were in place for unpaid carers, but the local authority acknowledged the need to improve this and to improve ways to identify unpaid carers, particularly younger carers. The local authority was also seeking to improve the information and advice offer for people who were funding their own care. Some work had been undertaken to reshape the front door, but this was a work in progress and the impact had not yet come to fruition. There was a lack of clarity amongst the staff we spoke with about the next steps or timescales for the work.'

Assessment and care planning for unpaid carers, child's carers and child carers

- **Page 15-16:** 'The needs of unpaid carers were recognised as distinct from the needs of the person they cared for. Staff told us carers assessments were completed alongside, but separately to Care Act assessments for the person with support needs. Carers were also referred to the Carers Hub for support specific to their own wellbeing. Staff were able to explain the processes and pathways for carers to access an assessment. They told us carers were

also signposted to other support services or placed on mailing list so the local authority could maintain contact with them. However, there were some barriers to accessing support. For example, a carer said they were not always able to access support from the Community Livewell Dementia Hub (a centre providing information about dementia, support, and training for those living in Stockton-on-Tees) due to transport costs and was unaware they were able to access this support virtually.

People's feedback on the local authority's approach to carers' assessments, planning, and support was mixed. Some carers gave positive examples of support, for example, some said they had an allocated local authority worker they could contact. However, others said they would have found more information about support available useful. The local authority acknowledged that further work was needed to fully understand unpaid carers' needs and maximising support opportunities to support carers was a strategic priority. This commitment to improving carers' access to support was demonstrated through the local authority's 2024 partnership with a carer-led and designed technology platform that provided enhanced, on-demand services to anyone with caring responsibilities in the region.

Unpaid carers experienced waits for a carer's assessment from the local authority. In June 2024, 83 people were waiting for a carers assessment. There was a median wait of 23 days over the previous 12 months, with a maximum wait of 63 days. Local authority leaders told us variability in time taken to process assessments was due to accommodation of client commitments and choice. At the time of the CQC assessment, there were no outstanding reviews of carers needs.

There was a process to refer young carers to an external organisation which was understood by staff who worked with them. For example, 14 referrals were made for young carers between October 2023 and September 2024. However, leaders told us more work was needed to increase the identification of young carers to meet their specific needs.'

Arrangements to prevent, delay or reduce needs for care and support

- **Page 22:** '... There was an ambition among leaders to make use of community partnerships to better identify and target vulnerable groups such as unidentified unpaid carers, victims and survivors of domestic abuse, and those with substance misuse issues. This indicated a joined-up approach to prevention across adult social care, the wider organisation, and partners.

Consideration was given to supporting unpaid carers and people at greatest risk of a decline in their independence and wellbeing, but more practical support and resources were required to help carers live as they wanted. For example, there was a timeout service in place which provided free short-term respite for unpaid carers and aimed to delay or reduce further need for carers' support. Carers who had accessed this service valued it highly and said it supported them in their caring role. However, there were approximately 20 people waiting for the timeout service at the time of the assessment, meaning that not everyone who could benefit from the service was able to do so.

National data from the Survey of Adult Carers in England (SACE, June 2024) showed that 90.7% of carers found information and advice from the local authority helpful. This was better than the England average of 85.22%. However, the same survey also indicated more could be done to improve the respite offer to unpaid carers; only 15.15% of carers in the borough said they were able to spend time doing things they value or enjoy – although this was in line with the England average of 15.97%. In relation to employment, 34% of carers said they could not maintain paid employment because of their caring duties, which was above the England

average of 26.7% (SACE, June 2024). Further work was in train to build on the existing support offer for unpaid carers.'

Provision of accessible information and advice

- **Page 25:** 'People could access information and advice on their rights under the Care Act and ways to meet their care and support needs. For example, people said they were impressed with the range of services provided in Stockton-on-Tees compared to neighbouring boroughs, and 75% of carers engaged with the local authority said they found it easy to access information and advice, which was significantly better than the England average of 59.06% (SACE, June 2024). Additionally, the local authority was aware of feedback from some carers who wanted better access to information and advice, and work was ongoing towards this.'

Direct payments

- **Page 26-27:** 'The effectiveness of arrangements to support people to take up direct payments were reflected in national data. Uptake of direct payments across all age groups was higher than the England average, particularly for those aged between 18 and 64 (49.51% compared to 37.12% for England, Adult Social Care Outcomes Framework (ASCOF), December 2024). Local authority data indicated that 100% of identified carers had also received direct payments in the last year.'

The local authority understood some of the barriers for people using direct payments and took steps to remove them. For example, the direct payment team worked closely with the carers' service to ensure they had a point of contact for support. The local authority also recognised national and local challenges around recruiting and retaining Personal Assistants (PA) and the impact of this on residents in Stockton-on-Tees wishing to employ a PA.

Promotion initiatives for the Personal Assistant role were underway to address recruitment issues in partnership with local carers' services. To further increase awareness and uptake of direct payments, staff attended job centre fairs and community-based parent/carer groups. This was positive action to increase the equity of their direct payment offer and make use of community assets to reach people. This work was ongoing, and leaders told us it evolved according to demand and available opportunities.'

Market shaping and commissioning to meet local needs

- **Page 35:** 'The carer's service was provided in-house. Approximately 73 new carers per month were being identified at the time of the assessment. There was regard for the provision of services to meet the needs of unpaid carers. However, only 25.19% of carers said they were accessing a support group or someone to talk to in confidence, which was worse than the England average of 32.98% (SACE, June 2024). Some carers said they received no support from the local authority despite assurances from staff that they would receive help. The local authority was aware of the need to improve the offer for carers and work was ongoing working towards maximising support available to them. This included entering into a 2024 partnership with an online carer-led platform that offered carers advice, tools, and community networks to support them in their caring roles. In July 2024, the platform had provided 165 carers with support that included emails, a peer support community, and a financial toolkit to help them manage their carers' allowance.'

Ensuring sufficient capacity in local services to meet demand

- [Page 38](#): 'There was consideration for the provision of services to meet the needs of unpaid carers. Significant investment into carers' services had been made by the local authority, and more carers in Stockton-on-Tees were satisfied with support they received than the England average (47.83% compared to 36.83%, Survey of Adult Carers in England (SACE), June 2024).

National data showed that 10.77% of carers said they were accessing support or services that enabled them to take a break from caring at short notice or in an emergency, which was in line with the England average of 12.08% (SACE, June 2024). Numbers of carers able to access support enabling them to take a break from caring for up to 24 hours were higher at 19.08%, but still low overall and below the England average of 21.73%. The local authority had plans to review capacity for contingency planning in its carers' support offering.'

Safety during transitions

- [Page 52](#): '...While some people described workers providing support after they left hospital as informative and helpful, some people described a lack of communication between care professionals and limited care coordination or continuity. This had led to key information about people being missed or not communicated to carers and families. Some people said their discharge process was rushed, while others did not receive support with their transition between care services, which affected their wellbeing and that of their family...'

Contingency planning

- [Page 53](#): 'The local authority undertook contingency planning to ensure preparedness for possible interruptions to the provision of care and support. For example, leaders said they worked with community safety agencies and partners to plan for access to alternative support in the event of a community-wide emergency.'

Some unpaid carers said staff worked with them to plan for current and future needs, with one saying they had an emergency carers card detailing a plan in the event they could not fulfil their caring role.'

Strategic planning

- [Page 63](#): 'There was a clear vision and strategy for adult social care which sought to improve outcomes for people with care and support needs, unpaid carers and reduce inequalities of experience and outcomes for people in the local area. The strategy was based on a sound understanding of local priorities and was aligned with the strategic plans of other key agencies, for example health, public health and housing. Adult social care strategy and delivery plans were publicly available, and staff, council members and partners showed a good awareness of them. Additionally, the local authority scored highly in the category of 'Strategic Partnership', among others, in a recent Local Government Association (LGA) Annual Health Check, indicating strong strategic alignment with its partner agencies.'

Glossary of Terms

ADASS	Association of Directors of Adult Social Services
ARF	Accelerating Reform Fund
BCF	Better Care Fund
CQC	Care Quality Commission
ICB	Integrated Care Board
ICP	Integrated Care Partnership
LGA	Local Government Association
NENC ICB	NHS North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board
NHS	National Health Service
NICE	National Institute for Health and Care Excellence
NTHFT	North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust
POF	Powering Our Future (SBC)
SBC	Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council
SCIE	Social Care Institute for Excellence
SID	Stockton Information Directory
STHFT	South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust
TSAB	Teeswide Safeguarding Adults Board
UHT	University Hospitals Tees (NTHFT & STHFT)
VCSE	Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise

This page is intentionally left blank

REPORT TO CABINET

12 March 2026

REPORT OF CORPORATE
MANAGEMENT TEAM

CABINET DECISION

Portfolio Title – Lead Cabinet Member – Councillor Pauline Beall

Adult Social Care Strategy 2026-30

Summary

The current Adult Social Care Strategy ran from 2021-25 and provided the Council and the public with a clear set of priorities. Having a strong understanding local needs for care and support is now a key requirement of the local authority Care Quality Commission (CQC) assurance framework, so having a new set of priorities from 2026 was agreed as essential to support the next phase in the Council's journey to meet the evolving needs of the local population.

This report summarises the process and outcome in developing the new strategy.

Reasons for Recommendation(s)/Decision(s)

Approval of the new Adult Social Care Strategy 2026-30 to replace the current strategy (2021-25).

Recommendations

1. Cabinet is asked to consider and endorse the final version of the Strategy attached and note the further work that will be progressed to develop accessible formats with support from the Making it Real Board (MIRB).

Detail

2. The draft Adult Social Care Strategy 2026-30 (paragraph 12) was developed in partnership with the MIRB.
3. The plan was originally developed in late spring 2025 in collaboration with the National Development Team for Inclusion (NDTi) who supported the Council in engaging with citizens and Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) groups to understand what they believed the priorities for Adult Social Care should be over the next 4 years.
4. Working with the MIRB, this information was reviewed and a set of key priorities developed along with an intentionally slimmed down strategy, acknowledging the Adult Social Care Strategy's place alongside the Stockton on Tees Plan 2024 and Stockton-on-Tees Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2025-2030. The approved draft version was shared with

key partners during November / December 2025 to gather their views. Engagement included VCSE providers (through a direct Catalyst mailshot and discussions with key partners at the Health and Wellbeing Forum), Healthwatch, NHS partners (North Tees Hospital, North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board, Tees, Esk and Wear Valley NHS Trust) and social care providers.

5. Based on this feedback, a revised version was developed and shared at Adult Social Care Senior Management Team and Corporate Management Team for agreement.

Community Impact and Equality and Poverty Impact Assessment

6. An EPIA has been completed for the Strategy with no identified negative impact on any protected characteristics.

Corporate Parenting Implications

7. The Adult Social Care Strategy includes a priority to “Enhance the support and process for young people in their transition into adult services” where this support is assessed as meeting our duties under the Care Act 2014.

Financial Implications

8. There are no direct financial implications in this report.

Legal Implications

9. There are no direct legal implications in this report.

Risk Assessment

10. There are no significant risks associated with this paper.

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

11. Engagement with Cllr Beall (lead Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care).

Background Papers

12. Copy of Adult Social Care Strategy 20206-30 attached. *Please note, this is the first version by design and print and several amendments have been identified to the layout / graphics by Communications that will be progressed to ensure it meets the Council's design and accessibility requirements.*

Name of Contact Officer: Rob Papworth

Post Title: Strategic Development Manager

Telephone number: 01642 528441

Email address: rob.papworth@stockton.gov.uk

Adult Social Care Strategy

2026 - 2030



Foreword

Pauline Beall, Cabinet Member for Health and Adult Social Care

This strategy for Adult Social Care at Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council sets out what we want to achieve by working as a team with partners, residents and communities across the six townships over the next three years. We want people in Stockton on Tees who have care and support needs and their carers to have the best possible quality of life, with the opportunity to make choices and do those things that are most important to them and make their lives worthwhile.



Our vision for Adult Social Care continues to ensure:

That people can get the right level and type of support at the right time to help, prevent, reduce or delay the need for ongoing support and maximise their independence.

Our approach focuses on building on the strengths of individuals and communities to help them grow and succeed. We will provide high-quality support that adapts to different needs while working with people to include them in decisions about their care. We will make sure that our services are safe and fair and invest in a skilled team that can offer the very best advice and support. We will use feedback, data and information to support our decisions and will collaborate closely with people, communities and partners across all sectors to achieve the best outcomes.

Carolyn Nice, Director of Adults, Health and Wellbeing

Adult Social Care is at a pivotal moment nationally and here in our Borough. As our communities and townships continue to grow and evolve, so too must the ways in which we support people to live safe, independent and fulfilling lives. The Stockton-on-Tees Adult Social Care Strategy 2026-2030 sets out our shared vision for the future of Adult Social Care. One that is person-centred, inclusive, and sustainable.



We are committed to working collaboratively: listening to the voices of those with lived experience, partners and stakeholders and embracing the opportunities that innovation can provide to meet the challenges ahead. Working with people, partners and communities to set out the priorities in the Stockton-on-Tees Adult Social Care Strategy 2026-2030. We will be reviewing progress against local priorities and what people tell us is important to them. Together we want to build a system that values wellbeing as much as care and ensures our approach is rooted in dignity, respect, and empowerment, ensuring that every individual receives the right support, at the right time, in the right place.

Where needed we will provide high-quality support that adapts to different needs, and places people at the heart of decision making. We will make sure that our services are safe and fair and invest in a skilled team that can offer the very best advice and support. Our decisions will be based in evidence from data and feedback at a local and national level. We need to work together to ensure that we are using the strengths of people, their loved ones and our communities to ensure we are sustainable now and for the future.

Together, we will create a future where Adult Social Care is a cornerstone of enabling thriving, resilient people, families and communities in Stockton-on-Tees

Adult Social Care context

What is Adult Social Care?

Adult Social Care in Stockton-on-Tees covers a wide range of activities to help people live independently, support wellbeing and help people to stay safe. It can include:

- supporting people within their own homes, also known as care at home or domiciliary care
- supported accommodation, which is housing that has an element of on-site support, such as Housing with Care or Supported Living Schemes
- support in day centres which offer recreational or community activities
- 24-hour care provided in residential and nursing homes
- services that help people to retain or regain their skills and confidence after a period of illness or hospital stay, such as reablement or rehabilitative services
- providing assistive technology, aids and adaptations for people to use in their homes
- providing information and advice and preventative services to help people stay safe and well and independent for longer
- providing support to unpaid carers in our communities
- supporting people to engage in work, training, education or volunteering and to socialise with family and friends
- providing safeguarding services for people with care and support needs who may be at risk of abuse, neglect or harm



Our Borough

What do we know about living in Stockton-on-Tees for those people who need care and support?

Population: 195,562



Moderate growth (above national average of all local authorities)



167,094 are aged 18 or over



Our average age is 41 years



20% of the population are over 65



3% are over 85 years

Population is growing older with the largest single age group being those aged 45 and 64 and the steepest increase in population are the older age groups of over 65 years and over 80 years

Life Expectancy

Our males and female life expectancy is very similar at

56.9  56.5

Both are below the average of all local authorities

Adult Social Care:



Requests for support from 11,170 people in 2024-2025



Of those residents requiring support, 1775 received short term support and 3525 receive long term support



Over 1600 unpaid carers were supported

Market:

Commission with 53 care homes of which



6% are rated as Outstanding by the Care Quality Commission



81% are rated Good

We have no care homes rated inadequate

Priority 1: Working with people

Our ambitions:

- Ensure people receive a timely assessment of their care and support needs.
- Continue to develop early intervention services and outreach support, including community-based activities to prevent isolation.
- Help people stay independent and avoid long-term care where possible. Services will be focused on promoting wellbeing, confidence, and independence.
- Provide information and advice that is easy to find and accessible to all.
- Continue to invest in valuing and supporting carers in unpaid caring roles and will continue work with them to understand their concerns and priorities.



Priority 2: Providing support

Our ambitions:

- Providing suitable housing and accommodation for people with care and support needs.
- Continue to work with the wider market and ensure consistent quality of care being delivered.
- Ensuring the care market has sufficient capacity and is sustainable.
- Ensure that co-production is embedded in all that we do when designing and commissioning services, including policy updates and new strategies.



Priority 3: Keeping people safe

Our ambitions:

- We will keep adults safe from harm.
- Enhance the support and process for young people in their transition into adult services.
- Work with people and listen to their feedback on the process and outcomes and continue to improve their experiences around safety.



Priority 4: Leadership

Our ambitions:

- Capture the voice of the person who uses services to support people who enable them to have an active role in informing the current and future delivery of Adult Social Care
- Delivering person-centred and strengths-based practice.
- Ensure all people who provide care and support are competent and well trained.
- Technology is used as an enabler to deliver effective and efficient ways of working and people are supported to use it.
- Improve the use of data and intelligence used in commissioning decisions.
- Work with the NHS services to improve care and ensure people get the care they need quickly and easily.



We want to enable all the residents of Stockton on Tees “to live in the place we call home, with the people and things we love, in communities where we look out for each other, doing the things that matter to us”. #socialcarefutures

Proof | adh0491

This page is intentionally left blank

REPORT TO CABINET

12 MARCH 2026

REPORT OF CORPORATE
MANAGEMENT TEAM

KEY DECISION

Regeneration and Housing - Lead Cabinet Member – Councillor Richard Eglington

LEVELLING UP FUND – YARM PUBLIC REALM

Summary

This report provides a progress update on the Round 1 Levelling Up Fund programme of interventions along with a summary of the public engagement undertaken to inform whether the Council should proceed with the Yarm High Street public realm proposals as presented to the public in May 2025. In response to the majority 'no' vote that was received, the report sets out a series of options to inform a decision on next steps for use of the remaining approved budget for Yarm High Street.

Reasons for Recommendation(s)/Decision(s)

To inform a decision on next steps for use of the remaining approved budget for Yarm High Street.

Recommendations

1. Cabinet to note the findings of the public engagement undertaken in relation to the Yarm High Street public realm scheme.
2. Cabinet to consider options for the future use of the allocated budget for Yarm High Street and agree a preferred option for its use.
3. Cabinet to consider options presented in relation to the removal and replacement of two fishing pontoons on True Lovers Walk and decide upon the most appropriate course of action regarding their future provision.

Detail

1. This report provides a summary update of all Levelling Up Fund (LUF) interventions before focusing specifically upon the Yarm High Street public realm element of the programme.

Background

Levelling Up Fund (LUF) Round 1 Programme

2. The approved LUF programme was developed in response to the publication of LUF Round 1 application in 2021 with the objectives of delivering major proposals in Yarm and Eaglescliffe under the priority themes of Transport, Culture and Town Centre Regeneration.
3. The bid focussed on delivery of improvements to cultural facilities in, and enhancements to, Preston Park Museum and Grounds (PPMG), redevelopment of Yarm Town Hall and public realm enhancements on Yarm High Street and delivery of cycleway connections in Yarm and Eaglescliffe.
4. In March 2023, Cabinet noted that work had been underway to develop a greater level of understanding on the scope, cost and deliverability of the agreed interventions and approved a funding profile to reflect the proposed interventions across Yarm High Street, PPMG and Cycleway infrastructure.
5. Since then, work has been underway to deliver a range of interventions at PPMG, with completion of the Spence Building in September 2025, a remodelled cafe and new toilets, additional parking and improvements to the Aviary and playground. A planning application for the demolition and redevelopment of South Lodge was submitted in January 2026.
6. Work to create an improved cycle link along Durham Lane to connect key employment sites and surrounding residential areas commenced in January 2026 and are on programme to complete in September 2026. The route will be comprised of segregated cycle routes, shared route, and new crossing facilities between Elton Interchange and Cleasby Way junction, extending to the new western access to Eaglescliffe Station.

Background

Yarm High Street

7. The programme of works for Yarm High Street, as set out in the LUF Round 1 bid was focussed on a public realm scheme and the redevelopment of Yarm Town Hall, in partnership with Yarm Town Council, to bring the building back into use as visitor attraction and to replace the public toilets that were displaced because of the works. The redevelopment of Yarm Town Hall was completed in September 2023 and new public toilets, located at Yarm Library opened in November 2022.

8. To help shape the public realm element of the High Street intervention and to gain insights into understand local priorities and opportunities, two periods of public consultation were undertaken in 2022.
9. The first period of consultation was undertaken in August 2022, for a period of three weeks. The consultation was promoted widely on social media and local media. Staffed engagement events were held in Yarm Library, and an online consultation form was available on the Council's website.
10. The results, published in October 2022, demonstrated that the top five improvements identified were: improving footpaths, reducing street clutter, adding more planting, improving connections and accessibility to the River Tees and providing more seating and places to rest. The findings from the initial public consultation were analysed and used to shape and develop a package of concept designs for Yarm High Street.
11. Concept designs were presented for a second round of consultation in December 2022 for a period of 4 weeks. Consultation provided the opportunity for members of the public to share their views through in-person consultation events held in Yarm Library and an online consultation form.
12. The proposals included new paving along the High Street, new landscaping, seating areas and improved public spaces, de-cluttering of pavements, new cycle parking as well as potential enhancements to the River Tees and Snaiths Field Playground.
13. The results published in January 2023 showed that 69 per cent of respondents agreed that the locations of proposed works were in the most appropriate places on the High Street, 64 per cent of respondents agreed that the proposals identified the right mix and type of improvements and 53 per cent of respondents said they would be accepting of the small loss of some parking spaces to deliver the scheme.
14. In response to public feedback received at this stage, which identified that enhancing spaces beyond Yarm High Street was a local priority, schemes to improve connections to and along the River Tees and upgrading the existing playground at Snaith's Field were developed.
15. The first phase of works focused on resurfacing the existing footpath and repairing root damage along True Lovers Walk, which were completed in September 2025, successfully improving access along walkways.
16. In response to feedback received, the scope of improvements to True Lovers Walk was broadened to consider two existing fishing pontoons located along the route.
17. A visual ground-level inspection of the pontoons was undertaken in autumn 2024, which found the pontoons to be in poor condition and their structural integrity compromised. Both structures were subsequently closed to the public.
18. Following the inspections an officer recommendation to remove the existing pontoons emerged, on the basis that their deteriorating condition, public safety concerns, ongoing

maintenance and unknown structural defects below the water line made the pontoons a financial and legal liability to the Council. The cost for removing both pontoons was estimated at approximately £20,000.

19. Works to upgrade Snaith's Field playground were completed in October 2025. The installation of new play equipment, provision of new seating and resurfacing works to the existing footpath have made the location more accessible, which has been well received by users of the park.
20. In May 2025, proposals for a series of improvements to the public spaces on Yarm High Street, developed in response to the two periods of public consultation were presented.
21. Following publication of the scheme in May 2025 some concerns were raised regarding the appearance of the proposed planters and a revised design was undertaken to incorporate a more subtle and refined finish to the planter material, in keeping with the character of the High Street. Furthermore, a commitment was made at Cabinet in July 2025 to assess the cost of re-providing pontoons in the current locations.
22. Despite these refinements to the scheme, a variety of representations were made to the Council throughout summer and autumn of 2025 in opposition to the proposed scheme, culminating in an instruction to pause the planned start of works whilst further public engagement took place to make sure any interventions reflected local views.

Yarm High Street Public Engagement - December 2025

23. Local people were invited to share their views on the proposed improvements to Yarm High Street over a 4 week period ending in early January 2026 under the banner of 'Yarm High Street - You Decide'. In-person engagement events were held in Yarm Library as well as an online form that was available on the Council's website.
24. The purpose of the engagement was to understand public views on whether the Council should proceed with the proposed scheme and from the 1,564 responses received, results showed that 225 (14 per cent) respondents agreed that Yes - the Council should proceed with the scheme as proposed whilst 1339 (86 per cent) people expressed a view that No – the Council should not proceed with the scheme as proposed.
25. A full summary of the engagement results can be found at Appendix 1.

Next Steps

26. As the recent engagement process produced an 86 per cent 'No' response as to whether the Council should proceed with the scheme as proposed, a decision is sought on next steps for use of the remaining approved budget.
27. As per the report to Cabinet in March 2023, the approved budget for the Yarm High Street element of the LUF programme was £4,600,000 to support interventions including a public realm scheme, redevelopment of Yarm Town Hall, relocation of public toilets, improvements to Snaiths Field and enhanced access to the River Tees.

28. The £4.6m was made up of £1m Council funding (from the previously approved £3million from the MTFP in 2020/21 for investment in interventions in Ingleby Barwick, Norton and Yarm), £3.5m LUF and £100k Yarm Town Council funding. To date c.£2.25m has been spent or committed leaving a balance of c.£2.35m made up of c.£950k Council co-funding and c.£1.4m LUF.
29. The Levelling Up Fund is currently administered opposite MHCLG under the Government's Regeneration Funding Simplification Programme – Local Regeneration Fund (LRF).
30. The Local Regeneration Fund simplifies capital funding by consolidating the Levelling Up Fund, Town Deals, Future High Streets Fund and Pathfinders Pilot into a single funding pot. The LRF programme attempts to provide a greater flexibility and allows for more local control, enabling local authorities to make decisions about moving funding between projects, cancelling and creating new projects.
31. Taking the flexibilities afforded by the Local Regeneration Fund into account, alongside the remaining c.£2.35m budget, a range of uses for the funding can be considered. The make-up of the remaining budget (LUF and SBC funding) allows for potentially more than one alternative use as the remaining budget could be considered as a single sum or separate budget strands by funding source.
32. To aid deliberation on potential next steps, a range of alternative courses of action are set out below. The options are by no means exhaustive, rather an attempt to categorise the potential alternatives within the existing LRF remit, options outside of the LRF remit and potential to split the funding by source.

Retain Funding in Yarm High Street / LUF Round 1 boundary

- Remove Council co-funding into Council reserves (£950k)
- Develop alternative scheme on Yarm High Street.
- Develop alternative scheme in Yarm and Eaglescliffe area.
- Utilise LUF to offset borrowing (approved at Council in February 2025) c£950k to deliver Aviary, Stockton & Darlington Railway heritage feature and Central Area.
- Explore increased scope of interventions in PPMG beyond planned programme.
- Retain LUF money (c£1.4m) for alternative scheme in Yarm and Eaglescliffe area (including High Street)

Reallocate some or all funding from Yarm / LUF Round 1 boundary to interventions across the Borough

- Remove Council co-funding into Council reserves
- Hold LUF funding for a period of time as contingency across LRF programme.
- Identify and develop a new project to allocate some or all LUF funding.
- Allocate to an existing project elsewhere in the Borough

Pontoons

33. Following the commitment to revisit the principle of removing the fishing pontoons, made at Cabinet in July 2025, further evaluation, including a dive inspection, has since been undertaken to establish the cost and deliverability of removing and replacing the two existing wooden pontoons.
34. The estimated cost of removing the existing pontoons and replacing with a modern standard, similar sized structure using composite and steel materials to provide improved durability and a longer service life would be approximately £135,000.
35. A decision on replacing the pontoons would be subject to securing the necessary permits and consents along with a detailed risk assessment to ensure they meet the Council's statutory duties and are safe for public use.
36. Cabinet is therefore asked to consider whether to proceed with the removal of the pontoons only, or the removal and installation of new pontoons.
37. Given the condition of the pontoons, in either scenario they must be removed which is estimated at £20,000. The cost of removal and installation of the pontoons, if instructed, will be deducted from the remaining allocated funding of £2.35m as set out in paragraph 28.

Community Impact and Equality and Poverty Impact Assessment

38. Proposals in this report have been the subject of an Equality & Poverty Impact Assessment, which will be developed further once Cabinet have taken a decision on a preferred alternative use for the remaining funding.

Corporate Parenting Implications

39. There are no corporate parenting implications in this report.

Financial Implications

40. The funding referenced above of £2.35m is within the approved Capital Programme. The specific financial impact would be determined by the solution chosen. Up to £950,000 of the Council revenue funding referenced could be utilised to support the revenue MTFP and/or reserves position. The £1.4m LUF monies can be re-prioritised under the flexibility provided by the Local Regeneration Fund (this all-encompassing fund covers what were previously referenced as Future High Street Fund, Town Deal and Levelling Up Funds). If Cabinet's preferred option is to utilise some of the LUF funding for offsetting prudential borrowing, the remaining LUF budget for reuse would be circa c£450K
41. Any financial changes to the capital programme would be reflected in a subsequent quarterly MTFP update to Cabinet.

Legal Implications

42. The MHCLG's technical guidance on the flexibility of the Local Regeneration Fund provides
43. "We are giving local authorities greater ability to make decisions locally about moving funding between projects in their funding portfolio. Local authorities should consider how they can use this increased flexibility to invest more effectively, whether that is pooling funding in the same area, redeploying funding to different priorities or making changes to existing projects to expedite delivery and maximise their impact".
- and further that
44. "We no longer require local authorities to seek approval from MHCLG for any changes to project activities and/or spend profiles as long as the following conditions are met:
- all MHCLG funding is spent by end March 2028
 - all project activity contributes to one or more Government Missions, and in particular economic growth outputs and outcomes as described in the simplified monitoring framework
 - consideration is given to the areas and communities that originally stood to benefit from the funding
 - the portfolio of projects continues to offer VFM - the S.151 Officer (or equivalent) must confirm this is the case
 - MHCLG spend is on activity that falls entirely within the administrative boundaries of the local authority (although this should not restrict collaborations with other local authorities)
 - does not require additional in-year funding above the yearly MHCLG allocation
 - the total MHCLG grant is not exceeded
45. As long as the conditions already mentioned above are met, changes could include:
- amendments to the scope of existing projects, cancellation of existing projects and creation of new projects
 - amendments to project outputs and outcomes
 - amendments to project spending profiles

Risk Assessment

45. A detailed risk assessment of the preferred option will be undertaken in line with the Council project governance and risk assessment criteria.

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

Eaglescliffe East, Eaglescliffe West and Yarm Wards

Background Papers

Report to Cabinet March 2023, Report to Cabinet July 2025

Name of Contact Officer: Iain Robinson
Post Title: Assistant Director Town Centre Development
Telephone No. 01642 526017
Email Address: ian.robinson@stockton.gov.uk

Appendix 1

Yarm High Street Engagement - Summary of Findings

Yarm High Street – You Decide engagement ran from Wednesday 10 December 2025 to Monday 12 January 2026.

In-person engagement events were held in Yarm Library on three separate days as well as an online form that was available on the Council's website.

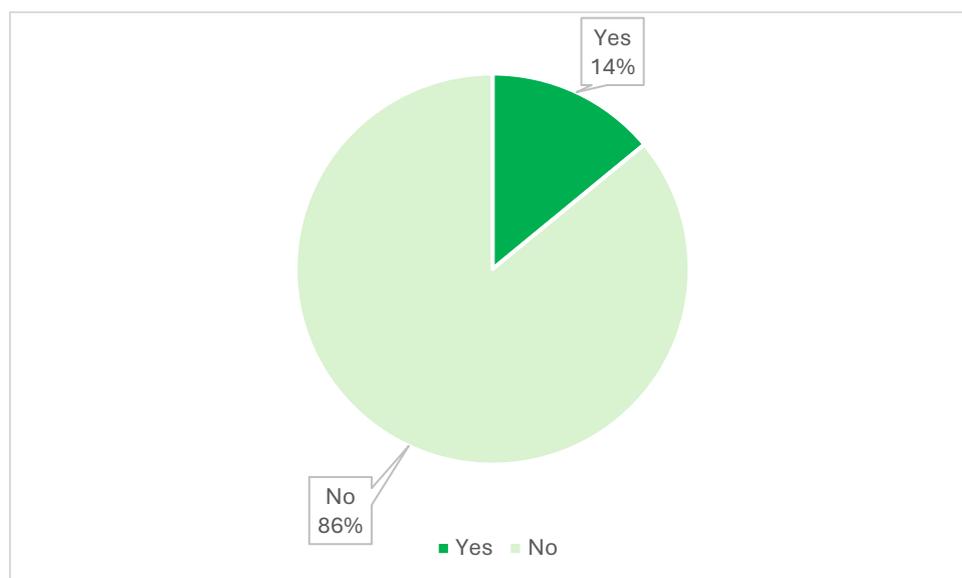
In total, 1,564 responses were received.

This summary presents the findings of this engagement.

Do you think the Council should proceed with the proposed Yarm High Street improvement scheme?

Question 1 of the survey asked respondents, 'Based on the information provided, do you think the Council should proceed with the proposed Yarm High Street improvement scheme?'

Respondents were asked to answer Yes or No to this question and the graph below details the results.



The results revealed that 225 (14 per cent) respondents agreed that Yes - the Council should proceed with the scheme as proposed whilst 1339 (86 per cent) people expressed a view that No – the Council should not proceed with the scheme as proposed.

Free Text Responses

In Question 2, thematic analysis of the optional free text question - *If you would like to explain your view, please use the space below* was undertaken to identify common themes across the

1190 written responses that were received. Examples of comments made under the key themes are summarised below.

Please note that people often raised more than one issue so for this reason percentages won't sum to 100 per cent.

Key Themes	Examples of comments
53 per cent of responses made comments on the theme of Parking & Traffic Congestion	Parking availability is already restricted. Removing parking spaces will increase congestion. Housing growth impacting on parking.
51 per cent of responses made comments on the theme of Yarm's Historic Character	Scheme is too modern and not in keeping with the historic Georgian High Street. Frequent comparisons to looking like Teesside Park.
26 per cent of responses made comments on the theme of Accessibility	Pavements and cobbles need to be better maintained as existing paving creates trip hazards. High Street is not very accessible for wheelchairs and public transport users.
18 per cent of responses made comments on the theme of Antisocial Behaviour	New public spaces will encourage more ASB, littering, loitering and vermin.
15 per cent of responses made comments on the theme of Traffic Congestion	Traffic congestion and traffic flow will be problematic. Need to look at creating a bypass or other traffic solutions.
13 per cent of responses made comments on the theme of New Planters & Seating	New planters and seating are deemed not necessary or of the wrong design. Style of benches and planters are too modern and feel inauthentic for Yarm. Concern that new public spaces won't be maintained by the Council.

In addition to the thematic analysis, respondents offered ideas for delivering High Street improvements, which have been summarised below.

- Focus on the maintenance of existing infrastructure such as re-lining parking bays and repairing paving slabs, road potholes and existing seating.
- Improve parking arrangements on the High Street including providing additional disabled parking bays and designated parent and child spaces.
- Improve and increase public toilet provision.
- More investment in the Riverside walkways including improving access to pontoons and more seating.
- Construct a ring road or bypass around Yarm High Street and a footbridge/subway to ease congestion, reduce vehicle emissions, and improve air quality.
- Improve signage to long-stay and short-stay car parks.
- Introduce a park and ride scheme.
- Alleviate the financial pressures faced by the Local Authority including a reduction in Council Tax burden on households.

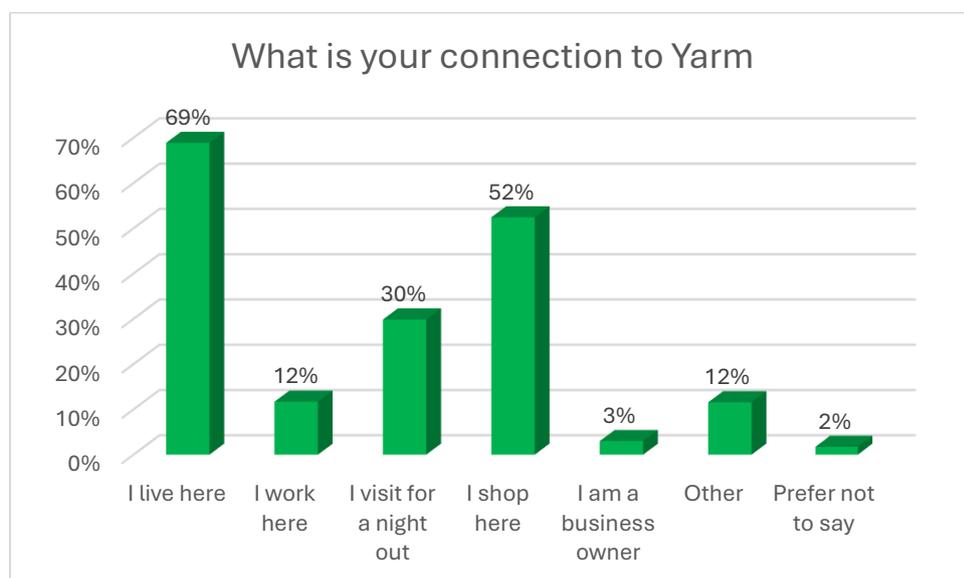
- Allocate funding to improvements at North Tees Hospital or in places like Thornaby or Billingham.

Profile of responses

This section summarises the demographic profile of people that responded to the engagement.

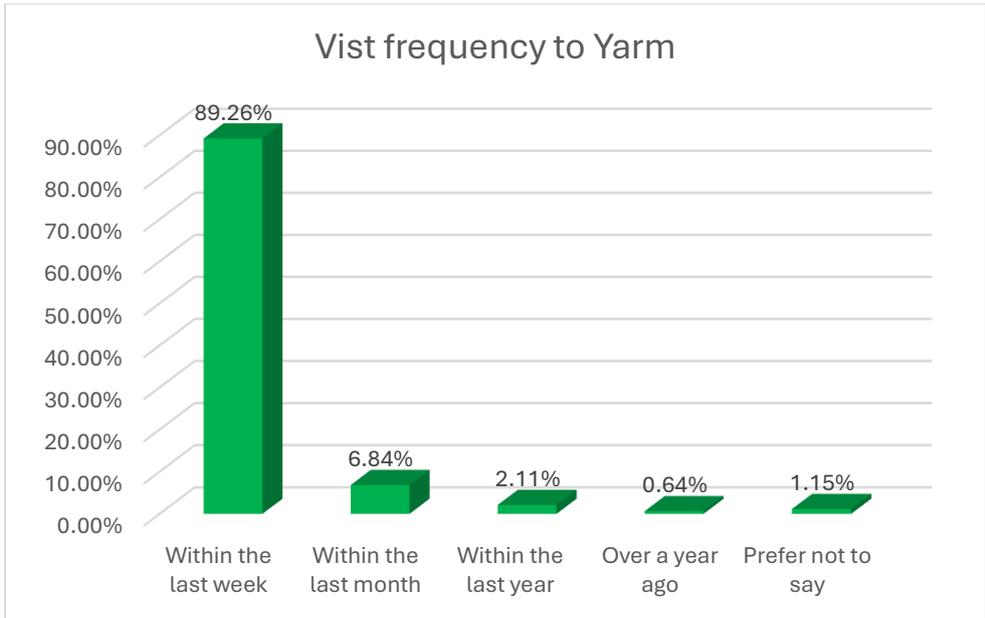
Connection to the Area

Respondents to the engagement found that respondents typically live in the area, shop in Yarm or visit for a night out. A smaller number of responses were received from people that work in the area, with this figure standing at 12 per cent. With regards to the response from business owners, this figure stood at 47 responses, making up 3 per cent of the total responses.



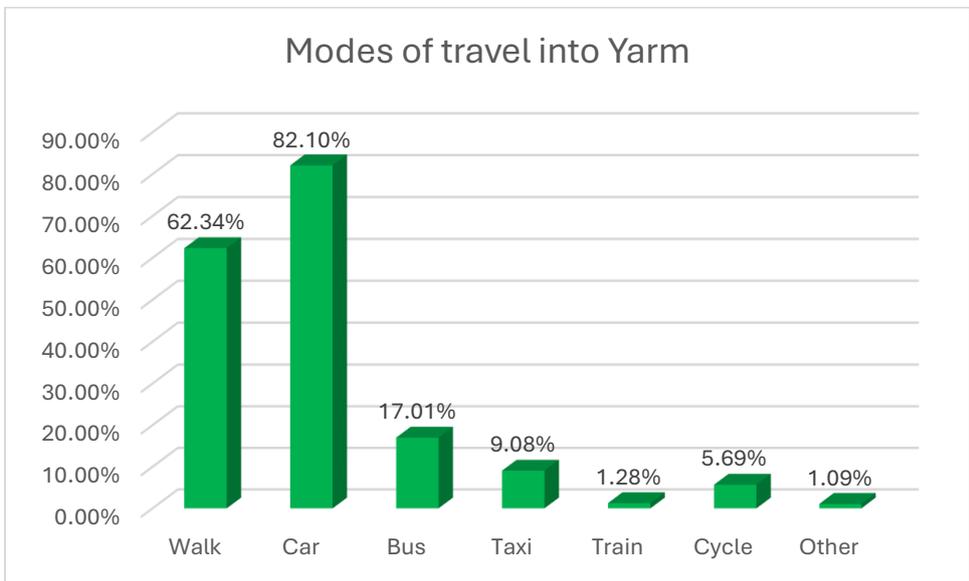
Visit Frequency

Most people who responded to the engagement were people that have visited Yarm recently, with 89 per cent of respondents visiting within the last week.



Modes of Travel

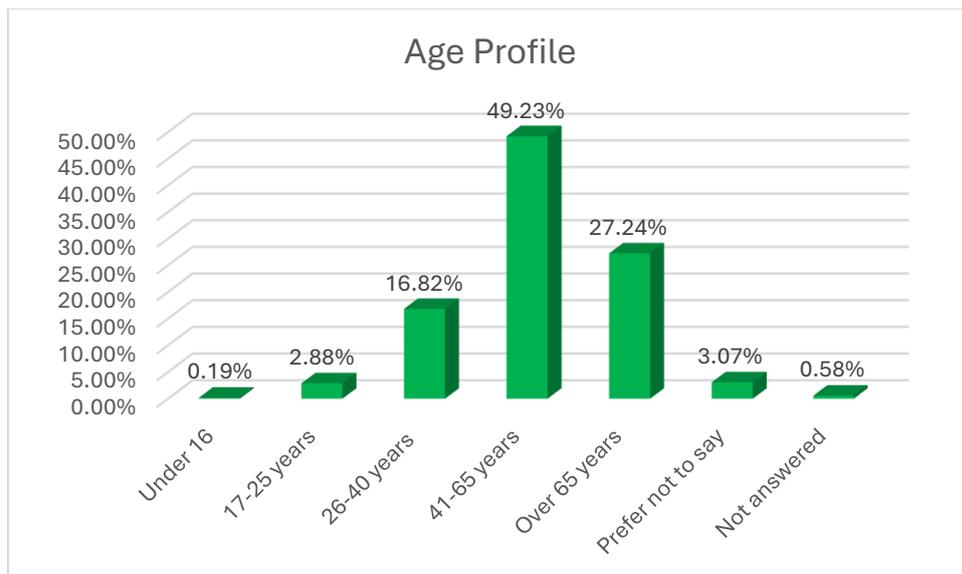
When travelling to and from Yarm, the most used mode was to travel by car (82 per cent). The second most popular mode was that of walking, with the figure being 62 per cent. Of the other transport modes, bus was slightly more popular than taxi (17 per cent versus 9 per cent) followed by cycle at 6 per cent, train at 1 per cent and 'other' at 1 per cent.



Age

The majority of respondents (49 per cent) were aged between 41 – 65 years old, with the second highest age category being Over 65 (27 per cent).

16.8 per cent of respondents were aged 26-40 years old and only 48 people aged 25 or under responded to the engagement.



Next steps

This report has presented a summary of the results from engagement on *Yarm High Street – You Decide* that was held from Wednesday 10th December 2025 to Monday 12 January 2026. In total 1564 responses were received. Overall, responses to this engagement were from local people that either live in Yarm or visit for shopping or leisure. Most of the respondents are people that have recently visited Yarm and have travelled by car or on foot. This round of engagement received low levels of engagement from young people and people that work or own a business in Yarm.

The purpose of the survey was to understand public views on whether the Council should proceed with the proposed scheme. Feedback will be used to inform a future decision, which will be presented to a Cabinet meeting in due course.

This page is intentionally left blank

REPORT TO CABINET

12 MARCH 2026

REPORT OF SENIOR
MANAGEMENT TEAM

CABINET DECISION

Lead Cabinet Member – Regeneration and Housing – Cllr Richard Eglington

Accelerating affordable housing delivery ('A quality home for all') - update**SUMMARY**

A previous report presented to Cabinet on the 12th June 2025 outlined that the Council, like most local authorities continues to experience an increased demand for affordable housing (both sale and rent). This increase, set against a background of limited supply, is placing growing pressure on the Council's ability to prevent homelessness and support vulnerable adults and care leavers access independent accommodation. To respond to these challenges, Cabinet agreed to adopt a '**Hybrid Delivery Model**' to increase affordable housing supply whereby each potential development site (as it comes forward) is assessed against 3 delivery routes - Enabling, Direct Delivery or a Partnership Structure and approved 'in principle' to a small number of housing sites for affordable housing provision (as detailed in paragraphs 8 of this report).

Following the assessment of the Raleigh Road site against the 3 delivery options, Cabinet is asked to approve the disposal of this site to North Star Housing Group to facilitate the delivery of social rented housing.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION(S) / DECISION(S)

The Stockton-on-Tees Plan and Powering Our Future programme affirm the Council's commitment to driving economic growth to support community prosperity and well-being. The delivery of good quality, affordable housing in well-connected neighbourhoods that meets the needs of the borough's residents is integral to this.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Cabinet is asked to:

1. Approve the direct award of the disposal of the Raleigh Road site to North Star Housing Group for the development of affordable social housing (as outlined in paragraphs 1 to 7 of this report).
2. Note progress made on the other smaller sites identified in the 12th June 2025 Cabinet report, in relation to bringing each forward for affordable housing provision (as outlined in paragraphs 8 to 10 of this report).
3. Following the conclusion of the competitive procurement exercise for the three smaller vacant sites (as detailed in paragraph 10) that the decision to proceed with a site disposal of each site to a Registered Provider for the provision of affordable housing, with a housing mix that reflects the borough's identified housing needs be delegated to the Director of Regeneration and Inclusive Growth in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Housing and Regeneration.

DETAIL

Raleigh Road

1. In accordance with the agreed Hybrid Delivery Model, 3 options to bring the Raleigh Road site forward for affordable housing have been assessed and concluded that the preferred approach is for the Council to utilise its **enabling role**. The direct delivery option was discounted due to the significant level of funding required to develop the site and the confirmed interest of a Registered Housing Provider in taking the scheme forward. The partnership option was also discounted as the proposal received from North Star Housing Group does not require the Council to share any financial risk associated in the site's development.
2. In summary by utilising its enabling function the Council will not be required to fund the development of the site, nor take ownership of the units post development however North Star Housing Group will build dwellings that meet our specific needs (in terms of the type and tenure of units developed) which the Council will access through nominations (100% of initial lets via a Local Lettings Plan and subsequent lettings via Tees Valley HomeFinder).
3. As members will be aware North Star Housing Group is local Registered Housing Group who provides both supported and general needs rented affordable housing. They are one of the five partners who are signed up to the Tees Valley Common Allocation Policy, with all their properties (in the borough) let via local lettings plans (supported housing units) or via Tees Valley HomeFinder. They have had a long-term interest in this site having previously developed adjacent land for the provision of 11 bungalows (in 2018) and are keen to work with the Council to bring forward a small, second phase of development.
4. North Star Housing Group have proposed a development of 12 units for affordable rent on the site; 2 x 1 bed bungalows, 6 x 2 bed bungalows and 4 x 1 bed houses. This mix has considered the Council's requirements for 1 bed properties to support independent living for young people leaving care system and the accommodation needs of vulnerable adults.
5. The total scheme cost is estimated at £2.9m. North Star will apply to Homes England for Social and Affordable Homes Programme grant; this application will be made alongside a planning application. Whilst a planning application will not be submitted until contracts have been exchanged to dispose of the land, to evidence their commitment to develop the site North Star secured their internal Board approval to progress with the scheme on the 15th December 2025.
6. As noted the delivery of the site will be subject to North Star Housing Group securing planning approval, however they are anticipating completion in Summer 2027 (following a 12 month build programme).
7. To enable the site to progress Cabinet is asked to direct award the disposal of the site to North Star for the provision of affordable rented housing.

Other Affordable Housing Sites

8. As noted previously Cabinet previously approved additional smaller sites for the purpose of affordable housing delivery:

Londonderry Road (*vacant potential in-fill site*)

Stirling House (*vacant*)

Parkside House (*vacant*)

Thornaby Baths (once vacant/following the opening of the Thornaby Pavilion & Pool)

9. Since the summer of 2025, work has been undertaken to explore the quantum of the affordable housing that can be delivered on the 3 vacant sites (in terms of specification, type, tenure and density), site feasibility work has commenced (topographic, ecology, pre-demolition asbestos, archaeological, GPR, flood risk and ground condition surveys) and pre-market engagement with potential partners completed.
10. The pre-market engagement exercise determined interest in all 3 vacant sites for the delivery of 100% affordable housing. A competitive procurement process will now be undertaken which will ensure compliance with the Procurement Act 2023. The three sites could be aggregated together, or bids for individual sites if this delivers a better solution.
11. In the 12th June 2025 Cabinet report it proposed that a further report be presented back to Cabinet seeking approval for the preferred delivery option for each site. As the pre-market engagement exercise has identified Registered Provider interest in the 3 vacant sites, it is proposed that following the conclusion of the competitive procurement exercise that the decision to proceed with a site disposal to a Registered Provider for the provision of affordable rented, delivering a housing mix that reflects the boroughs identified housing needs, be delegated to the Director of Regeneration and Inclusive Growth in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Housing and Regeneration.

EQUALITY AND POVERTY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

12. An Equality and Poverty Impact Assessment (EPIA) has been completed to ensure that the Council is following its legal duty to consider equality and diversity during the decision-making process. The conclusion of the EPIA is that the proposal outlined within the report will have a positive impact on our older residents, residents suffering from physical and/or mental ill-health, those who are affected by poverty and those who have experience of care. The assessment has determined that no specific group or protected characteristic will be negatively impacted by the proposal.

CORPORATE PARENTING IMPLICATIONS

13. As detailed within the body of the report, the provision of 1-bedroom self-contained social rented units at Raleigh Road will directly support young people in the care of the Council, who are ready to transition into appropriate, independent living accommodation and affirms the Councils Corporate Parent commitment to provide the best possible care and safeguarding for the child who are looked after by us.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

14. In accordance with Section 123 of the Local Government Act 1972, an independent valuation of the Raleigh Road site was commissioned to verify that the proposed disposal price was not below market value. The independent valuation confirmed that the proposed sale price reflects the market value of the land, considering the 100% affordable housing that will be delivered as part of the scheme.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

15. Independent legal advice has been sought on the disposal of Raleigh Road and future procurement and disposal routes. In relation to the Procurement Act 2023, the value of the works on the Raleigh Road site falls well below the current procurement threshold. As a result, any contract relating to that site would not be a covered procurement. Therefore, the Council is within its rights to direct award the contract to dispose of the site and specify the required housing mix.

RISK ASSESSMENT

19. A project risk register will be prepared for each of the affordable housing delivery projects and will be managed within the existing risk management systems and daily routine activities.

WARDS AFFECTED AND CONSULTATION WITH WARD/COUNCILLORS

20. The Raleigh Road site is located within the Norton Central ward.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

None.

Name of Contact Officer:	Jane Edmends
Post Title:	Assistant Director Housing & A Fairer Stockton-on-Tees
Telephone No.	01642 526682
Email Address:	jane.edmends@stockton.gov.uk

REPORT TO CABINET

12 MARCH 2026

REPORT OF CORPORATE
MANAGEMENT TEAM

COUNCIL DECISION

Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Resources and Transport
Councillor Paul Rowling

Revisions to the Council's Constitution

Summary

This report asks Cabinet to recommend revisions to the Council's Constitution, following consideration by Members' Advisory Panel.

Reasons for Recommendation(s)/Decision(s)

To ensure that the Council's Constitution remains clear, up to date and reflects the Council's current needs and governance requirements.

Recommendations

To recommend to Council that:

- 1) The wording within the Council's Constitution is amended to be clear and consistent that if there are over 1000 signatures on a petition, then referral to Council is automatic and that only final responses, not all correspondence, will be published.
- 2) The Council's Constitution specifies that electronic petitions are only accepted via the Modern.Gov platform to enable the Council to set the parameters of the petition (i.e. that the petition can only be signed by a person if they live, work or study in the Borough).
- 3) The Council's Constitution is amended to extend the composition of the Scrutiny Liaison Committee to include the Group Leader and Deputy Group Leader of each political party on the Council (where they are not already a member of the Forum in another role).

Detail

Petition Scheme

1. The petition scheme states that “Whenever possible we will also publish all correspondence relating to the petition (all personal details will be removed).” It is clearly not appropriate to publish all correspondence in relation to a petition. However, it would be in order to publish any final response and it is proposed that the wording within the Constitution is amended accordingly.
2. There is also some inconsistency around the use of the word “considered”. The first page of the petition scheme states “If a petition has 1,000 signatures or more, it will be **considered for referral to a full Council meeting** for a full and proper debate. The petition scheme additional information then states “If your petition has received 1000 signatures or more, it will **automatically be referred to a meeting of full Council** for a full and proper debate”. Page 5 of the petition scheme states “If a petition contains more than 1,000 signatures **it will be considered for debate by the full Council**. This means that the issue raised in the petition will be discussed at a meeting which all councillors can attend. The Council will endeavour to consider the petition at its next meeting, although on some occasions this may not be possible, and consideration will then take place at the following meeting”. Members’ Advisory Panel proposed that the wording within the Constitution is amended to be clear and consistent that, if there are over 1000 signatures referral to full Council is automatic.
3. The Modern.Gov Committee administration system has e-petition functionality which allows the Council to be able to set the parameters of the petition before it goes live i.e. making it explicitly clear that persons should only sign the petition if they live, work or study in the Borough. Anyone signing a petition would tick a box saying which of these criteria they meet and then giving the address where they live, work or study which will ensure they are a valid signatory. It has proved problematic accepting them from Change.Org as we have been unable to ensure that the lead petitioner makes the public aware of the parameters that apply to the Council’s petitions scheme i.e. live work or study in the Borough. Members’ Advisory Panel therefore proposed that in future the Council should only accept electronic petitions submitted through the Modern.Gov platform.
4. The submission of hard copy petitions will still be permitted.

Composition of Scrutiny Liaison Forum

5. Under the Constitution, the role of Scrutiny Liaison Forum is to:
 - a) meet annually to provide a Forum to foster and develop a closer, more constructive working relationship between the Cabinet Members, the Corporate Management Team and Scrutiny Chairs and thereby assist in the efficient and effective working of scrutiny and the scrutiny work programme in order to deliver the Council’s key priorities and secure added value and to consider the Scrutiny agenda for the forthcoming municipal year;
 - b) receive briefings from Cabinet Members, Corporate Management Team and Scrutiny Chairs on emerging policy development areas;
 - c) consider the current scrutiny work programme position and progress in delivering its aims;

- d) consider and ensure support for the current scrutiny work programme and its delivery;
 - e) consider any special issues which may require urgent policy development advice or scrutiny work; and
 - f) undertake appropriate liaison with the Executive Scrutiny Committee on future policy development issues and review topics.
6. The membership of the Forum is comprised of Cabinet members, members of the Corporate Management Team, Executive Scrutiny Chair and Select Committee Chairs.
7. When the Forum was first established, there were opposition scrutiny chairs in place and the membership of the Forum therefore facilitated cross party informal discussions on the scrutiny work programme ahead of consideration by Executive Scrutiny Committee. Recognising that opposition chairs are not currently in place, Members' Advisory Panel proposed that the membership of the Scrutiny Liaison Forum be extended to include the Group Leader and Deputy Group Leader of each political party on the Council (where they are not already a member of the Forum in another role).

Community Impact and Equality and Poverty Impact Assessment

8. None.

Corporate Parenting Implications

9. None.

Financial and Legal Implications

10. No financial and legal implications are identified at this stage.

Risk Assessment

11. This report is categorised as low to medium risk. Existing management systems and daily routine activities are sufficient to control and reduce risk.

Wards Affected and Consultation with Ward/ Councillors

12. Not ward specific

Background Papers

13. None

Name of Contact Officer: Jonathan Nertney

Post Title: Head of Democratic Services

Telephone number: 01642 526312

Email Address: Jonathan.nertney@stockton.gov.uk

This page is intentionally left blank

REPORT TO CABINET

12 MARCH 2026

REPORT OF CORPORATE
MANAGEMENT TEAM**CABINET DECISION**Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Resources and Transport
Councillor Paul Rowling**Council Motion – Flying the Union Flag****Summary**

This report asks Cabinet to review the Council's Flag Flying Policy following approval of the Council motion to fly the Union Flag on Council premises and consideration by Members' Advisory Panel.

Reasons for Recommendation(s)/Decision(s)

To ensure that the motion, agreed unanimously by Council, is implemented in a manner that is practical, affordable and legally robust, following cross-party engagement through the Members Advisory Panel.

Recommendations

That the Council's existing flag flying policy be endorsed with an addendum that the Union Flag be flown internally in reception areas at public facing buildings (including libraries and customer service centres) across the Borough.

Detail

1. At its meeting in September 2024, Council approved a motion requesting that the Union Flag be flown all year round on all Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council office premises. The motion was supported by all political groups. The Council motion set out:

“Council notes that:

Government Guidance on the flying of the Union Flag, put forward by Department for Culture, Media and Sport and Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport and updated in March 2025 dictates that ‘There are designated days when the Union Flag must be flown on UK government buildings by command of His Majesty The King. However, UK government buildings are encouraged to fly the Union Flag all year around.

This guidance is aimed at UK government buildings. However, we would encourage local authorities and other local organisations to follow suit where they wish to fly flags’.

Council believes that:

Following the guidance put forward by Government, our National Flag should fly from Council Premises.

Council resolves:

That Cabinet be requested to fly the Union Flag all year round on all Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council office premises.”

2. The Council already has an adopted Flag Flying Policy covering Stockton Town Hall and the Council’s headquarters. The policy provides for the Union Flag to be flown continuously at the headquarters and on designated days at the Town Hall, alongside other flags such as the Commonwealth, Armed Forces Week and Pride flags.
3. A copy of the Council’s current flag flying policy is attached at Appendix A. This policy relates to the flying of flags on the Council’s main headquarters building and Stockton Town Hall. The current policy provides for the Union Flag to be flown from the headquarters building at all times and for the Union Flag to be flown on the Town Hall with the exception of designated days for other flags as outlined below:

March (second Monday in March)	Commonwealth Day	Commonwealth Flag
23 April	St George’s Day	St George’s Flag
End of June (fly for one week) (these dates change each year)	Armed Forces Week	Armed Forces Week flag
June	Pride	Rainbow Flag
3 September	Merchant Navy Day	Red Ensign
15 September	Battle of Britain Day	Royal Air Force Flag

Public Facing Council Buildings

4. The Council owns approximately 270 properties, of which only a proportion would be regarded as public-facing (for example, Dunedin House, libraries and customer contact centres). Further technical work is required to determine which sites are suitable for inclusion within any extended policy.
5. The flagpole at Dunedin House was commissioned when the Council’s headquarters moved there, to ensure that a flag could continue to be flown in accordance with the existing policy. The installation was therefore a continuation of established practice rather than a new initiative.
6. A list of buildings that could be deemed as public facing is attached at Appendix B, including comments on the feasibility of installing a freestanding or building mounted flagpoles and other considerations.

Planning Considerations for External Flagpoles

7. Under the advertisement regulations flying flags does not necessarily require advertisement consent provided that certain criteria are met. However, all flags must:
 - Be adequately maintained
 - Kept in a safe condition
 - Have the landowner's permission
 - Not obscure or hinder road, rail, waterway or aircraft signs
8. Planning permission would be needed for any ground mounted flagpole over 4.6m tall. Permission would be needed for a flagpole mounted on the side of a building which is in controlled area e.g. conservation area.

Technical Considerations for External Flagpoles

9. Flagpoles can be floor, wall or roof mounted, and the size of flag flown is determined by the size of the pole. The new flagpole at Dunedin House is floor mounted. As well as material, other considerations include weight, diameter, thickness and wind loading guarantees.
10. The life span of the flag itself varies depending on the location of the flag pole and weather conditions and periodic replacement of flags also needs to be planned for. The structural wind loading for the flagpole will determine whether more than one flag can be flown at the same time as well as the size of the flag. The flagpole at Dunedin House does not allow for more than one flag to be flown at the same time.
11. Specialist companies offer site surveys and wind calculations.
12. As an indicator of cost, the most popular size of flagpole in the UK is 6m in height with a 2-yard flag. A glass fibre floor mounted 6m flagpole can retail from £432 to £861. A 2-yard Union Flag retails for around £75. Costs will however vary significantly depending on the specification. Installation costs would be additional.
13. A decision around the costs in relation to the installation of a flagpole at any new site cannot be confirmed without a site investigation and quotation from a specialist supplier. Site investigations would be required for all buildings to assess the structural integrity of the building if wall or roof mounted options are to be looked at and also the checking of underground utility apparatus for any freestanding options. How the flags are to be raised and lowered would also need to be considered along with any maintenance of the flagpoles. Wall mounted options may require ladder or cherry picker access.
14. Ground-based flagpoles in particular require suitable foundations and underground service checks, together with structural calculations to verify wind loading, safe access for raising and lowering, and arrangements for inspection and maintenance. Wall- or roof-mounted options may require additional specialist assessment and access equipment.

Views of Members' Advisory Panel

15. Members' Advisory Panel acknowledged the significant costs that would be involved with installing external flagpoles in new locations, including the site surveys that would be

required even before a final decision was made. The Panel also noted that in several of the potential new locations, flags were already being flown in the vicinity by local Town Councils. The Panel felt that a better solution to implementing the Council motion would be to fly the Union Flag internally in reception areas at the list of public facing buildings referred to in the appendix to the report, which included libraries and customer service centres across the Borough.

Community Impact and Equality and Poverty Impact Assessment

15. None

Corporate Parenting Implications

16. None

Financial Implications

17. The external flagpole at Dunedin House cost approximately £25,000 to install, with replacement flags which require regular periodic renewal currently costing around £300 each. Structural and wind-loading assessments, health-and-safety compliance, and ongoing maintenance all carry cost implications. Although some indicative costs are available, a decision around the costs in relation to the installation of an external flagpole at any new site cannot be confirmed without a site visit and quotation from a specialist supplier. Revenue and costs for raising/lowering and maintenance would need to be considered.
18. There is currently no budgetary provision for any additional flagpoles or flags. Site investigations and quotations would therefore be required before any commitments could be made for additional external flagpoles.
19. The cost of siting a floor standing flagpole to fly the Union Flag internally is approximately £75. The total cost of flying the Union Flag internally at the nine library/customer service centres at Appendix B and at Dunedin House would therefore be approximately £750.

Legal Implications

20. The installation and maintenance of external flagpoles would require compliance with advertisement and safety regulations. There are no considerations in relation to internal flagpoles.

Risk Assessment

21. Specialist advice would need to be sought to ensure safe installation and ongoing maintenance of external flagpoles.

Wards Affected and Consultation with Ward/ Councillors

22. Not ward specific

Background Papers

23. None

Name of Contact Officer: Jonathan Nertney

Post Title: Head of Democratic Services

Telephone number: 01642 526312

Email Address: Jonathan.nertney@stockton.gov.uk

This page is intentionally left blank

Flag Flying

There are two flagpoles on Council owned buildings in Borough, located at Dunedin House and Town Hall, Stockton-on-Tees.

This policy on flying flags follows the Department of Digital, Culture, Media and Sport's (DCMS) guidelines for flag flying on UK government buildings, which can be found on the following website <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/designated-days-for-union-flag-flying>

Department of Digital, Culture, Media and Sport's Guidelines

The guidelines state designated days for when the Union Flag be flown. These dates are:

9 April	His Majesty The King's Wedding Anniversary
6 May	Coronation Day
14 June	Official Birthday of His Majesty The King
21 June	Birthday of HRH The Prince of Wales
17 July	Birthday of Her Majesty The Queen
8 September	His Majesty The Kings Accession
9 November	Remembrance Day (second Sunday in November)
14 November	Birthday of His Majesty The King

However, UK government buildings are encouraged to fly the Union Flag all year round.

Where buildings only have one flagpole other flags may be flown, including but not limited to:

- the national flags of the constituent nations of the United Kingdom
- the Armed Forces flag
- the Commonwealth flag
- county and other local flags
- other flags which may promote civic pride

DCMS may issue ad-hoc guidance encouraging UK government buildings to fly such flags throughout the year, alongside the Union Flag.

UK government building flagpoles should not remain empty – the default should be flying the Union Flag if no other flag is being flown.

There are three categories of flags that can be flown in the UK, subject to compliance with the standard conditions. These are:

(a) flags which can be flown without consent of the local planning authority.	<p>1) Any country's national flag, civil ensign or civil air ensign</p> <p>2) The flag of the Commonwealth, the United Nations or any other international organisation of which the United Kingdom is a member</p> <p>3) A flag of any island, county, district, borough, burgh, parish, city, town or village within the United Kingdom</p> <p>4) The flag of the Black Country, East Anglia, Wessex, any Part of Lincolnshire, any Riding of</p>
---	--

	<p>Yorkshire or any historic county within the United Kingdom</p> <p>5) The flag of Saint David</p> <p>6) The flag of Saint Patrick</p> <p>7) The flag of any administrative area within any country outside the United Kingdom</p> <p>8) Any flag of His Majesty's forces</p> <p>9) The Armed Forces Day flag</p> <p>The above flags or their flagpoles must not display any advertisement or subject matter additional to the design of the flag, but the Regulations now highlight that you can attach a black mourning ribbon to either the flag or flagpole where the flag cannot be flown at half mast, for example, when flying a flag on a flagpole projecting at an angle from the side of a building.</p> <p>The use of the word "country" in (1) and (7) of the list above, includes any of the Channel Islands, the Isle of Man and any British Overseas Territory. The flags of St George and St Andrew are recognised as the national flags of England and Scotland, but the flags of St David and St Patrick are listed separately as they do not necessarily fall into the category of a country's national flag.</p> <p>Two flags can also be flown from the same flagpole without the need for consent if: (i) both flags are within the list above; or (ii) one flag is within the list above and the other is within the categories of flag set out under (b) below.</p> <p>In either case, if one of the flags is the Union Flag, it must be flown in the superior position.</p> <p>Following the UK's departure from the European Union, the flag of the European Union is no longer included in the list of flags that do not require consent.</p>
<p>(b) flags which do not need consent provided they comply with further restrictions regarding the size of the flag, the size of characters on the flag, and the number and location of the flags(referred to as "deemed consent" in the Regulations).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • house flag – flag is allowed to display the name, emblem, device or trademark of the company (or person) occupying the building, or can refer to a specific event of limited duration that is taking place in the building from which the flag is flown • any sports club (but cannot include sponsorship logos)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the Rainbow flag (six horizontal equal stripes of red, orange, yellow, green, blue and violet). • specified award schemes – Eco-Schools, King’s Awards for Enterprise and Investors in People • the NHS flag. • certain environmental awards. <p>The restrictions on flying this second category of flag relate to where the flagpole is located on a building or within the grounds of a building.</p> <p>When flying a flag on vertical flagpole from the roof of a building there are no restrictions on the size of flag.</p> <p>There are also no restrictions on the size of any character or symbol displayed on the flag, except where a flag is flown within an area of outstanding natural beauty, area of special control, the Broads, conservation area or a National Park (referred to elsewhere as “controlled areas”) where the characters may be no more than 0.75 metre in height (0.3 metre in height in an area of special control).</p>
(c) flags which require consent (“express consent”)	All other flags

Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council Policy

To adhere to the above guidance, the Union flag will be flown every day on the Dunedin House flagpole.

The Union Flag will also be flown on the Town Hall, with the exception of designated days for other flags noted in the DCMS guidelines as outlined below:

March (second Monday in March)	Commonwealth Day	Commonwealth Flag
23 April	St George’s Day	St George’s Flag
End of June (fly for one week) (these dates change each year)	Armed Forces Week	Armed Forces Week flag
June	Pride	Rainbow Flag
3 September	Merchant Navy Day	Red Ensign
15 September	Battle of Britain Day	Royal Air Force Flag

The Borough Flag will be flown at half-mast from the Town Hall on the death of the Mayor or Freeman from the day of the death until sunset on the day of the funeral. If a councillor dies in service, or on the death on an ex-Mayor, the Borough Flag will be flown at half-mast from Town Hall on the day of the funeral.

The flag flying schedule is complemented on the days listed below by our memorial lighting scheme which is agreed annually and runs January to December. It includes lighting of Newport Bridge and Town Centre lighting columns and fountain lights:

2026 Schedule

Date	Event	Lighting Colour
Tuesday 27 January	Holocaust Memorial Day	Purple
Sunday 1 February	LGBT+ History Month	Multi
Wednesday 4 February	World Cancer Day	Orange
Sunday 8 March	International Women's Day	Purple
Sunday 8 March	National Day of Reflection	Yellow
Saturday 28 March	Earth Hour (8.30pm to 9.30pm)	Switched off
Thursday 2 April	Autism Acceptance Day	Gold
Thursday 23 April	St George's Day	Red and white
Monday 18 May	National Dementia Action Week	Purple
Monday 1 June	National Volunteers Week	Red and purple
Monday 8 June	National Carers Week	Blue
TBC	Shared Lives Week	Purple
Saturday 27 June	Armed Forces Day	Red, white and blue
Friday 4 September	World Sexual Health Awareness Day	Orange and blue
Monday 21 September	Fairtrade Fortnight	Blue and green
Saturday 26 September	Organ Donation Week	Purple
Thursday 1 October	Stoptober (Stop Smoking Campaign)	Red
Friday 9 October	Baby Loss Awareness Week	Pink and blue
Saturday 10 October	World Mental Health Day	Purple
Friday 16 October	Show Racism the Red Card	Red
Sunday 1 November	National Care Leavers Month	Blue
Wednesday 11 November	Remembrance Day	Red
Saturday 14 November	World Diabetes Day	Blue
Wednesday 25 November	International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women	Orange

In addition, Pride month is marked by changing the logo on corporate social media to multi coloured.

All flags currently flown from Stockton Town Hall and Dunedin House are in categories (a) flags that do not need consent and (b) those that can be flown without consent so long as they comply with restrictions (Rainbow Flag). Restrictions relate to where a flag pole is located, and due to the Rainbow Flag being flown from a vertical pole on the Town Hall there are no restrictions.

The list of dates for flags to be flown with instructions for when to raise the flag and when to take it down will be shared with Facilities Management at the beginning of each year. Reminders will be sent nearer the date of each designated flag flying day. Flags will be raised as early as possible on the day until as early as possible the following day. Flags on a weekend will be raised all weekend.

Civic office will check the DCMS website on a regular basis for other days and instructions for flying the flag (i.e. funerals/memorial services for ex-prime ministers).

In addition to the flags flown on external flag poles at Stockton Town Hall and Dunedin House, the Union Flag will also be flown in reception areas and in reception areas at libraries and Customer Service Centres.

Building	Address	Permission Needed from Third Party	Flagpole location option		Comments
			Freestanding	Building Mounted	
Stockton Central Library/Contact Centre	Church Road Stockton-on-Tees TS18 1TU	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Looks to be sufficient space in the grassed area to position a flagpole Alternative option could be a wall mounted (brick section) or roof mounted
Thornaby Central Library/Contact Centre	Wrightson House, Pavilion Shopping Centre, Thornaby, TS17 7EW	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	SBC lease the use of Wrightson House for the contact centre, Thornaby Central Library and TAL facility. Permission (amendment to lease) would be required to erect a building mounted flagpole There is no identification on outside of building that SBC library is located within - may cause confusion as to whom is flying the flag ?
Thornaby Library	Riverbanks Childrens Centre Gilmour Street, Thornaby, TS17 6PF	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Dual use within building. Location nearest SBC use would need to be considered to avoid confusion
Fairfield Library	Fairfield Road Stockton-on-Tees TS19 7AJ	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Dual use within building. Location nearest SBC use would need to be considered to avoid confusion Paved area to front is in SBC option for a freestanding option
Roseworth Library	Redhill Family Hub Redhill Road Stockton-on-Tees TS19 9BX	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Building mounted option may be obscured by trees
Norton Library	87 High Street Norton Stockton-on-Tees TS20 1AE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	SBC lease ground floor of building for library provision. Permission (amendment to lease) would be required to erect a building mounted flagpole Upper floor understood to be residential accommodation - owners/tenants of these flats may object to flag being flown outside their window
Yarm Library	49 High Street, Yarm, Stockton-on-Tees, TS15 9BH	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Building already has wall bracket for mounted a Christmas Tree. Sufficient space for additional mounting for flagpole.
Ingleby Barwick Library	Ingleby Barwick Leisure Centre Blair Avenue Ingleby Barwick Stockton-on-Tees TS17 5BL	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The library is located within Ingleby Barwick Leisure - permission would be required to be agreed with Tees Active Limited who manage this building. Cladding walls would be unsuitable for wall mounted option - brick faced wall may be less visible. Roof mounted option would need investigation. There is no identification on the outside of the building that the SBC library is located within - confusion may arise if flag were to be flown as to why other TAL buildings are not flying a flag ?
Existing Flagpoles					
Stockton Town Hall Dunedin	High Street, Stockton-on-Tees, TS18 1AU Columbia Drive, Thornaby, TS17 6QZ				Flagpole already insitu Flagpole to be installed 2025
Billingham Library/Contact Centre	Queensway Billingham TS23 2LN				Funded by Community Participation Budget in 2017/18 for the erection of the British Legion flag for remembrance Sunday. Bham Town Council currently flying their flag. Room for additional flagpole in SBC owned grassed area to front of library. Site investigations would be required for all buildings to assess the structural integrity of the building if wall or roof mounted options to be looked at and also the checking of underground utility apparatus for any freestanding options
All					How the flags are to be raised/lowered would need to be considered along with any maintenance of the flagpoles - wall mounted options may require ladder or cherry picker access Revenue cost for raising/lowering and maintenance would need to be considered

This page is intentionally left blank

REPORT TO CABINET

12 MARCH 2026

REPORT OF CORPORATE
MANAGEMENT TEAM

CABINET DECISION

Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Resources and Transport
Councillor Paul Rowling

Council Motion – Livestreaming Meetings

Summary

This report asks Cabinet to approve proposals for the livestreaming and recording of meetings following the Council motion to livestream all Council meetings and consideration of implementation details by Members' Advisory Panel.

Reasons for Recommendation(s)/Decision(s)

To implement the unanimously supported Council motion in a manner that is technically feasible, legally compliant, financially sustainable and consistent with accessibility standards.

Recommendations

- 1) That the proposals for the livestreaming and recording of meetings, and associated expenditure, set out in report and protocol be approved.
- 2) That meetings held outside of the Dunedin Council Chamber should not be livestreamed.
- 3) That officers look into the feasibility of holding Annual Council meetings in the Dunedin Council Chamber and consider bringing a further report to Members.
- 4) That photographs of past Mayors and Aldermen be displayed digitally on a television screen in the Civic Reception area and that this television to have the ability to display the livestreams of Council meetings as they are taking place.

Detail

1. At its meeting in September 2025, the Council approved a motion requesting that all public meetings held in the Council Chamber be recorded and, where possible, livestreamed to support openness and transparency. The motion was supported by all political groups. Specifically, Council resolved that:

“Council notes that:

Under the Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014, filming, photographing and making an audio recording of all public meetings is permitted.

Council meetings are public meetings. Elected representatives and council officers acting in the public sphere should expect to be held to account for their comments and votes in such meetings. The rules require councils to provide reasonable facilities for any member of the public to report on meetings. Councils should thus allow the filming of councillors and officers at meetings that are open to the public.

Stockton Council has spent £9000.86 of public money on the installation of 2 Cameras in the council chamber.

Council believes that:

In the interest of transparency and openness, the council should ensure that its public meetings, which includes Committee Meeting’s, Cabinet and Full Council should be fully recorded and where possible live streamed to allow our residents to fully engage in local democracy.

The cost associated with the installation of the cameras can only be justified, if they are there to aid residents in viewing proceedings. Furthermore, the recording of proceedings will ensure an accurate account to be taken of the meeting and assist with accurate minutes.

Council resolves:

That all Council meetings held in the Council Chamber that are open to the public, specifically Full Council, should be recorded and livestreamed;

That Cabinet be requested to ensure that Cabinet meetings held in the Council Chamber are both recorded and livestreamed;

on the Council’s website, to provide the greatest level of accessibility and inclusivity for residents.”

Technical Solution

2. The Dicientis audio-visual system currently supports hybrid meetings. Livestreaming introduces additional requirements, including:
 - a) Camera control and speaker tracking;
 - b) Real-time moderation and technical oversight;
 - c) Secure integration with a public-access platform;
 - d) Storage, captioning, and publication processes.
3. A technical solution has been developed by the equipment provider. The proposal provides the required additional hardware and services to implement the public streaming capability or the already installed Bosch Dicientis conferencing system in the Stockton Council Chamber.
4. While the Dicientis system allows for in-room and hybrid conferencing with voting capabilities for all participants, the current setup does not support streaming

conferences to a publicly accessible web link or Teams Town Hall session. It is also only possible to share a presentation laptop to the displays in the council chamber but not to the remote attendees currently, or to view the remote attendees in the council chamber.

5. Encoders and decoders are included in the technical solution and also an option for adding a dedicated Yealink Teams Room system for joining to a Teams Town Hall event which will generate a public streaming link. The live stream through Teams Town Hall will include a live, auto-captioned video feed which would be hosted via a Teams link shared on Modern.Gov/ SBC website.
6. The Dicontis server allows for configuring layouts for the output streams to show a multi-view window including laptop presentation, remote attendees, in-room camera views and voting results. The appropriate view will be configured for the hybrid meeting and public stream to show all required participant views and information.
7. Following the meeting, the video will be uploaded to Vimeo. Vimeo is the Council's chosen video hosting platform, due to the option to remove all adverts before and after video. This decision was made to avoid any inappropriate adverts showing before, during, or after any Council videos. The video will also be made available to watch on the Council's website and the Council's Vimeo page as soon as practicable, no later than three working days after the meeting.
8. To adhere to accessibility laws (WCAG.2.2), closed captions and a transcript will be automatically generated using Teams Town Hall or Vimeo and added to the video when uploaded. A disclaimer will be added alongside the videos to make it clear that the transcription is automatically generated, and that people can submit corrections if necessary.
9. It is recommended that we have, at most, 12 months of meetings listed on the SBC website, however, meetings will be retained on Vimeo for a longer period, to be advised by the Information Governance Team.
10. The Communications Team will make sure that all copyright security options are switched on for the videos (e.g. no "download" button), however, there is no way to ensure that people cannot clip the videos under fair use law using a screen recording or something similar.
11. The technical solution does not allow for broadcasting delay.
12. Where meetings are held in other venues such as Billingham Forum or the Baptist Tabernacle, an external company would need to be contracted to film the meeting. Initial investigation suggests that any recording done from another location would not meet the legal and technical requirements that are in place for the Council Chamber and may need to be via another platform such as You Tube. Costs would also be significant. Another option would be to film meetings in other venues and afterward place them on Vimeo on the Council's website but this would not be a live stream. Members' Advisory Panel felt that it would not be necessary for the small number of meetings that might be

held out the Dunedin Council Chamber to be filmed due the complexity and significant costs involved. Members also requested that officers look into the feasibility of hosting the Annual Council meeting in the Dunedin Council Chamber rather than at Billingham Forum and consider bringing a further report on this issue.

13. Members Advisory Panel were given a demonstration of the operation of the cameras which are linked to the microphones in the Chamber and have intelligent panning and tracking to different areas of the Chamber based on which microphones are active without the need for manual production by officers.

Consent and Confidentiality

14. Council and Committee agenda notifications, signage within the Chamber and reception and the Council's website will need to include notice that meetings will be filmed for live and subsequent broadcast on the Council's website. This will need to state that the whole of the meeting will be filmed, except where there are confidential or exempt items and the length of time that the footage will be displayed on the Council's website with a copy of it retained in accordance with the Council's data retention policy.
15. A draft protocol for livestreaming of Council meetings is attached at Appendix A. Owing to the layout of the Council Chamber it is problematical for an area to be designated for attendees who do not wish to have their image captured. The protocol therefore states:

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

The Council's Data Protection Officer has advised that this constraint should not present an issue provided there are other ways for people to engage in the democratic process and have their views heard. The website, agenda notifications and signage would need to clearly indicate that the meeting would be livestreamed and recorded, and attendees would be advised to contact democratic services if they did not wish to have their image captured. A pull up screen can be utilised if necessary. The Council has a stock of pull up screens that can be utilised for this purpose as they were issued to polling stations for use during elections.

16. A quote of £3,533.74 has been obtained to install a television in the civic reception area. As well as providing the ability for the live stream to be shown outside of the Council Chamber, other relevant information can be shown. For example, Members have enquired about plans for the display of past Mayors and Aldermen photographs. Historically these have been on display in the Town Hall and it seems appropriate that these historical photographs should remain in this setting. In keeping with the modern Dunedin Council Chamber, new photographs could be displayed digitally on the television screen in the civic reception. Members' Advisory Panel supported the display of photographs of past Mayors and Aldermen on a television screen in the civic reception area. It was also noted that an additional screen in the reception area outside

of the Council Chamber would allow the livestream of meetings to be viewed by attendees on occasions where too many public attended to be seated in the Chamber.

Accessibility Requirements

17. To ensure inclusivity and compliance with legal obligations, all videos published by the Council must meet accessibility standards. Adherence to the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.2 Level AA is not optional but a legal and ethical responsibility. Accessible videos empower users with visual, auditory, cognitive, or motor impairments to engage with content meaningfully. The Local Government Association supports the use of digital technologies to enhance democratic engagement and accessibility.
18. For videos that remain on the site after live streaming, the following criteria must be met: they must include a transcript detailing visuals, spoken dialogue, and contextual sounds; synchronised closed captions must be provided; any media that auto-plays for more than five seconds must offer a way to pause, stop, or hide it; audio that plays automatically for more than three seconds must allow users to stop, pause, mute, or adjust volume; and flashing content must not exceed three flashes per second. For live-streamed videos, the standards are more relaxed, captions should be provided to support accessibility.

Community Impact and Equality and Poverty Assessment

19. Livestreaming of Council meetings will support the openness and transparency of Council business and open up meetings to those residents who might not otherwise have been able to attend. In addition, accessibility standards will allow residents with a range of impairments to engage more meaningfully. Transcripts also offer the added benefit of translation into other languages.

Corporate Parenting Implications

20. None

Financial Implications

21. Further work is required to determine capital and ongoing revenue costs. A quotation has been received for initial hardware and labour costs totalling £10,772.64. There will also be staffing implications. Additional support from IT is anticipated at meetings in particular when live streaming is first introduced. The Communications Team will also be responsible for putting the recording of the meeting on the Council's Vimeo page.
22. The installation costs of a television in the Civic Reception area to show the live stream of meetings and Mayor/ Alderman photographs is £3,533.74.

Legal Implications

23. Public recording and reporting of Council meetings is subject to UK law. Individuals undertaking recording or reporting must ensure compliance with relevant legislation,

including the Human Rights Act 1998, the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR), the Data Protection Act 2018, and laws relating to defamation and libel.

24. The Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) advises that public authorities must conduct a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) prior to implementing livestreaming or recording, to identify and mitigate risks to personal data. Attendees must be clearly informed that meetings are being recorded, and appropriate safeguards such as broadcast delay and editing capability should be considered to prevent inadvertent publication of sensitive or defamatory content.
25. The Local Government Association (LGA) supports the use of digital technologies to enhance democratic engagement but emphasises that livestreaming must be inclusive and legally compliant. This includes meeting Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.2 Level AA for recorded content and providing captions for live streams where feasible.
26. Filming must be suspended when the meeting formally excludes the public, and no recording of individuals under 16 or vulnerable adults may take place without explicit consent from those responsible for them. Freedom of expression must be exercised responsibly, with respect for the rights and views of others.

Risk Assessment

27. Legal and reputational risks associated with livestreaming include potential breaches of data protection, defamation, and accessibility non-compliance. The ICO advises that livestreaming should be subject to a DPIA and that safeguards such as broadcast delay and editing capability be considered to mitigate these risks.

Wards Affected and Consultation with Ward/ Councillors

28. Not ward specific

Background Papers

29. None

Name of Contact Officer: Jonathan Nertney

Post Title: Head of Democratic Services

Telephone number: 01642 526312

Email Address: Jonathan.nertney@stockton.gov.uk

Protocol for Live Streaming, Filming and Recording of Council Meetings

1 Background

1.1 The main purpose of live streaming is to promote openness and accountability, and to support greater participation in local democracy by giving members of the public, elected members, officers and other interested parties the opportunity to view meetings without having to attend in person.

1.2 Live streaming and the retention of recordings online for later viewing does not replace the formal record of the meeting and the decisions made. The only formal record of any meeting of a Local Authority is its minutes and agendas which are required to be maintained and retained for a number of years.

2 Operating Procedure for Filming/Webcasts

2.1 At the start of each meeting to be filmed, an announcement will be made to the effect that the meeting is being live streamed, and that the Chair may also terminate or suspend the webcasting of the meeting, in accordance with this protocol. This will be confirmed by the Chair making the following statement: "I would like to remind everyone present that this meeting will be broadcast live to the internet and will be capable of repeated viewing."

2.2 Live streams will only commence at the beginning of a meeting when the Chair opens the meeting and will finish when the meeting is closed. During any adjournments or parts of the meeting where press and public are excluded, video and audio will be switched off and a holding screen displayed for those viewing live.

2.3 The Chair of the meeting shall have the discretion to terminate or suspend the livestream if:

- a) The meeting is adjourned;
- b) A resolution is lawfully passed to exclude the press and public from the meeting or a specific portion of the meeting;
- c) There is a public disturbance;
- d) Live streaming may lead to a potential infringement of the rights of any person or other breach of law, subject to legal advice; or
- e) The Chair considers that continuing to livestream would prejudice the proceedings of the meeting, subject to agreement by the majority of Members attending the meeting.

2.4 Recordings of live streams or parts of them may be removed if, in the reasonable opinion of the Monitoring Officer, it may prejudice the Council's or the public's interests.

2.5 Content may also be removed if the Monitoring Officer considers it necessary because all or part of the content of the recording is or is likely to be in breach of any statutory provision or common law, for example Data Protection and Human Rights legislation or provisions relating to confidential or exempt information. The reason for any decision to edit a recording will be logged and published.

2.7 Council anticipates that the need to exercise this power will occur only on an exceptional basis.

2.8 Any elected Member who is concerned about any recording should raise their concerns with the Monitoring Officer.

2.9 Should the live stream be halted for a technical reason the following procedure will be applied:

- a) The Chair will be informed as soon as practically possible
- b) The Chair may agree a short adjournment to see if the problem can be resolved. *If after adjourning the problem still persists, the meeting should continue irrespective of it not being transmitted live.

2.10 People under the age of 16 will not be filmed unless written parental/guardian permission has been provided.

2.11 Following the meeting, recordings of meetings will be made available to view on the Council's website as soon as practicable and not later than three working days after the meeting and will remain on the Council's website for a period of 12 months.

2.12 Closed captions and a transcript will be automatically generated and added to the video when uploaded. A disclaimer will be added alongside the videos to make it clear that the transcription is automatically generated, and that people can submit corrections if necessary.

3 Notification of Live Streaming

Agenda Packs

3.1 Included with each Council and Committee agenda notification the following notice will be attached for meetings that are being live steamed:

LIVESTREAMING OF COUNCIL MEETINGS

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

[Members of the public may also film or record this meeting]

If you make a representation to the meeting, you will be deemed to have consented to being filmed. By entering the body of the Chamber you are also consenting to being filmed and to the possible use of those images and sound recordings for live streaming and/or training purposes. If you do not wish to have your image captured, please contact Democratic Services.

Public Speakers

3.2 In any correspondence notifying public speakers of the meeting date at which permission to speak has been granted, the following advice will be included if the particular meeting is to be webcast:

Please note that this meeting will be filmed for live and/or subsequent broadcast on the Council's website. If you do not wish your public question/statement and subsequent discussion to be filmed/recorded, please contact Democratic Services to discuss your concerns.

To comply with the Data Protection Act 2018, we require the consent of parents or guardians before filming children or young people.

Signage at meetings

3.3 The following signage will be displayed inside and outside of the meeting room:

WEBCASTING

PLEASE NOTE THAT STOCKTON ON TEES BOROUGH COUNCIL WILL BROADCAST THIS MEETING LIVE ON ITS WEBSITE AND THE RECORD WILL BE ARCHIVED FOR FUTURE VIEWING

[MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC MAY ALSO FILM OR RECORD THIS MEETING]

AS YOUR IMAGE MAY BE INCLUDED IN THE BROADCAST, BY ENTERING THE CHAMBER YOU ARE CONSENTING TO BE FILMED AND TO THE POSSIBLE USE OF THOSE IMAGES AND ANY SOUND RECORDINGS

IF YOU DO NOT WISH TO HAVE YOUR IMAGE CAPTURED, PLEASE CONTACT DEMOCRATIC SERVICES.

4 Tweeting or blogging by members of the public and press

4.1 The Council permits social media reporting of all its public meetings.

5 Photography

5.1 The Council permits photography at all of its public meetings.

This page is intentionally left blank

REPORT TO CABINET

12 MARCH 2026

REPORT OF CORPORATE
MANAGEMENT TEAM

CABINET DECISION

Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Resources and Transport –
(Councillor Paul Rowling)

SOCIAL VALUE ANNUAL REPORT

Summary

This report presents the Social Value Annual Report, detailing the progress achieved in advancing the Council's Social Value Policy during 2025 and outlining planned developments for 2026/27.

Reasons for Recommendation(s)/Decision(s)

To provide an update of the Council's approach to Social Value.

Recommendations

1. Note the Social Value Annual Report (Annex 1).
2. Note the work undertaken during 2025/26 and the planned work in 2026/27.

Detail

1. Cabinet approved the Social Value Policy in March 2023, and the annual report in Annex 1 provides an update on the social value delivered during 2025. It includes case studies illustrating the range and impact of outcomes achieved, along with statistical information on the associated financial proxy value.
2. Since last year's report, the Council's approach to social value continues to develop, including:
 - The appointment of a dedicated Social Value Officer,
 - A refresh of the Themes Outcomes Measures (TOMs) that are used to measure social value and the associated financial proxy values,
 - Alignment of the refreshed TOMs to the Stockton on Tees Plan,
 - Updates to the Social Value Calculators and dashboards used during the procurement process,

- Closer work with Catalyst to ensure the VCSE sector benefits from social value commitments,
 - Initial work to explore how social value commitments made in Section 106 Agreements and Development Agreements can be captured and reported, and
 - Networking with various community organisations/ VCSE organisations to understand how social value can help them
 - Working both regionally and sub-regionally to share good practice and approaches to social value.
3. Work planned for 2026/27 includes:
- Work with Catalyst to develop a unified Corporate Social Responsibility and Social Value Framework to ensure a consistent, strategic approach to allocating social value contributions and CSR-related financial donations from local businesses,
 - Continue to develop processes to monitor and capture social value commitments made through Section 106 Agreements and Development Agreements,
 - Identify other contract opportunities to include social value.
 - Use social value case studies in press releases to demonstrate how suppliers, providers and contractors contribute to the borough through their social value commitments.
 -

Consultation and engagement

4. Discussion with Catalyst.

Next Steps

5. Continue the development of the Council's approach to Social Value and Corporate Social Responsibility.
6. Continue to monitor the financial proxy values of social value.

Name of Contact Officer: Martin Skipsey

Post Title: Assistant Director Procurement & Governance

Telephone number: 01642 526364

Email address: martin.skipsey@stockton.gov.uk

Social Value Annual Report

Social Value 2025



Cabinet Report – Social Value Update

1. Purpose of the Report

To provide an update on Social Value delivered across Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council during 2025 and how changes to the national Themes, Outcomes and Measures (TOMs) have been refreshed and aligned with the Stockton-on-Tees Plan 2024.

2. Background

The National Themes Outcomes and Measures (TOMs) Framework has been refreshed and now comprise of the following Themes;

- Work Local Skills and Employment
- Economy Growth of Responsible and Local Business
- Community Healthier, Safer and more Resilient Communities
- Planet Decarbonising and safeguarding world

The new TOM's have been aligned to the Councils priorities;

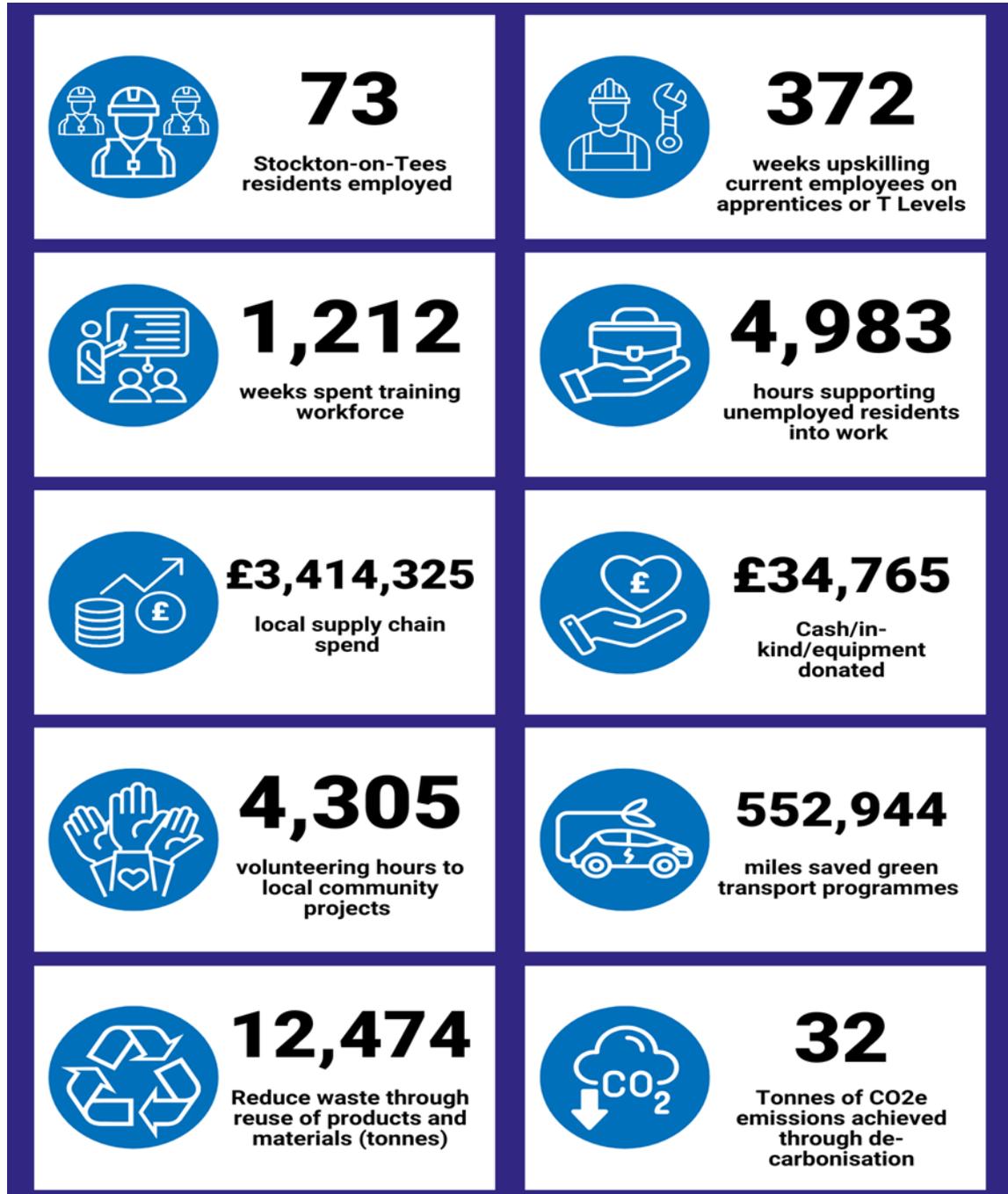
- Priority one – the best start in life to achieve big ambitions
- Priority two – healthy and resilient communities
- Priority three – A great place to live, work and visit
- Priority four – an inclusive economy
- Priority five – A Sustainable Council

As a result, the key outcomes Stockton-on-Tees Council aiming to achieve are as follows;

- Increased employment for Stockton residents
- Improved skills and training
- Work placements for Care Leavers, SEND and NEET
- Embedding Social Value in supply chains
- Increased opportunities for VCSEs and SMEs
- Improved health and wellbeing
- Reduced environmental impact

5. Social Value Delivery 2025

Between January and December 2025, the Council delivered £8,130,382.13 in measurable Social Value. A more detailed report can be found in Annex A



6. Other Contributions

Section 106 Planning Agreements

Caddick Construction received planning approval from the Planning Department to construct a warehouse on Queen Elizabeth Way, Land South of Lockheed Close, Preston Farm Industrial Estate. As part of the Section 106 agreement, Caddick produced a Social Value Plan with a total commitment value of **£9,276,340**. This contribution has not been reflected in current reporting, as we currently only capture Social Value delivered through procurement. However, the Social Value Officer has been actively supporting Caddick in achieving these commitments.

7. Case Studies

ESH – Stockton Waterfront Phase 1 & 2

- 41 Stockton Residents were directly employed by ESH
- 4,520 days worked by Stockton Residents
- £3.9m spend in the Tees Valley regions of which £2.1m spent with n the local supply chain in Stockton
- 755 days' work experience provided for Stockton residents
- 8 Stockton residents have undertaken work experience placements, of which 4 were paid placements studying Civil Engineering and Quantity Surveying
- 538 hours volunteering hours delivered supporting community activities in Stockton
- £2,200 donations in kind community support in Stockton
- 68 hours delivered in 17 local primary and 3 secondary schools and colleges supporting STEM curriculum subjects and employability skills
- 2,092 hours employability skills training, CV and interviewing support delivered to unemployed Stockton residents
- 14,608 tonnes of clay have been reused on site, saving approximately 104 tonnes of Co2e in comparison to using imported fill
- 7,000 tonnes of waste diverted from land fill



Premier Road Markings

Premier Road markings have supported several local projects via donations, volunteering and creating green infrastructure.

- Great Nort Air Ambulance Service – Refreshing Road markings and hatched areas at the Depot at Progress House, Urlay Nook in Eaglescliffe



- Crooksbar Primary School, Petrel Crescent, Norton – enhancing the school playground by creating a brighter, more engaging space for the children to play.



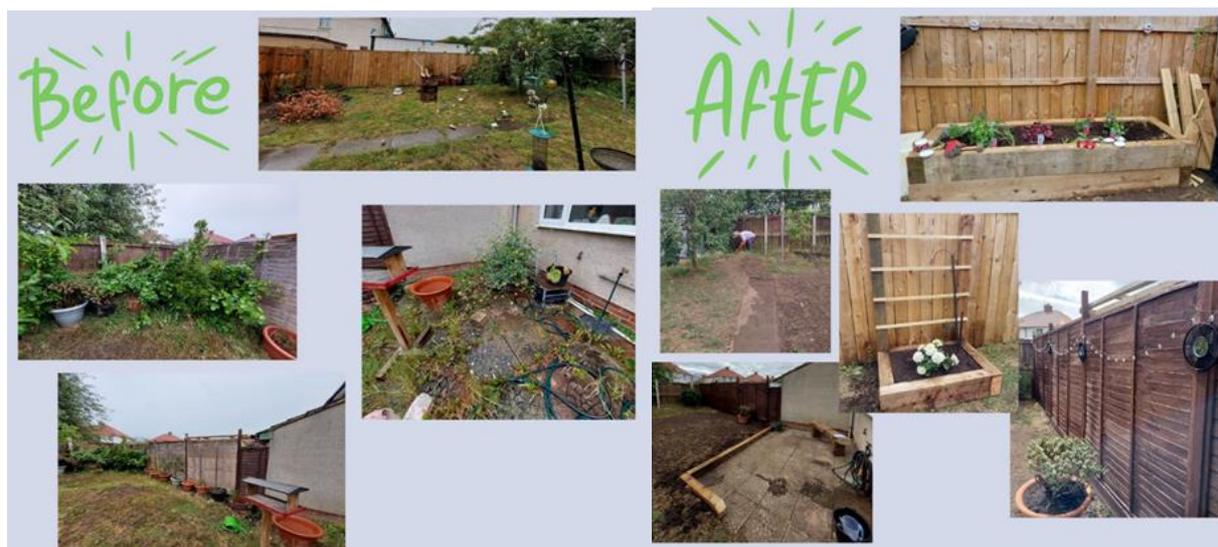
Pioneering Care Partnership - Stockton Community Wellbeing Champions (SCWC) - Garden Makeover that Sparkled with Community Spirit

The Stockton Community Wellbeing Champions (SCWC) team, alongside partners Thirteen and Groundwork NE & Cumbria, wanted to bring people together and create a positive impact, by creating garden makeovers that would transform outdoor spaces for both communities. PCP achieved their Social Value commitments by volunteering and supporting people to engage in health interventions.

Residents attending the warm welcome housing and environmental events at Primrose Hill Community Centre, and Newtown Community Resource Centre and, were invited to enter a garden makeover competition. The more times residents engaged with the team the more chances they had at winning resulting in one lucky resident from Primrose Hill winning the prize of a garden makeover. Seven volunteers weeded and pruned, painted fences, installed raised beds, added charming touches like solar lights and garden décor. They cleared patios, planted vibrant flowers, and even gave the bird feeder a fresh coat of paint.

For the resident, this wasn't just a makeover, it was a lifeline as they were going through a challenging time, they found "joy and peace" in the renewed garden. The space became easier to access and a source of comfort, boosting their mental wellbeing.

This project was not about a garden. It was about community, kindness, and the power of coming together. Through voluntary hours, health and wellbeing initiatives, and sheer determination, SCWC and its partners turned a patch of earth into a sanctuary and reminded everyone that even small acts can make a significant difference.



Tees Active - Voluntary work to help improve green spaces

During 2025- Tees Active employees volunteered by participating in a range of events aimed at enhancing green infrastructure, supporting biodiversity, and maintaining clean spaces.

- Five Tees Active employees' volunteered to help plant 400 trees at Kinloss Walk in Thornaby
- Thirteen Tees Active employees volunteered to take part in a litter pick along the river at Round Hill Country Park in Ingleby Barwick



Bristow and Sutor – Enforcemnet Agency Services

Staff from Bristow & Sutor volunteered 24 hours of their time to ROC Group, a service that offers respite support for families with children with disabilities and life-limiting illnesses to help create a sensory space and community garden, complete with a teepee, sand-and-water play tray, and a mud kitchen at the Redhill Family Hub.

Staff also volunteered for 8 hours and donated £130 towards paint and materials and redecorated the reception area at Catalyst House, Yarm Road, T18 3NJ. Made a donation of £3,000 into Catalyst community grants program and paid £1,680 to support the delivery of British sign language classes at Lakoka Hub CIC.



Annex A



2025 Social Value Achievements

2025 SV Achievement

£8,130,382

Total Social Value Achieved
2025

Achievement By Themes



Work

73

Stockton Residents
Employed

1,212

Weeks Spent on
Workforce Training

4,983

Hours Supporting
Unemployed Residents...

200

Weeks of Paid/Unpaid
Work Placements

134

Hours of Educational
Visits/Career Talks for...

Planet

552,944

Miles saved in Green
Transport Programmes

12,474

Tonnes Waste reduction
from Reuse of...

32

Tonnes of CO2e
Emissions achieved...

Community

£34,765

Donated Cash/In-
kind/Equipments

4,121

Tonnes Waste reduction
from Reuse of...

Economy

£3,414,363

Local Supply Chain
Spend

2025 Social Value Achievements Across all Themes

Works



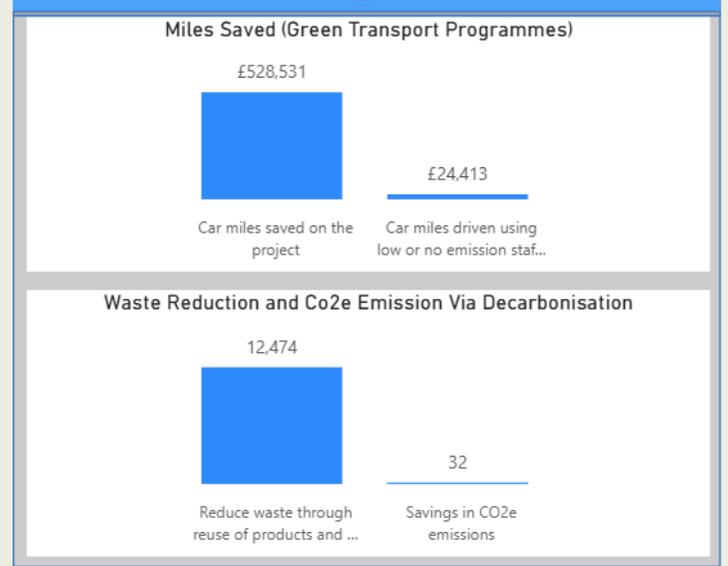
Community



Economy



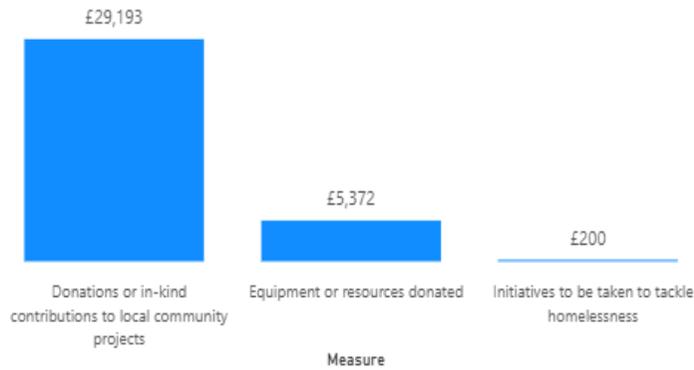
Planet



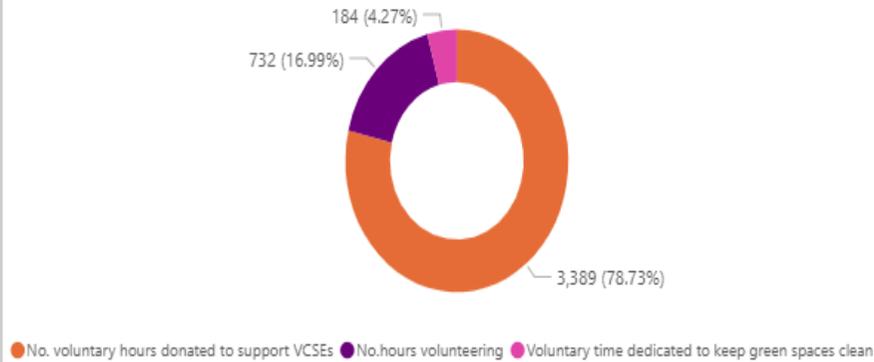
2025 Social Value Achievements -Community

Community

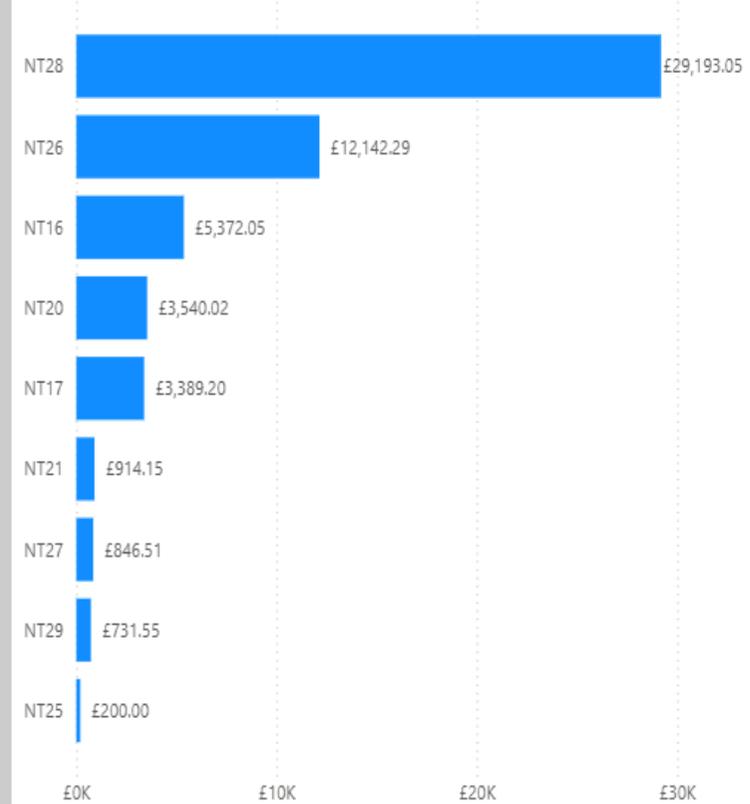
Donations Made Towards Building Resilient Communities



Volunteering Hours To Local Projects



Achievement by Measures

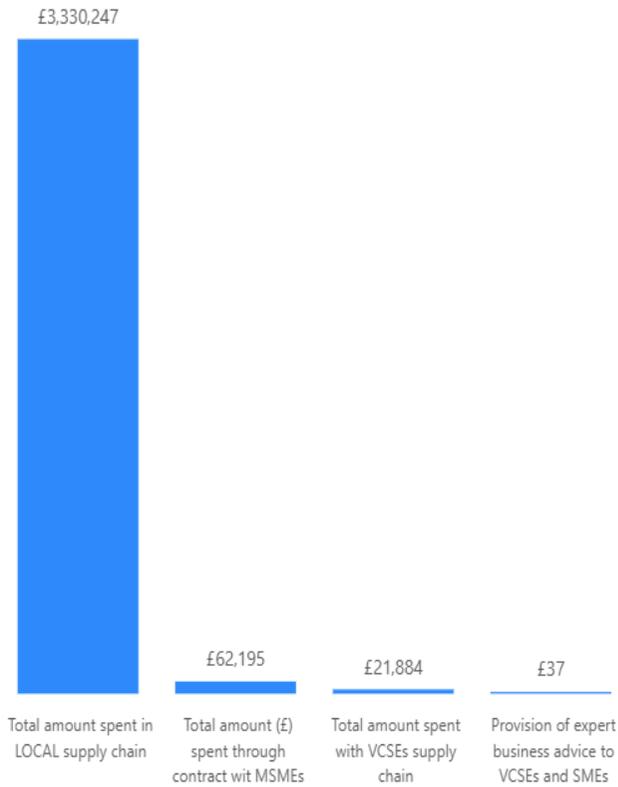


2025 Social Value Achievements - Economy

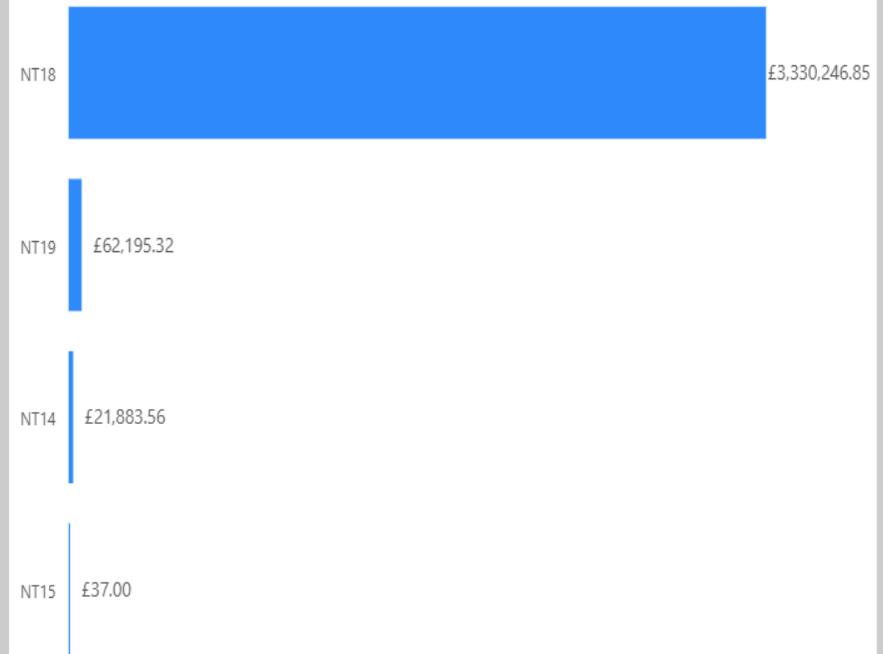


Economy

Economy - Building Diverse and Sustainable Supply Chains



Achievement by Measures

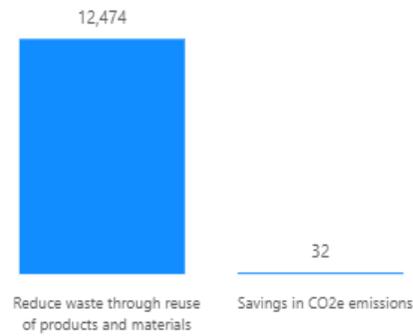


2025 Social Value Achievements - Planet



Planet

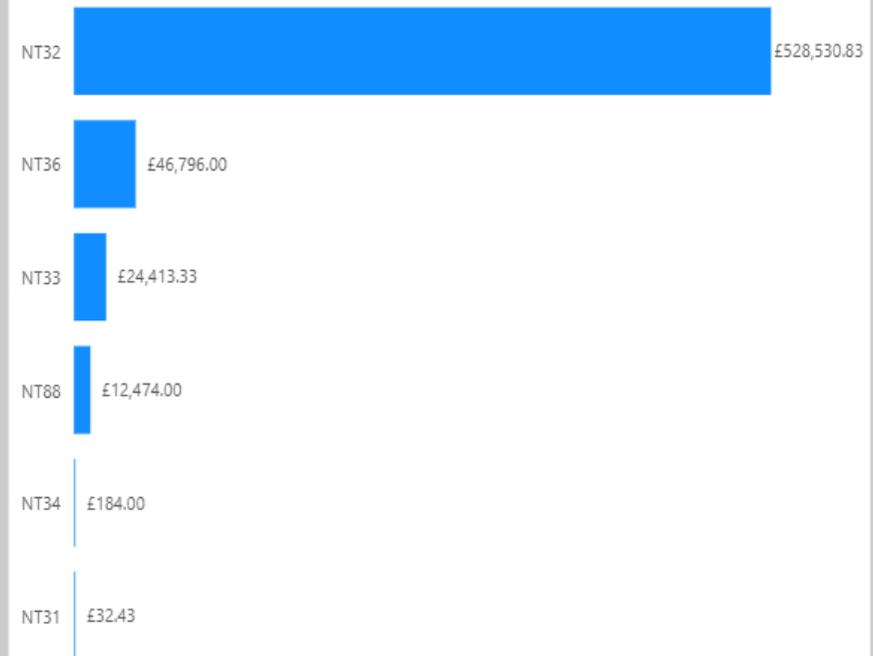
Waste Reduction and Co2e Emission Via Decarbonisation



Miles Saved (Green Transport Programmes)



Achievement by Measures



REPORT TO CABINET

12 MARCH 2026

**REPORT OF CORPORATE
MANAGEMENT TEAM**

CABINET DECISION

**Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Resources and Transport –
(Councillor Paul Rowling)**

PROCUREMENT PLAN/ HIGHER VALUE CONTRACTS

Summary

This report seeks approval from Cabinet for the award of planned higher value contracts where the value exceeds the limit on officer delegated authority and which are either funded within the approved MTFP/ Capital Programme or are subject to a bid for external funding.

Reasons for Recommendation(s)/Decision(s)

To enable Cabinet to exercise its strategic oversight of higher value planned procurement projects, in accordance with the constitution.

Recommendations

That Cabinet

1. approves the contracts listed in Annex 1;
2. gives authority to the relevant Director or Assistant Director to make the specific contract award decision and any subsequent contract variation, annual inflationary uplifts (where allowed in the contract terms and conditions) and extension decision in accordance with the delegations listed in Annex 1;

Detail

1. The constitution defines a range of decisions that require a specific Cabinet approval, the financial threshold for which is set at a level of £500k or more. Annex 1 lists contracts that exceeds the financial threshold and have not otherwise been delegated to officers.

2. Further Procurement Plan/ Higher Value Contracts Reports will be presented to Cabinet for approval during the year as details of new contracts needed to deliver capital schemes are developed or new revenue funded contracts are identified.

Community Impact and Equality and Poverty Impact Assessment

3. N/A

Corporate Parenting Implications

4. N/A

Financial Implications

1. The report includes higher value contracts expected to be awarded in the 2026/27 financial year. The expenditure committed as a result of these tenders/ quotes is planned and remains within the Council's approved budget/ MTFP/ Capital Programme or is subject to a bid for external funding which will ensure that at the point of contract award, funds are available within the MTFP/ Capital Programme.

Legal Implications

5. Notwithstanding Cabinet approval it remains the responsibility of officers to ensure that the correct processes within Contract Procedure Rules have been followed and that where applicable the Procurement Act 2023 or the Provider Selection Regime introduced by the Health and Care Bill (2022) is complied with.
6. Where the value of goods, services or works exceeds the threshold at which the procurement process must comply with the Procurement Act 2023, either a tender exercise or the use of a suitable framework agreement will comply with the Regulations.

Risk Assessment

7. There are several risks relating to procurement. Firstly, the Council spends a considerable amount of public money on goods, services and works. Having effective Contract Procedure Rules and ensuring compliance with the Procurement Act 2023 can help mitigate the risk of accusations of corruption and help demonstrate value for money and transparency. Secondly, effective tender/ quote processes and contract management also reduce the risk of poor supplier selection and subsequent performance which can impact service delivery.

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

8. N/A

Background Papers

9. N/A

Name of Contact Officer: Martin Skipsey

Post Title: Assistant Director Procurement & Governance

Telephone number: 01642 526364

Email address: martin.skipsey@stockton.gov.uk

Annex 1

Contract Title: NEPO214 - Grounds Maintenance Equipment and Plant	
Contract Purpose The contract is required to supply equipment to maintain parks, open spaces, and highways to statutory standards, supporting essential services such as grass cutting, tree maintenance, and seasonal operations.	
Contract Term (Framework) Commencing 01/09/2026 or up to 4 years	
Contract Term (SBC Call off) Commencing 01/03/2027 for up to 4 years	
Contract Value The total spend over the 4-year duration is anticipated to be circa £1.7m (based on current contract rates).	
Procurement Process NEPO will carry out a tender process under Procurement Act 2023 to establish a framework agreement of suppliers from which to purchase/ hire of Grounds Maintenance Equipment and Plant. The Council will then carry out a further competition call-off process from the new NEPO framework agreement to appoint a suitable supplier to supply Grounds Maintenance Equipment and Plant.	
Key Decision: Yes	Funding within MTFP: Yes
Delegated Officer: Reuben Kench, Director of Community Services, Environment and Culture	
Checks and Balances: Decision in consultation with other appropriate officers for professional advice to include Finance and Procurement. Legal for certain specified decisions.	

Contract Title: Peer Advocacy	
Contract Purpose	
<p>To improve health, wellbeing, and life chances for people with multiple disadvantages in Stockton-on-Tees using an asset-based approach to working with individuals.</p> <p>The Peer Advocacy service will provide a peer-led, community-based programme for individuals over the age of 18 years, with at least three of the five of the following disadvantages: homelessness, substance misuse, domestic abuse, contact with criminal justice system and mental health issue. Support will be coordinated across the system, with specific links and interdependencies established with services that provide support for each of the specific disadvantages (e.g. substance misuse services). The service will also seek to recruit people with lived experience of multiple disadvantage as Peer Link Workers.</p>	
Contract Term	
Commencing 01/07/2027 for a period of up to 3 years.	
Contract Value	
£200k per year, subject to external funding from ICB Health Inequalities Funding.	
Procurement Process	
The Council will carry out an open tender under Procurement Act 2023 (Light Touch Regime), above threshold.	
Key Decision: No	Funding within MTFP: No
Delegated Officer: Carolyn Nice, Director of Adults, Health and Wellbeing	
Checks and Balances: Decision in consultation with other appropriate officers for professional advice to include Finance and Procurement. Legal for certain specified decisions.	

Contract Title: Framework Agreement for SBC Minor Works	
Contract Purpose	
<p>The Minor Works framework is required to appoint a framework of suppliers to provide services to the Council such as electrical works, roofing, footpath and carriage way minor repairs, flooring, windows, energy efficiency related measures and Disabled Facilities Grant extensions etc.</p> <p>This framework will be split into approximately 15 Lots and is required to purchase minor works services to maintain and improve the Council's buildings and other physical assets to ensure they remain safe and can meet operational requirements.</p> <p>The framework will be of particular interest to local SMEs, attract social value commitments and create an economic impact in the borough.</p>	
Contract Term	
Commencing 01/10/2026 for a period of up to 8 years.	
Contract Value	
Current annual spend is variable and dependent upon individual project requirements. Average annual spend over the last 4 years has been circa £1.97m.	
Procurement Process	
The Council will carry out an open tender process under Procurement Act 2023 to establish an open framework agreement of suppliers from which to purchase Minor Works.	
Key Decision: Yes	Funding within MTFP: Yes
Delegated Officer: Reuben Kench, Director of Community Services, Environment and Culture	
Checks and Balances: Decision in consultation with other appropriate officers for professional advice to include Finance and Procurement. Legal for certain specified decisions.	

Contract Title: Further Competition from NEPO210 for Road Markings and Studs – Lot 16	
Contract Purpose	
The contract will include the maintenance and refurbishment of superimposed road markings, cats eyes and road studs in recently re-surfaced roads or surface dressed roads.	
Contract Term	
Commencing March 2027 for a period of 2 years with 2 x 12-month optional extensions.	
Contract Value	
The current annual spend is circa £150k.	
Procurement Process	
The Council will carry out a further competition from NEPO210 – Highway Surfacing Works Framework Agreement – Lot 16 Road Markings from which to purchase Road Markings and Studs.	
Key Decision: No	Funding within MTFP: Yes
Delegated Officer: Reuben Kench, Director of Community Services, Environment & Culture	
Checks and Balances: Decision in consultation with other appropriate officers for professional advice to include Finance and Procurement. Legal for certain specified decisions.	

Contract Title: NEPO219 Buildings Materials Open Framework	
Contract Purpose	
The supply of Building Materials such as plumbing and heating parts, electricals, doors, windows and extends as far as modular buildings.	
Contract Term	
Commencing 03/01/2027 for a period of 8 years.	
Contract Value	
Current annual spend is variable and dependent upon individual project requirements. Current annual spend is approx. £450K.	
Procurement Process	
NEPO will carry out a tender process under Procurement Act 2023 to establish a framework agreement of suppliers from which to purchase Buildings Materials.	
Key Decision: No	Funding within MTFP: Yes
Delegated Officer: Reuben Kench, Director of Community Services, Environment and Culture.	
Checks and Balances: Decision in consultation with other appropriate officers for professional advice to include Finance and Procurement. Legal for certain specified decisions.	

Contract Title: Framework for Supported Living Services Smaller non-building-based schemes, with shared delivery hours	
Contract Purpose	
Supported Living Schemes for individuals with Learning Disabilities, Mental Health Conditions and Autism, who reside within the Borough of Stockton-on-Tees. Each of these schemes will involve a minimum of 2 supported individuals, with an element of shared service delivery.	
Contract Term	
The new contract will commence during 2026/27, ending March 2031.	
Contract Value	
The current annual spend for these Supported Living Schemes are circa £3.3m.	
Procurement Process	
The Council will undertake an open tender process under Procurement Act 2023 (Light Touch Regime), to appoint providers the framework agreement.	
Key Decision: Yes	Funding within MTFP: Yes
Delegated Officer: Carolyn Nice, Director of Adults, Health and Wellbeing	
Checks and Balances: Decision in consultation with other appropriate officers for professional advice to include Finance and Procurement. Legal for certain specified decisions.	

Contract Title: Specialist Stop Smoking Service	
Contract Purpose	
<p>To reduce levels of Smoking and Vaping for Stockton-on-Tees' residents and improve health outcomes. The provision of a high-quality and evidence-based stop smoking services is a priority in reducing health inequalities and improving health among local populations to reduce the long-term impact on health and social care resources. Specialist Stop Smoking Services contribute to the ambitions of creating a smokefree generation and tackling youth vaping.</p>	
Contract Term	
<p>Commencing 01/04/2027. The period of this contract is to be determined and is likely to be for a maximum duration of 5 years.</p>	
Contract Value	
<p>The current annual spend is circa £565k.</p>	
Procurement Process	
<p>The Council will consider the option of a direct award process allowed for within the Health Care Services (Provider Selection Regime) Regulations 2023.</p>	
Key Decision: Yes	Funding within MTFP: Yes
Delegated Officer: Carolyn Nice, Director of Adults, Health and Wellbeing	
Checks and Balances: Decision in consultation with other appropriate officers for professional advice to include Finance and Procurement. Legal for certain specified decisions.	

Contract Title: Further Competition from the Older People’s Care Home Framework, for Reablement and Rehabilitation Beds in Care Homes	
Contract Purpose To allocate designated Care Home setting(s) from which focused short-term community reablement and rehabilitation care services can be delivered.	
Contract Term The contract will commence in 2026/27 and end in March 2031.	
Contract Value The current annual spend is estimated to be £442k.	
Procurement Process The Council will run a further competition from the Older Peoples Care Home Framework Agreement.	
Key Decision: No	Funding within MTFP: Yes
Delegated Officer: Carolyn Nice, Director of Adults, Health and Wellbeing	
Checks and Balances: Decision in consultation with other appropriate officers for professional advice to include Finance and Procurement. Legal for certain specified decisions.	

Contract Title: Further competition from the Older People’s Care Home Framework - Single Gender Units in Care Homes	
Contract Purpose	
To allocate a suitable Care Home setting(s) that is able to designate a bespoke area, which will be dedicated for the provision of residential care for male only residents.	
Contract Term	
The contract will commence in 2026/27 and will end in March 2031.	
Contract Value	
The current annual spend is estimated to be between £170-£260k.	
Procurement Process	
The Council will run a further competition from the Older Peoples Care Home Framework Agreement.	
Key Decision: No	Funding within MTFP: Yes
Delegated Officer: Carolyn Nice, Director of Adults, Health and Wellbeing	
Checks and Balances: Decision in consultation with other appropriate officers for professional advice to include Finance and Procurement. Legal for certain specified decisions.	

Contract Title: Platform Refresh	
Contract Purpose	
Refresh of the Council's ICT Partnership (Xentrall Shared Services) server, storage, and data protection platform. The platform provides the underpinning infrastructure to operate virtual servers that operate most of the Council's line of business applications, in a highly available manner. The system also supports the data protection of these including off-site backups.	
Contract Term	
Commencing 01/05/2027 for a period of 5 years with a 2-year optional extension period (contract to be agreed in 26/27FY).	
Contract Value	
The total contract cost is anticipated to be £1.4m over 7 years. Split SBC £960k / DBC £440.	
Procurement Process	
The Council will call off from a suitable framework agreement to allow the purchase of the Virtual Server Platform.	
Key Decision: No	Funding within MTFP: Yes
Delegated Officer: Ian Coxon, Finance, Transformation and Performance - Xentrall	
Checks and Balances: Decision in consultation with other appropriate officers for professional advice to include Finance and Procurement. Legal for certain specified decisions.	

Contract Title: Managed Print Service	
Contract Purpose	
<p>The supply & maintenance of multi-function print devices, associated hardware maintenance, consumables service, device fleet management, device replacements within the contract period, Managed Print Services software and the contract for per-click print costs which allow council staff to print / copy documents.</p> <p>This is a shared services contract for both SBC & DBC</p>	
Contract Term	
Commencing 26/09/2026 for a period of 5 years.	
Contract Value	
The total contract cost is anticipated to be circa £791k over the 5 years based on current contract costs. Split SBC – £676,000 / DBC £115,000.	
Procurement Process	
The Council will call off from a suitable framework agreement to allow the purchase of the Managed Print Services Contract.	
Key Decision: No	Funding within MTFP: Yes
Delegated Officer: Ian Coxon, Finance, Transformation and Performance - Xentrall	
Checks and Balances: Decision in consultation with other appropriate officers for professional advice to include Finance and Procurement. Legal for certain specified decisions.	

Contract Title: Azure CSP & Additional Licenses	
Contract Purpose	
<p>The contract gives the Council practical tools that protect data, support access, and improve decision making. Offsite immutable backups keep information safe and recoverable if files are lost or systems are affected by a cyber incident.</p> <p>Azure supports our telephony platform so calls are routed to the right teams and the contact centre, helping residents reach us quickly.</p> <p>Power BI within Microsoft Fabric provides clear, timely reporting and analysis so services can track demand, monitor performance and target resources more effectively.</p> <p>Where eligible, academic licensing offers discounted pricing that reduces ongoing software costs compared with standard commercial rates.</p> <p>Together, these services strengthen our digital foundations, deliver better insight from data, and provide good value for money for the Council.</p>	
Contract Term	
Commencing 19/07/2026 for a period of 3 years.	
Contract Value	
The total contract cost is anticipated to be £220k per year (£660k total). Split SBC £132k / DBC £88k/ year.	
Procurement Process	
The Council will call off from a suitable established framework agreement to allow the purchase of the CSP licenses.	
Key Decision: No	Funding within MTFP: Yes
Delegated Officer: Ian Coxon, Finance, Transformation and Performance - Xentrall	
Checks and Balances: Decision in consultation with other appropriate officers for professional advice to include Finance and Procurement. Legal for certain specified decisions.	

Contract Title: Rolling Contract for Apprenticeship Training	
Contract Purpose	
The apprenticeship levy contract provides the Council with a means to offer apprenticeship training to employees in order to develop and upskill them.	
Contract Term	
Commencing 01/04/2026 for one year.	
Contract Value	
Approximately £675,000 goes into the levy every year to fund apprenticeships. The spend is variable every year.	
The cost for 26/27 is difficult to determine as it is dependant of number of apprenticeships undertaken. The expenditure is anticipated to be in the region of £800k and the shortfall is funded from existing levy underspend in previous years.	
Procurement Process	
The Council will call off from a suitable established framework agreement to allow the purchase of high value apprenticeship Training such as Social Worker Degree, Children’s Residential training and Management Apprenticeships.	
Where the cost of the training exceeds the Council’s quotation threshold of £15K and more than one training provider can provide the training, a desktop selection process will be undertaken by the OD Lead and Service area to select an appropriate training provider.	
Key Decision: Yes	Funding within MTFP: Yes
Delegated Officer: Ged Morton, Director of Corporate Services	
Checks and Balances: Decision in consultation with other appropriate officers for professional advice to include Finance and Procurement. Legal for certain specified decisions.	

Contract Title: ESPO Supply of Teachers and Temporary Staff	
Contract Purpose	
To provide the Council with access to temporary education agency staff to fulfil our statutory requirement with regards to ensuring that all children are educated.	
Contract Term	
Commencing Sept 2026 for a period of 4 years.	
Contract Value	
Spend is variable depending on the number of temporary staff required. Expenditure for 24/25 was approximately £367k.	
Procurement Process	
The Council will carry out a further competition process from lot 1 of an ESPO Framework and award a contract to 4 providers.	
Key Decision: No	Funding within MTFP: Yes
Delegated Officer: Majella McCarthy, Director of Children’s Services	
Checks and Balances: Decision in consultation with other appropriate officers for professional advice to include Finance and Procurement. Legal for certain specified decisions.	

<p>Contract Title: Provision of Insurance Coverage & Associated Services</p>	
<p>Contract Purpose</p> <p>Insurance for Property, Employer and Public Liability (both SBC staff and the public), Motor Vehicles, Fidelity Guarantee, and Travel.</p> <p>Insurance cover is needed to protect the Council against financial losses arising from operational risks, public liability, and unforeseen incidents. This is a statutory requirement.</p>	
<p>Contract Term</p> <p>3 year plus 2 x 12 month extensions 01/06/2026 – 31/05/2029 Ext 1 01/06/2029 – 31/05/2030 Ext 2 01/06/2030 – 31/05/2031</p>	
<p>Contract Value Approx. £4,841,555 – including extensions</p>	
<p>Procurement Process</p> <p>A further competition will be carried via the ESPO/ NEPO Insurance Placement II Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS).</p> <p>The DPS covers multiple classes of insurance which means different insurance companies may be appointed to provide specific types of insurance cover.</p>	
<p>Key Decision: Yes</p>	<p>Funding within MTFP: Yes</p>
<p>Delegated Officer: Ged Morton, Director of Corporate Services</p>	
<p>Checks and Balances: Decision in consultation with other appropriate officers for professional advice to include Finance and Procurement. Legal for certain specified decisions.</p>	

CAPITAL FUNDED CONTRACTS

Department: Highways, Transport and Design.	Category: Carriageway resurfacing contract
Scheme: Carriageway resurfacing programme 26/27	Budget: £2,000,000
<p>Contract(s) Purpose</p> <p>Stockton Borough Council has a statutory responsibility to maintain the highway network in a safe and serviceable condition. Extending the call off contract from the NEPO 210 Highway Surfacing and Cold Planing framework with Tarmac Trading Limited is essential to fulfilling this duty. The contract ensures the continued delivery of planned surfacing programmes that preserve the condition of the road network, reduce deterioration, and minimise costly reactive repairs.</p> <p>Without this contract in place, road defects would escalate, increasing risks to public safety and exposing the Council to potential legal claims for failing to meet its maintenance obligations. Poorly maintained roads would also disrupt local businesses, public transport, and emergency services, while limiting the Council’s ability to use sustainable construction materials and methods aligned with environmental objectives.</p> <p>Maintaining this contract is therefore critical to protecting public safety, managing financial risk, supporting the local economy, and delivering long term, sustainable highway improvements. The contract will be drawn down with spend in both capital and revenue budget areas.</p>	
<p>Contract(s) Value</p> <p>The projected spend for the next 12 months is £2m. The anticipated budget for 2026–2027 is £1.6m, with a further contribution of £400k from the Department for Transport (DfT) and Tees Valley Combined Authority (TVCA).</p>	
<p>Procurement Process</p> <p>The Council will call-off from the NEPO210 Framework (Lot 1) for Highway Surfacing Works.</p>	
Key Decision: Yes	Funding within Capital Programme: Yes
<p>Delegated Officer:</p> <p>Reuben Kench, Director of Community Services, Environment and Culture</p>	
<p>Checks and Balances: Decision in consultation with other appropriate officers for professional advice to include Finance and Procurement. Legal for certain specified decisions.</p>	

Department: Children’s Services	Category: School Investment Strategy SEN Investment
Scheme: Mill Lane Primary School SEND Project	Approved Budget: £1,700,000
Contract(s) Purpose Refurbishment works and the construction of an extension at Mill Lane Primary School to create a Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Unit focused on supporting children with Speech, Language and Communication Needs	
Contract(s) Value £1.4m	
Procurement Process The Council will carry out a further competition under a suitable framework agreement to appoint a suitable contractor.	
Key Decision: Yes	Funding within Capital Programme: Yes
Delegated Officer: Majella McCarthy, Director of Children’s Services	
Checks and Balances: Decision in consultation with other appropriate officers for professional advice to include Finance and Procurement. Legal for certain specified decisions.	

Department: Children's Services	Category: Education
Scheme: Northfield School & Sports College Extension to Create Additional Toilet Facilities	Approved Budget: £1,250,000
Contract(s) Purpose Construction of an extension to infill at courtyard at Northfield School & Sports College to create additional toilet provision	
Contract(s) Value £950k	
Procurement Process The Council will carry out a further competition under a suitable framework agreement to appoint a suitable contractor.	
Key Decision: Yes	Funding within Capital Programme: Yes
Delegated Officer: Majella McCarthy , Director of Children's Services	
Checks and Balances: Decision in consultation with other appropriate officers for professional advice to include Finance and Procurement. Legal for certain specified decisions.	

Department: Children’s Services	Category: School Investment Strategy SEN Investment
Scheme: St Johns Primary School SEND Project	Approved Budget: £5,555,058
Contract(s) Purpose Refurbishment works and the construction of an extension at St Johns Primary School to create a 24-place SEND Unit	
Contract(s) Value £4.5m	
Procurement Process The Council will carry out a direct award from the NEPO Construction Framework. A direct award route is justified due to the urgent programme timescales, the complex phasing required to ensure continuity of educational delivery, and the necessity for Early Contractor Involvement to derisk design, logistics, sequencing and cost certainty prior to construction. The NEPO Construction Framework permits direct award where the supplier best meets the Council’s needs and where early engagement is essential for safe and efficient project delivery	
Key Decision: Yes	Funding within Capital Programme: Yes
Delegated Officer: Majella McCarthy, Director of Children’s Services	
Checks and Balances: Decision in consultation with other appropriate officers for professional advice to include Finance and Procurement. Legal for certain specified decisions.	

Department: Highways, Transport and Design	Category: Highways
Scheme: Stockton Town Centre Cycleway	Approved Budget: £5,500,000.00
Contract(s) Purpose Construction of a Stockton Town Centre Cycleway to create upgrades to cycling and walking infrastructure.	
Contract(s) Value £5.5m	
Procurement Process The Council will appoint through a direct award to the number one ranked contractor on the NEPO Civil Engineering and Infrastructure Lot 5 Framework for the delivery of the cycleway scheme. This route has been requested by the Tees Valley Combined Authority due to the project's original urgent programme requirements, the complex phasing needed to maintain safe and continuous access throughout the works, and the critical need for Early Contractor Involvement. Early engagement will help to derisk the design, optimise logistics and construction sequencing, and provide greater cost certainty ahead of mobilisation. The NEPO Civil Engineering and Infrastructure Lot 5 Framework permits direct award when a supplier demonstrably meets the Council's requirements and when early involvement is essential to ensure safe, efficient and timely project delivery	
Key Decision: Yes	Funding within Capital Programme: TBC, funding is subject to receiving the TVCA grant and subsequent update of the Capital Programme. The contract will not be let until funding is secured.
Delegated Officer: Reuben Kench, Director of Community Services, Environment and Culture	
Checks and Balances: Decision in consultation with other appropriate officers for professional advice to include Finance and Procurement. Legal for certain specified decisions.	

Department: Regeneration & Inclusive Growth	Category: Shopping Centre Investment
Scheme: Wellington Square Shopping Centre Car Park	Approved Budget: £1,000,000
<p>Contract(s) Purpose</p> <p>Refurbishment of top deck of Wellington Square Shopping Centre car park. Surface is currently in very poor condition and has effectively failed. Works are required to repair, resurface and waterproof the top deck of the car park along with replacement of defective light fittings and redecoration of metal work.</p>	
<p>Contract(s) Value</p> <p>£770k</p>	
<p>Procurement Process</p> <p>The council's appointed property manager, Knight Frank, has carried out a full tender process and obtained quotes from five different contractors.</p>	
Key Decision: Yes	Funding within Capital Programme: Yes
Delegated Officer: Tracey Carter, Director – Regeneration & Inclusive Growth	
<p>Checks and Balances: Decision in consultation with other appropriate officers for professional advice to include Finance and Procurement. Legal for certain specified decisions.</p>	

REPORT TO CABINET

12 MARCH 2026

REPORT OF CORPORATE MANAGEMENT TEAM

**Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Resources and Transport –
Lead Cabinet Member – Councillor Paul Rowling**

Minutes of Various Bodies

Summary

The attached minutes are for consideration by Cabinet.

Reasons for Recommendation

To enable Cabinet to view the minutes of various bodies.

Recommendations

That the minutes of the meetings detailed in the appendices be received.

Detail

1. In accordance with the Council's Constitution or previous practice the minutes of the meeting of the bodies indicated below are submitted to members for consideration:-

TSAB – 8 October 2025

SSP – 26 November 2025

TVCA Cabinet – 30 January 2026

Consultation and engagement

Not applicable.

Next Steps

None.

Name of Contact Officer: Jonathan Nertney

Post Title: Head of Democratic Services

Telephone number: 01642 526312

Email address: jonathan.nertney@stockton.gov.uk

This page is intentionally left blank



Teeswide Safeguarding Adults Board

Meeting Date: **Wednesday 8th October 2025**

Time: **9.30am – 12pm**

Venue: **Microsoft Teams**

Minutes

Attendees

Name	Job Role	Role	Representing
CLlr Pauline Beall	Lead Member	Member	Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council
Jane Bell	Business Support Officer	Member	TSAB Business Unit
Lee Brown	Area Manager	Member	Cleveland Fire Brigade
Anne Coxon	Temporary Project Officer	Member	TSAB Business Unit
Helen Dent	Project Development Manager	Member	PCP - Healthwatch South Tees
Wayne Fox	Temporary Assistant Chief Constable	Member	Cleveland Police
Elaine Godwin	Business Support Officer	Member	TSAB Business Unit
Adrian Green	Independent Chair	Member	Teeswide Safeguarding Adults Board
Jill Harrison	Director of Adult and Community Based Services	Member	Hartlepool Borough Council
Neil Harrison	Head of Safeguarding & Specialist Services	Member	Hartlepool Borough Council
Rachelle Kipling	Head of Policy, Partnerships & Delivery	Member	Office of Police & Crime Commissioner
Amy Mahoney	Business Manager	Member	TSAB Business Unit
Jen Moore	Designated Nurse for Safeguarding Adults	Member	North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board
Ruth Musicka	Head of Access and Safeguarding	Deputy	Middlesbrough Council
Carolyn Nice	Director of Adults and Health	Member	Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council
Lucy Owens **	Chief Executive	Member	Catalyst Stockton
Vicky Playforth	Interim Director of Nursing	Member	North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board
Patrick Rice	Corporate Director of Adults and Communities	Member	Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council
Iain Richardson	Head of Safer Prisons & Equality	Member	HMP Holme House Prison
Nicki Smith	Associate Director for Nursing (Safeguarding)	Member	Tees, Esk and Wear Valleys NHS Foundation Trust
Angela Storm	Data Analysis and Performance Monitoring Officer	Member	TSAB Business Unit
Chloe Swash	Business Support Officer	Member	TSAB Business Unit
Stephen Thomas	Development Officer	Member	Healthwatch Hartlepool
Kellie Woodley	North East Director	Member	People First

Apologies

Name	Job Role	Role	Representing
Angela Connor	Assistant Director Adult Social Care/PSW	Deputy	Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council
Elsbeth Devanney	Group Director of Nursing & Quality	Member	TEWW
Page 1 of 9 Angela Longstaff	Advanced Customer Support Senior	Member	Durham Tees Valley Department

	Leader		for Work and Pensions
Louise Grabham	Director of Adult Social Care	Member	Middlesbrough Council
John Lovatt	Assistant Director	Deputy	Hartlepool Borough Council
Caroline McGlade	Chief Superintendent	Deputy	Cleveland Police
Cara Nimmo	Assistant Director for Adult Care Operations	Deputy	Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council
Julian Penton **	Development Officer	Member	Hartlepool Community Trust
Ann Powell	Head of Stockton & Hartlepool PDU	Member	National Probation Service
John Rafferty	Compliance Business Partner - Safeguarding	Member	Thirteen Group
Linda Sergeant	Project Lead	Member	Healthwatch South Tees

Absent (Invited)			
Name	Job Role	Role	Representing
Cllr Gary Allen	Lead Member	Member	Hartlepool Borough Council
Sarah Bowman-Abouna	Director of Public Health	Member	Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council
Lindsay Britton-Robertson	Assistant Director of Safeguarding	Member	University Hospitals Tees
Mark Davis *	Chief Executive	Member	Middlesbrough Voluntary Development Agency
Natasha Douglas	Healthwatch Manager	Member	Healthwatch Stockton
Mike Fleet	Principal Lecturer (Programmes) Department of Nursing & Midwifery	Member	Teesside University
Peter Neal *	CEO	Member	Redcar and Cleveland Voluntary Development Agency
Kay Nicolson	CEO	Member	A Way Out
Cllr Lisa Robson	Lead Member	Member	Redcar and Cleveland Borough Council
Cllr Jan Ryles	Lead Member	Member	Middlesbrough Council
Leanne Stockton	Business Manager	Member	Hartlepool & Stockton Safeguarding Children Partnership
Gary Watson	Business Manager	Member	South Tees Safeguarding Children Partnership

* Attends on behalf of MVDA & RCVA,

** Attendance will be shared between Catalyst and Hartlepool Community Trust

Referenced Organisations		
Name	Role	Representing
Ashleigh Parsons	Inspector	CQC (Middlesbrough, Stockton-on-Tees and Redcar & Cleveland) ***
Rachel Lucas		North East Ambulance Service

*** CQC Attend the Regional Safeguarding Adults Board Chairs Network Meetings.

Copies: Margaret Blakey, Tami Egonu, Emily Johnson, Judith Oliver, Rachael Winspear, Executive Mailbox Cleveland Police, NENCICB Safeguarding.

Agenda Item 1	Introductions and Apologies	Presenter: Chair
<p>Independent Chair, Adrian Green (AG), welcomed members to the October Board meeting. AG welcomed Wayne Fox (WF) to his first meeting as Temporary Assistant Chief Constable and to Carolyn Nice (CN) who returns as Board representative for Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council (SBC). A number of apologies have been received and will be noted within the minutes. AG reminded members that the role of the Board is to protect vulnerable people with care and support needs from abuse and neglect and to be curious and challenging in their approach whilst remaining respectful and constructive.</p>		

Agenda Item 2	Minutes from the meeting held on 10th September	Presenter: Chair
<p>Actions from the meeting that took place on 10th September were reviewed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are a number of actions still pending in relation to Homelessness which will be picked up outside of this meeting. • Helen Dent (HD) advised that the Healthwatch Report on Rough Sleeping should be available in time for the next Board meeting in December. • Members were reminded that any concerns regarding displays of violence and aggression in relation to Right Care Right Person should be forwarded to Caroline McGlade for challenge to the process. • All other actions have been completed. <p>The minutes were agreed as a true and accurate record.</p>		

Agenda Item 3	PowerBi Data Dashboard	Presenter: Angela Storm
<p>End of Year (EOY) Data 2024-25 AG explained that due to time constraints and a last minute error being identified in the EOY data this item was carried forward from the September meeting. Angela Storm (AS) explained that this allowed for extra accuracy checks of the data to be undertaken, as it is important to ensure this data is correct, as it is included within the Annual Report, which is made public.</p> <p>EOY Priorities 2022-25 - The data covers the final year of the 2022-25 Strategic Plan. The key points were highlighted:</p> <p>The first section links the data to the 4 key priorities within the plan.</p> <p>Joint Working – Multi-Agency Audits have taken place across a number of themes with good participation from partner agencies. 126 cases were referred into the High Risk Adult Panel (HRAP) across the 4 Local Authority (LA) areas and 95% of individuals were satisfied with their outcomes.</p> <p>People – The e-learning platform continues to be well used with an 82% completion rate, 558 delegates attended training courses and 180 workbooks were completed. 8 SAR notifications were considered.</p> <p>Communication – Over 9,000 Newsletters were delivered across Tees, social media reach and website views continue to increase and 92% of individuals were asked about their desired outcomes.</p> <p>Services – 6 Statutory Partners took part in the QAF Process and all received an overall green rating. 8 Care Providers were subject to the Responding to and Addressing Serious Concerns Protocol (RASC).</p> <p>Performance Indicators – Three out of the four Performance Indicators (PI) were achieved. PI 2 was missed narrowly, but Angela Storm (AS) reminded members that the target for this indicator was increased to 95% as the original target had consistently been met over a number of years.</p> <p>Concerns – Since 2023-24 there has been a 7% increase in the number of Concerns received, with Middlesbrough Council (MBC) reporting the most significant increase of 62%. The Performance, Audit and Quality (PAQ) Sub-Group has considered this increase and attributed it to changes within the access team point of contact process. The other LA areas reported decreases between 5% and 10%. The main categories of abuse were Neglect & Acts of Omission, Physical, Self-Neglect, Domestic and Financial/Material. The biggest increase was in Domestic Abuse with SBC and MBC being the main contributors to this. Increases were also noted in relation to Self-Neglect and Financial/Material Abuse. Most Concerns were received from Care Homes and Social Care followed by NHS Secondary Care, Police, Care at Home, the Ambulance Service and Mental Health Services. During this period work has been carried out to review the 'Other' category under source of referral to improve the accuracy of the data. As a result, this category has now decreased by 41%.</p> <p>Section 42 Enquiries – There has been a 3% increase in the number of S42 Enquiries, reflective of the increase in the number of Concerns. Neglect & Acts of Omission was the main category of abuse followed by Physical. Increases were seen in relation to Domestic Abuse, Financial/Material Abuse and Self-Neglect. The average age of the adult dropped from 62 years to 58 years, whilst the gender split</p>		

remained similar to the previous year, with 60% relating to females. Own Home remains the main location of risk, with the main types of abuse being Domestic and Financial/Material, Self-Neglect and Neglect & Acts of Omission. The Care Home category showed a 27% decrease, with the main types of abuse continuing to be Neglect & Acts of Omission and Physical. The average age of the adult in Care Home settings was 74 years compared to 76 years in the previous year. Figures for Community settings have increased by 31% during the period. This includes locations such as businesses, offices and pubs. The main categories of abuse were Physical, Self-Neglect, Domestic and Financial/Material.

Outcomes – During the year, 2,060 S42 Enquiries were concluded, and 2,295 Concerns did not progress to a S42 Enquiry. The figure for Concerns not progressing to a S42 Enquiry is likely to increase during the next reporting year as data reporting on this category becomes more consistent across the four Local Authority areas. In 47% of concluded Enquiries, the source of risk was known to the adult. The proportion of cases where the source of risk was unknown to the individual has risen from 11% to 13%. Safeguarding action was taken in 96% of concluded Enquiries and in 96% of cases the risk was reduced or removed. 92% of individuals were asked about their desired outcomes and these were fully or partially achieved in 95% of cases.

The dashboard now includes a new section for HRAP, providing insight into the referrals received.

Members raised queries in relation to the number of Concerns received that don't then progress to a S42 Enquiry, the amount of work involved to triage these and whether the Board is assured that the decision-making process of when to proceed is suitably robust. CN noted that the gap between Concerns received and the number progressing to an Enquiry is continuing to grow, and that CQC have noted conversion rates during their inspections. AS advised, the recent Back to Basics campaign was a response to discussions that have taken place at all Sub-Groups around the number of Concerns that don't progress. The campaign has highlighted the Tees procedures, in particular Stage 1, which is not always being used effectively to determine if something needs to be raised as a Safeguarding Concern. RM added that the increase in Safeguarding Concerns is also a result of increases in demand and complexity overall.

It was noted that in some cases, Concerns may be submitted in order to pass on the risk and decision making, and that increases in workloads may be impacting people's appetite for risk. It was also highlighted that there is confusion between vulnerability and those with care and support needs. The Care Act needs to be applied correctly to ensure that thresholds are being met.

Following a shift in conversion rates, Hartlepool Borough Council (HBC) carried out dip sampling, which revealed that first contact workers were trying to resolve issues at this stage, rather than handing cases over to another worker. As these cases didn't then progress to the enquiry stage, they weren't recorded in the data, despite the work that had been done. SBC and Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council (RCBC) are also undertaking work to look at conversion rates.

Lucy Owens will highlight the issue with colleagues at the Tees Valley Infrastructure Partnership, who can help to share the message regarding referrals. HD will raise the issue at the Healthwatch Board to see how they can support sharing the message with Care Providers.

Jill Harrison (JH) queried why the SBC figure for repeat referrals under PI1 was much lower than the other LA areas, and if this was as a result of good practice that could be shared. AS responded that discussion at OLSG and PAQ has highlighted different practices for how repeat referrals are dealt with. Figures for Q1 have also shown a decrease across all LA areas. AS will need to look at this in more depth to understand the reasons.

Quarter 1 2025-26

The data now links to the new priorities for 2025-28 and shows a good start to the year.

Information, Engagement & Involvement – This section includes data linked to desired outcomes, website and social media activity, Safeguarding Champions and Newsletter reach.

Confident, Competent Practice – Links to data for training and the number of SAR notifications received.

Emerging Challenges and Enabling Solutions – Data relating to the QAF process, Multi-Agency Audits, RASC, HRAP and outcomes for individuals.

Performance Indicators – The PIs have remained unchanged from the previous year, although the way they are displayed has been amended to show the figures for each quarter to allow for easy comparison. Three out of the four are being achieved. PI2 is not currently being met, although figures are higher than the national average, which is typically around 70%. The Multi-Agency Audit work confirms that the questions are asked, but work needs to be done to ensure that this is being captured within the systems. The Risk Reduced or Removed is an area that has to be reported on within the annual returns. It is completed by the worker and then agreed by a manager at the conclusion of the S42 Enquiry process. This has also been investigated through the audit process to ensure that the Risk Remains category is being applied correctly by the worker, as this is dependent upon the worker’s perception.

Concerns – There has been an increase of 18% compared to the previous year, with the most notable increase being from MBC. The main categories of abuse were Physical and Neglect & Acts of Omission. Self-Neglect, Domestic Abuse and Financial/Material saw the biggest rises during the quarter. Care Homes were the main source of risk, followed by social care and care at home. The ‘Other’ category has seen a reduction due to the work that has been done in this area. New categories have been added to allow the report to show data against the individual hospital trusts.

S42 Enquiries – There has been a reduction in the number of S42 Enquiries as the gap between Concerns and Enquiries continues to expand. The main types of abuse were Neglect & Acts of Omission, Physical, Financial/Material, Domestic Abuse and Self-Neglect. This is similar to previous quarters, although the order does change. The biggest reduction has been seen in the Physical category. The average age is 58 years, which is down from 60 years. The main location of risk remains as Own Home, although this has decreased compared to Q1 in the previous year.

Care Homes – The data is similar to the previous quarter, with Neglect & Acts of Omission and Physical as the main categories of abuse.

Outcomes – 656 Section 42 Enquiries were concluded during the quarter. In 56% of cases, the source of risk was known to the individual. Action was taken in 97% of the concluded cases, and in 98% of these, the risk was reduced or removed. This is a significant increase on the previous year due to the work that has been done to improve the recording of this within processes.

HRAP – There has been a drop in numbers in HBC as they are taking part in a pilot as part of the HRAP review and are conducting work to ensure that cases coming in are appropriate.

AG thanked AS for the reports and agreed that further work is needed to provide assurance in relation to the widening gap between a Safeguarding Concern and a Section 42 Enquiry and repeat referrals. AG will liaise with the Business Unit to consider work that is already underway around consistency, appropriateness and the impact of capacity.

Action Points	Action Owner	Deadline
1. Raising appropriate Safeguarding Concerns is to be highlighted with the Tees Valley Infrastructure Partnership to help share the message about this.	LO	10/12/2025
2. Raising appropriate Concerns is to be highlighted with the Healthwatch Board to see how they can support sharing the message with care providers.	HD	10/12/2025
3. AG to liaise with the Business Unit regarding assurance in relation to the widening in the gap between a Safeguarding Concern and a Section 42 Enquiry.	AG/ BU	10/12/2025

Agenda Item 4	Annual Report 2024-25 - Final	Presenter: Anne Coxon
<p>The first draft of the Annual Report was shared with members at the September meeting. Thanks were extended to those who provided feedback, which has now been incorporated into the final version. Anne Coxon advised that there are a few minor formatting amendments still to make. Subject to these changes being made, the final version of the report was circulated with the agenda for approval. Once approved, the report will be made accessible and published in November. A copy will be hosted on the TSAB website.</p> <p>Members approved the Annual Report 2024-25.</p> <p>AG thanked partners and the Business Unit for producing a clear and concise report, noting the amount of work that has gone into achieving this.</p>		

Agenda Item 5	Strategic Plan Monitoring Framework – Mid Year Progress	Presenter: Angela Storm
<p>A copy of the Monitoring Framework document was uploaded to the TSAB website for members to access, rather than being added to the agenda due to the file size.</p> <p>AS advised that this is the first update based on the new Strategic Plan 2025-28 and Business Plan for 2025-26. The Board’s priorities have not been numbered within the Plan as they all carry equal importance, but numbers have been added for ease of navigation within the Monitoring Framework. A RAG rating criteria has been applied to the progress, and all actions are currently showing as being on track.</p> <p>Priority 1: Information, Engagement & Involvement - The focus is on community and engagement and links to the work of the Communication & Engagement Sub-Group. A positive amount of proactive engagement work has been undertaken by the Project Officer with key community organisations, including GlowSticks Café, Vision 25, and the Amputation Foundation Teeswide Hub in Middlesbrough, to promote awareness and understanding of Safeguarding practices. The Annual Survey has been launched, and all partners are encouraged to share and take part in the survey to help determine the Boards’ direction over the next year. Accessibility work on the website has achieved a score of 99%, ensuring that public facing documents are accessible to all. A Multi-Agency Audit Schedule is in place for 2025-26 and continues to monitor Making Safeguarding Personal. The Back to Basics Campaign took place in June, and work is underway to deliver a full awareness programme for National Safeguarding Adults Week (NSAW), taking place from 17th to 21st November.</p> <p>Priority 2: Confident, Competent Practice – A new MCA resource hub has been created on the TSAB website, and a number of guidance and policy documents have been reviewed and updated. Training evaluation forms are being reviewed and improved to make the process more effective. SAR work remains busy; sharing learning from reviews and monitoring action plans and also includes a joint SAR Domestic Abuse Related Death Review (DARDR).</p> <p>Priority 3: Emerging Challenges, Enabling Solutions – The priority focuses on the work done around the more complex cases. The Tees HOTH Transitions Standard Operating Procedure was signed off and published. The Project Officer visited the Trauma Hub and highlighted plans for a new trauma-informed, one-stop service for young adults in Middlesbrough. Joint working is taking place in relation to the Adult Exploitation Strategy with Task & Finish Groups looking at processes, procedures and data. The Rough Sleeping Working Group has been established, and Terms of Reference agreed. Three Multi-Agency audits have already taken place during this period, with a further three planned for later this year and early next year. The RASC reports are shared with the Operational Leads Sub-Group for discussion and work is underway to look at mapping this to the PowerBi system as part of the reporting process.</p> <p>The report highlights the amount of work that has already taken place and there are no areas of concern to raise.</p>		

Agenda Item 6	Sub-Group and Task & Finish Group	Presenter: Sub-Group Chairs
----------------------	--	------------------------------------

	Update	
--	---------------	--

Updates were provided from the Sub-Groups that have met since the last Board meeting in September.

Communication & Engagement – Neil Harrison

The Sub-Group met on 6th October. Discussion included Equality, Diversity & Engagement and website accessibility, with a focus on improving service access for the deaf community. The “Back to Basics” campaign is ongoing. A proposal was made to engage Safeguarding Champions to help identify future priorities. Briefings and guidance have been promoted on topics including the Mental Capacity Act and Executive Function. Learning from the Jack SAR was shared and transitions and Harm Outside the Home were discussed. The social media platform has now moved from X to Bluesky, enabling more cost-effective analytics. Members are encouraged to join the platform and a link will be shared. Newsletters and bulletins continue to be distributed and an audit of the Safe Place Scheme has taken place, supported by the OPCC. A press statement has been issued in preparation for the publication of the Evie SAR. The Annual Survey has now been launched and will run until 23rd January. There are three versions and the Board are keen to hear from VCSEs, advocacy groups, and seldom-heard communities. NH extended thanks to all partners for their ongoing contribution and support.

Learning, Training & Development – Patrick Rice

The Sub-Group met on 25th September and confirmed that the training budget is on track. The paper workbooks have now been closed down following work to ensure that users were aware of the changes. The Me-Learning contract has been renewed for a further 3 years and the Q1 e-learning licence usage report was shared with members. It was noted that usage was lower in Q1, possibly due to seasonal training patterns. A new training evaluation form was signed off, enhancing governance and assurance by linking training outcomes to SAR findings. The Training Needs Analysis (TNA) will be conducted in Q3 and a joint event with the Children’s Partnerships is planned for Q4 to share learning from the Evie SAR. The workplan was reviewed and all actions are on track.

Operational Leads – Amy Mahoney

The Sub-Group met on 18th September. Key discussions included the MBC Multi-Agency Audit report on Risk Remains, with the category of abuse as sexual abuse. This included a themed discussion on risk remains data, acknowledging that safeguarding interventions can reduce risk even if it remains present. A case study on a medical incident prompted a review of the guidance and flowcharts which were deemed to be robust and useful. The group discussed TSAB’s Incidents Between Residents resources and the impact of the number of low-quality, high-volume incidents being raised, with ideas shared to improve awareness among providers and commissioning teams. The gap between concerns and enquiries was discussed. This was raised with the National SAB Business Managers Network where it was confirmed that this is reflected in national trends and a formal agenda item will be added for further review. Good practice examples were highlighted, including a joint initiative in SBC to build stronger relationships between adult and children’s social care including shared access to case management systems. The Chloe SAR action plan was reviewed, in particular, the action relating to effective engagement with hard-to-reach individuals. The Workplan was reviewed and all items are on track. The RASC report was shared and learning discussed. There were a number of regional and national updates including the Best Interests Assessor Forum and the SAB Manager Network Forum which featured a presentation on Exploitation and a national SAR training video. Links to both were shared with the members.

Middlesbrough Council – Multi Agency Audit Report

A copy of the report was circulated with the agenda. Ruth Musicka (RM) highlighted the key points from within the report. Lessons learnt were identified around how Concerns are processed at the front door, looking at whether risk has been reduced and practitioners recognising the work carried out and sharing risk information across agencies when actions are being formulated. Management oversight is now being added to case notes, timeframes for investigations have now been addressed and MBC are looking at Section 42 Enquires being allocated and undertaken by another organisation and how cases like this are managed in the future.

AG queried the risks around carrying of weapons, how this is shared and flagged within systems and whether this could be improved. RM advised that within the Council this would be added to the

Vulnerable Persons Register and the practitioner would take ownership for sharing this with relevant agencies. A Police Information Sharing (PIS) Protocol is in place so that information can be shared with the Police and added to systems and used to support activity by the police and, where appropriate, partner agencies. In relation to the Police Information Sharing Protocol, WF asked if RM was confident that this was being adhered to. RM advised that she would be happy to look at this further outside of the meeting to provide assurance that the protocol is being followed. AG queried if there would be an opportunity to automate the PIS Form, linked to the rough sleeping Target Priority Groups, to provide support for the staff who are working with this group. It was agreed to add the sharing of information regarding offensive weapons to the next agenda for the Operational Leads Group for further discussion on existing practice.

AG queried the wording in the report in relation to Police closing their investigation as a result of the hospital investigation stating that no further action was required. RM confirmed that the Police investigation was closed based on their own findings, and that this was down to the phrasing on the audit tool.

Safeguarding Adults Review – Jill Harrison

A SAR Notification Meeting took place on 1st October and JH extended thanks to Jen Moore for chairing the meeting. One case was discussed and a recommendation made. Following the meeting additional information became available so it was agreed that the case would be reconsidered at the next meeting in November.

Three SAR action plans were circulated with the agenda for sign off. JH noted that a considerable amount of work has gone into completing the action plans and thanked all partners that have contributed to the plans and to the Business Unit for coordinating the work.

All three action plans were signed off as complete by members.

Action Points	Action Owner	Deadline
1. Link to Bluesky to be shared with members	BU	31/10/2025
2. Sharing of information regarding offensive weapons to be added to the agenda for discussion at the Operational Leads Sub-Group	BU	20/11/2025

Agenda Item 7	Any Other Business	Presenter: All
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A Mental Capacity Workshop led by Neil Allen from LPS Law is scheduled for 2nd December as part of a Safeguarding Adult Review. The full day event is targeted at operational and senior managers, HRAP chairs and legal teams who can then cascade information to their teams. A number of local SARs will be included within the session alongside the SAR that has generated the event. To support ongoing learning, a suite of resources including learning briefings, a presentation, and fact sheets will be shared following the session. Places can be booked via the TSAB website and the link will be shared with the minutes of the meeting. AG noted that the event demonstrates a proportionate and creative response as part of the SAR and encouraged members to promote to the relevant people within their organisations in order to maximise the impact. AG advised members that an update has been requested from Probation in relation to the changes that are taking place which may impact on wider agencies. A presentation was made to the national group regarding work that one area had conducted in relation to refugee and asylum seeker accommodation providers: Seeking assurance around identification of vulnerability and the referral process for contracted providers of accommodation. AG has asked the Business Unit to further explore this to identify who these may be and to seek assurance. 		
Action Points	Action Owner	Deadline
1. Link to Mental Capacity Workshop booking form to be shared with the minutes	BU	31/10/2025

Next Meeting Date: **Wednesday 10th December 2025**

Time: **9.30am – 12pm**

Venue: **Microsoft Teams**

Minutes approved by Independent Chair:



Date: 16/10/2025

Appendix 1 - Attendance Matrix

The table below reflects named members of the TSAB, although deputies have been shaded.

Company	09/04/2025	11/06/2025	10/09/2025	08/10/2025	10/12/2025	11/02/2026	11/03/2026	4
A Way Out	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	50%
Catalyst Stockton / Hartlepool Community Trust	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	75%
ICB	2	2	1	2	0	0	0	100%
Cleveland Fire Brigade	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	100%
Cleveland Police	1	1	2	1	0	0	0	100%
DWP	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	50%
Hartlepool and Stockton Safeguarding Children Partnership	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0%
Hartlepool Borough Council	2	2	2	2	0	0	0	100%
HBC Lead Member	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0%
Healthwatch Hartlepool	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	50%
Healthwatch South Tees	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	50%
Healthwatch Stockton	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0%
HMP Holme House Prison	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	50%
Middlesbrough Borough Council	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	100%
MBC Lead Member	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0%
Middlesbrough VDA / Redcar & Cleveland VDA	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0%
National Probation Service Cleveland	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	25%
People First	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	50%
Public Health	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	50%
Office of Police & Crime Commissioner *	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	100%
Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	100%
RCBC Lead Member	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0%
Stockton on Tees Borough Council	2	1	2	1	0	0	0	100%
SBC Lead Member	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	100%
South Tees Safeguarding Children Partnership	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0%
Teesside University	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	25%
Tees Esk & Wear Valleys NHS Foundation Trust	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	100%
Thirteen Housing	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	75%
TSAB Independent Chair	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	100%
TSAB Business Unit	5	6	6	6	0	0	0	100%
University Hospitals Tees	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	50%

* (committed to 2 meetings per year)

This page is intentionally left blank

Safer Stockton Partnership

A meeting of Safer Stockton Partnership was held on Wednesday 26th November 2025.

Present: Cllr Norma Stephenson OBE (Chair), Alan O'Donoghue (Vice), Sharon Cooney, Jamie Bell, Chris Dunwell, Laura Bliss, Dawn Tyerman, Leanne Maloney-Kelly, Mandy Mackinnon, Mandie Rowlands, Kellie Wigley, Anthony Trattles, Kevin Tyerman, Tracy Brittain, Sarah Bowman-Abouna, Kay Nicholson, Mark Stephenson.

Officers: John Devine, Junita Agyapong.

Also in attendance:

Apologies: Cllr Pauline Beall, Sarah Wilson.

SSP/42/25 Evacuation Procedure

The Evacuation Procedure was noted.

SSP/43/25 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

SSP/44/25 Minutes

The minutes of the previous meeting which was held Wednesday 1st October 2025 were agreed as a true record.

SSP/45/25 Recorded Crime & Disorder Report

Members were presented with the Recorded Crime & Disorder report, the report focused on the recorded crime in the Stockton on Tees Borough over a 12-month period starting in October 2024 to October 2025.

The key points noted from the report were as follows:

- Publicly reported offences had decreased.
- Police generated crime had increased.
- Total recorded crime had reduced.
- Stalking and Harassment showed a large reduction of -6.6%
- Sexual Offences overall had increased by 30.2%. Officers emphasised their continued commitment to see a reduction in all Sexual Offences.
- Officers also noted an increased number of assaults on front line workers, which had been made into a separate category in a piece of legislation in 2018.

- Criminal Damage was down by 11.6%

Officers also noted the increase in Vehicle crime, and informed members that Police would continue to urge the public to not leave their vehicles running when they weren't present to prevent their theft.

Members noted the update and agreed that joint working would hopefully prove to be a solution for Sex Offences. Members also lamented the increase in assaults on front line workers, agreeing that no one should be assaulted while doing their job.

Members AGREED to note the update.

SSP/46/25 Operation Shield Update

Officers gave an update on Operation Shield which Members would know was a community safety initiative of the Councils alongside Cleveland Police and other partners.

Members were reminded of Community Safety Officers role in providing supporting the Licensing teams Reduce the Strength (RTS) scheme. Which had received positive feedback from retailers and Town Centre Managers, a tenth voluntary sign up had also been achieved since the last meeting which was confirmed during the Op Shield Day of Action in October 2025.

Officers moved onto another aspect of Op Shield which was the Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO), the Council had only had one order in place which came into force in 2023 and is due to expire in April 2026.

Following the Councils Community Safety Select Committee report earlier in the year on creating welcoming and safe town centres, Officers have evaluated the current PSPO which has shared conditions impacting Stockton and Norton. Based on this evaluation Officers were now consulting statutory partners and key stakeholders on a revised draft PSPO for both town centre locations, to come into effect upon the expiry of the current order. Officers would be proposing that conditions of the PSPOs be strengthened and enforcement procedures streamlined, to maximise the potential of this tool.

A public consultation was scheduled to take place on the proposed revised PSPOs following this meeting of SSP and the next meeting in January. Officers explained they had sought out a wide range of consultees over the new orders to find out what works well, what Officers need to complement the Councils ongoing work. This also explained the long public consultation so they Officers were able to consider a diverse set of views on how to tackle ASB.

Operation Shields Days of Action had continued to be praised by partners such as Change Grow Live. Throughout the time Op Shield had been active Officers and partners had worked to create close working relationships.

Officers noted that they were particularly proud of the close working relationships which had been developed with the previously mentioned Change Grow Live group, as it had helped bridge organisational divides in front line roles. CGL staff regularly volunteered for Op Shield duties on the monthly days of action.

Members AGREED to note the report.

SSP/47/25 Selective Licensing Annual Report

Officers brought the Selective Licensing Annual Report to the meeting for Members attention. They began by highlighting the areas covered and an overview over the type of housing in each area and other general information.

Area 1 Central Stockton –

An area of older, predominantly terraced housing. Selective Licensing was proposed on the basis this area is or is likely to become an area of low housing demand, has a high concentration of private rented properties (well above the national average) and is experiencing high levels of deprivation.

Area 2 North Thornaby –

An area of older, predominantly terraced housing. Selective Licensing was proposed on the basis that this area is or is likely to become an area of low housing demand, has a high concentration of private rented properties (well above the national average) and is experiencing high levels of deprivation.

Area 3 Newton –

An area of older, predominantly terraced housing. Selective Licensing was proposed on the basis that this area is experiencing significant and persistent problems caused by high levels of crime and anti-social behaviour, with high concentrations of private rented properties (well above the national average) and is experiencing high levels of deprivation.

The Selective Licensing Officers spoke about their year one priorities which were below.

- Receiving and processing applications for licences.
- Commencing inspections of Licensed properties.
- Raising awareness of scheme with landlords, tenant and partners.
- Developing and maintaining relationships with stakeholders.

Regarding unlicensed properties Officers spoke about their pro-active approach to identifying licensable properties which did not have a duly made application. Information on unlicensed properties could come from a number of different sources such as community intelligence from residents and door knocking visits.

Address would be referred to SL Compliance officers for investigation with contact being made with the owner to encourage an application. There were over three hundred properties had been identified as potentially unlicensed, and investigations had been opened. 205 applications had been received as a result of these investigations.

Under the Selective Licensing scheme Officers may undertake compliance inspections of properties. Inspections began in December 2024 as soon as the first licence had

been issued. Officers aimed to inspect all properties at least once with 243 inspections already carried out at the time of the meeting.

130 of those properties which had been inspected had been issued with improvement plans, 62 properties had improved, and investigations were closed and 92 investigations had been closed with no works required as the homes were of a good standard.

Offices informed members of how they had started to do Visual Audits of the Licensed areas. This consisted of regular patrols of the three selective licensing areas; 160 visual audits had been recorded by the team. During the Visual Audits Officers had made note of empty homes, identified licensed properties for targeted inspections, helped submit intelligence to the Police and intervened in cases of Anti-social behaviour.

Members asked if Officers were given any training on spotting abuse and safeguarding concerns. Officers confirmed that all Selective Licensing Officers had been trained in spotting signs of abuse and other safeguarding issues and would share intelligence with Social Services and Children's Services when needed.

There had already been a significant amount of joint working between Licensing Officers and those partners involved with Operation Shield. Officers informed members of the how Officers had carried out targeted work to compliment Op Shield, a Day of Action had been organised and resulted in 19 inspections (Unlicensed HMO's identified), 16 streets audited, 7 CFYA referrals, 4 new empty properties identified, 4 new unlicensed property investigations opened and 6 referrals to Community Safety following on street discussions with residents.

Members asked if there weren't any current contact links between Selective Licensing Officers and Fire Services would that be implemented going forward? Officers would usually be in contact with the Fire Services on a case-by-case basis but would be open to having more regular contact.

AGREED to note the report.

SSP/48/25 Health & Wellbeing Strategy Update

The Health & Wellbeing Strategy update began by highlighting the theme for the strategic plan, which was to support local action on the building blocks of health. This would be achieved through renewed focus on the wider determinants which research studies show that 50% of a person's health and wellbeing is determined by their education, employment, income, physical environment.

For the new strategy Officers informed members of the four focus areas that it would have. They were as follows:

- All children and families have the best start in life
- Everyone has a healthy standard of living
- Everyone lives in healthy and sustainable places and communities
- Everyone lives long and healthy lives

Officers moved onto the highlight the links between the new strategies commitment areas related to community safety.

- Community safety: To make Stockton a safer place where people are protected from serious harm and live in communities which are safer and welcoming.
- Domestic abuse: We want everyone living or working in Stockton-on-Tees to feel safe, supported and protected from domestic abuse, regardless of their age, sex, gender, sexuality, disability, socio-economic status, faith or background.
- Alcohol related harm: We will reduce alcohol related harm in Stockton-on-Tees whilst ensuring that alcohol can be enjoyed responsibly.
- Drug related harm: We will reduce the number of people using drugs through primary prevention initiatives and tackling the drivers contributing to drug misuse. We will treat addiction as a health condition, breaking down stigma, and ensuring early help and treatment to reduce drug related harm.
- Complex and multiple needs: For people experiencing complex and multiple needs, we will look for all opportunities to better coordinate and deliver holistic support and care, rather than siloed.

Members were informed of how the monitoring and accountability framework for the health and wellbeing strategy would work. A high-level action plan which would include overview of the Health & Wellbeing strategy commitment areas and corresponding objectives and would serve as a tool to understand work that exists across SBC/ wider partners.

There would also be deep dive review sessions throughout the year including data overview, community perspectives and would be an opportunity for the board to provide input and serves as a collective problem-solving opportunity.

Outcome Dashboard were highlighted from the report, and how they would serve to track and visualise the performance of the HWB strategy objectives

There would also be an end of year summary, which would include each commitment area completing a self-assessment that monitored progress, and date would be analysed and provided. This would also include a review of the outcomes dashboard to monitor progress. Officers would work to include community feedback.

Members AGREED to note the report.

SSP/49/25 Prevent (CT) Update

Members were given an update on Stockton Councils current Present (CT) position. At the time of the meeting Stockton had five live cases currently being looked at, Officers explained that since 2018 there had been an increase in the number of referrals to the Council. The reason for the increase had been debated by all members, but no clear consensus was found. The Home Office rigorously inspect all Local Authorities responsible, and Officers were pleased to inform members that Stockton had come out of the inspection with high marks and was seen a regional lead.

Members AGREED to note the update.

SSP/50/25 Any Other Business

Officers from Cleveland Fire Brigade gave a brief update on Bonfire night operations. But from the initial numbers Officers reported that the message of 'Fire Changes Lives' was being received. Officers stated that a more detailed report would follow for January's meeting.

Members AGREED to Note the update.

SSP/51/25 Youth Endowment Fund

Members were presented with a restricted report that provided an overview on the Youth Endowment Fund.

Due to the nature of the report relating to a consultation process the report was restricted.

Members AGREED to note the report.

SSP/52/25 IQuanta Report

Members were presented with a restricted report that provided an overview on crime comparisons against other similar CSPs utilising iQuanta.

This report was a restricted document due to the statistical information only made available as an intelligence tool for partnerships until released by the Home Office.

AGREED that the report be noted.

SSP/53/25 PSPO Update

This report was restricted due to the links to Information relating to any action taken or to be taken in connection with the prevention, investigation or prosecution of crime.

AGREED to note the update.

SSP/54/25 CSP Plan

Due to the connection to an ongoing Police investigation this Agenda Item was restricted.

Agreed that the update be noted.

Chair:



TEES VALLEY COMBINED AUTHORITY CABINET

Friday, 30 January 2026 at 10.00am

Teesside Airport Business Suite, Teesside International Airport, Darlington

These Minutes are in draft form until approved at the next Cabinet meeting and are therefore subject to amendments.

ATTENDEES	
Members	
Mayor Ben Houchen (Chair)	Tees Valley Mayor
Councillor Stephen Harker	Leader, Darlington Borough Council
Councillor Pamela Hargreaves	Leader, Hartlepool Borough Council
Mayor Chris Cooke	Leader, Middlesbrough Council
Councillor Lisa Evans	Leader, Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council
Councillor Alec Brown	Leader, Redcar and Cleveland Borough Council
Matthew Ord	Chair of the Business Board
Officers	
Tom Bryant	Chief Executive, Tees Valley Combined Authority
Sarah Brackenborough	Director of Operations, Tees Valley Combined Authority
Jo Moore	Interim Director of Finance & Resources, Tees Valley Combined Authority
Craig Peacock	Director of Inward Investment & Marketing, Tees Valley Combined Authority
Jonathan Spruce	Director of Infrastructure, Tees Valley Combined Authority
Jeanette McGarry	Interim Deputy Monitoring Officer, Tees Valley Combined Authority
Beverley Bearne	Chief Operating Officer, Hartlepool Development Corporation
Amy Wennington	Assistant Director, Law & Governance, Darlington Borough Council,
Erik Scollay	Chief Executive, Middlesbrough Council
Brian Archer	Chief Executive, Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council

Mike Greene	Chief Executive, Stockton Borough Council
Sally Henry	Governance Officer, TVCA
Councillor Ian Blades	Chair of Overview & Scrutiny Committee

These Minutes capture the key points and decisions of the meeting, but they do not attempt to reproduce every word spoken. The full recording can be found [here](#).

	<p><u>CHAIR'S OPENING REMARKS</u></p> <p>The Chair opened the meeting and welcomed everyone in attendance.</p>
TVCA 68/25	<p>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</p> <p>Denise McGuckin, Managing Director, Hartlepool Borough Council</p> <p>Sarah Walker - Director of Business Solutions, Tees Valley Combined Authority</p>
TVCA 69/25	<p>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</p> <p>Councillor Hargreaves declared an interest in agenda item 6 - Appointment of New Chair - Hartlepool Development Corporation.</p>
TVCA 70/25	<p>MINUTES</p> <p>Councillor Ian Blades noted that the Deputy Chair of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee had attended the previous Cabinet meeting but her name was omitted from the minutes.</p> <p>RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 12 December 2025 were confirmed as an accurate record, once Councillor Creevy's attendance was recorded.</p>
TVCA 71/25	<p>TEES VALLEY MAYOR'S UPDATE</p> <p>The Mayor welcomed both Jonathan Spruce and Jeanette McGarry to the Cabinet meeting.</p> <p>He advised Cabinet members that he had nothing further to update them on which was not covered elsewhere on the agenda.</p>

	<p>Members were however given an opportunity ask questions.</p> <p>No questions were asked.</p>
<p>TVCA 72/25</p>	<p>APPOINTMENT OF INTERIM MONITORING OFFICER AND UPDATE ON RECRUITMENT PROCESS FOR PERMANENT CHIEF LEGAL & MONITORING OFFICER AND FINANCE & RESOURCES DIRECTOR.</p> <p><i>Appendix 1 to this report is exempt and not for publication by virtue of paragraph 1 (information relating to any individual), paragraph 2 (information which may identify an individual) of Schedule 12 A of the Local Government Act 1972).</i></p> <p>Jeanette McGarry left the meeting room.</p> <p>The Chair advised members that as the appendix to the report is confidential, if it is to be discussed, members of the public would need to leave the room.</p> <p>Cabinet received a report from the Chief Executive seeking approval to appoint an interim Monitoring Officer and also an update on the recruitment process for a permanent Chief Legal & Monitoring Officer and Finance & Resources Director.</p> <p>Cabinet were invited to:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. APPROVE: the appointment of Ms. Jeanette McGarry as Interim Monitoring Officer for a period of up to six months. B. NOTE: the process for the recruitment of the permanent Chief Legal & Monitoring Officer and Finance and Resources Director. <p>The Chief Executive highlighted the key points of the report and noted that the proposal for the appointment of Jeanette McGarry to the role of Interim Monitoring Officer and the retention of Jodie Townsend in a consultancy role, is cost neutral and increases governance capacity.</p> <p>He then provided an update on the recruitment process in place to recruit a permanent Chief Legal & Monitoring Officer and Finance & Resources Director.</p>

	<p>Members were given the opportunity to comment or ask questions.</p> <p>CLlr Brown enquired how long the consultancy role would last. He was advised it is envisaged that once the permanent Monitoring Officer is in post, the consultancy role would finish. He was also advised that the role was being undertaken remotely.</p> <p>Councillor Hargreaves noted that the fact we are moving to recruit full time, permanent people is good. She commented that strengthening the governance arrangements by keeping Jodie Townsend on in a consultancy role is a good thing. They are all positive steps.</p> <p>Cabinet were advised that Jeanette McGarry will be focussing on the day to day Monitoring Officer role while Jodie Townsend will be focussing on strategic governance improvements, including the Constitution and Single Assurance Framework.</p> <p>RESOLVED that Cabinet:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. APPROVE: the appointment of Ms. Jeanette McGarry as Interim Monitoring Officer for a period of up to six months. B. NOTE: the process for the recruitment of the permanent Chief Legal & Monitoring Officer and Finance and Resources Director <p>Jeanette McGarry returned to the meeting room.</p>
<p>TVCA 73/25</p>	<p>APPOINTMENT OF NEW CHAIR - HARTLEPOOL DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION</p> <p>Cabinet received a report informing them that, in exercise of the powers vested in the Mayor, the decision has been made to bring Mark Robinson's term as Chair of the Hartlepool Development Corporation (HDC) to a close and appoint Councillor Pamela Hargreaves, Leader of Hartlepool Borough Council, as the new Chair.</p> <p>Cabinet were invited to:-</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NOTE that, in accordance with the statutory powers conferred under the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009, the Localism Act 2011, and supporting Orders, the Mayor has concluded Mr. Mark Robinson's term as Chair of Hartlepool Development Corporation and appointed Cllr Pamela Hargreaves in his stead. <p>The Chair expressed his thanks to Mark Robinson and also to Councillor Hargreaves for accepting the role of Chair of the Hartlepool Development Corporation.</p> <p>Members were given the opportunity to comment or ask questions. No questions or comments were received.</p> <p>RESOLVED that Cabinet:-</p> <p>NOTE: that, in accordance with the statutory powers conferred under the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009, the Localism Act 2011, and supporting Orders, the Mayor has concluded Mr. Mark Robinson's term as Chair of Hartlepool Development Corporation and appointed Cllr Pamela Hargreaves in his stead.</p>
<p>TVCA 74/25</p>	<p>DRAFT BUDGET 2026/27 & REVISED MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN</p> <p>Cabinet received a report from the Interim Director of Finance & Resources presenting the draft budget 2026/27 & Revised Medium Term Financial Plan for consultation.</p> <p>Cabinet were invited to:-</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> APPROVE the draft Budget for Mayoral Functions for 2026/27 for consultation; APPROVE the proposed Concessionary Fares budget of £14.834m for 2026/27 APPROVE the draft Combined Authority Revenue Budget for 2026/27 for consultation APPROVE the proposed consultation plan set out at Appendix 2 APPROVE the updated Medium Term Financial Plan 2026/27 to 2029/30

- F. **NOTE** the draft Capital Budget for 2026/27 and revised capital programme to 2029/30
- G. **APPROVE** the transfers to/from reserves as set out in Table 17 of the report
- H. **NOTE** the forecast revenue reserves on 31 March 2027
- I. **NOTE** the forecast capital reserves on 31 March 2027
- J. **NOTE** the key financial risks for the MTFP period
- K. **NOTE** that the S73 Officer's S25 Statement will be included with the final budget proposals

The Interim Director of Finance and Resources introduced the paper and provided Cabinet members with the key facts to note.

The Chief Executive advised that the final budget will be presented to Cabinet on 20th March 2026.

Members were given the opportunity to comment or ask questions.

Councillor Evans noted that the layout and format of this report is much more understandable. She then questioned the financial liabilities and risk of the three Development Corporations and the airport and enquired how they would affect the TVCA budget and would it impact on future funding and investment for the rest of the Tees Valley.

The Chair advised that, advice from Government is that risks and liabilities of the Development Corporations do not sit with TVCA. He advised that the written advice will be circulated to Cabinet members post meeting.

Mayor Cooke enquired whether TVCA have sufficient capacity in the teams to compete with the other Combined Authorities in, for example Inward Investment. He suggested that the Directors should be given the opportunity to present where they see the pressures within their Directorate.

The Chief Executive advised that capacity within all the directorates is being considered as part of the budget setting process and he advised that he would be happy to discuss further with Cabinet.

Councillor Evans enquired whether further information about the capability and capacity within the finance directorate could be made available.

The Interim Director of Finance and Resources advised that an interim structure is in place and interims are currently in place and there is an allowance in the budget for that. The structures of both the finance and legal governance teams are currently being reviewed. She advised that it is not necessarily about increasing or decreasing the head count, but more about ensuring the right people are doing the right roles.

Councillor Brown requested a further explanation on the recharge of the support grants and asked whether this would impact on the amount of the grants going to the Local Authorities.

He was advised that previously, a consistent recharge mechanism had not been in place. Most grants allow for top-slicing and some grants stipulate a maximum amount that can be recharged. The LGA are undertaking a piece of work to support us in ensuring that the mechanism is robust and that will be complete in time for the final budget. It was acknowledged that if support costs are being recharged, residual funds will be less, but it is essential to ensure that appropriate support services are in place to ensure service delivery.

The Chief Executive noted that there is a revenue pot which sits alongside the Transport Capital Fund which covers staffing and support services costs.

Councillor Harker queried the key financial risks which are included in the report – namely the STDC loan and the airport loan.

He was advised that for the loans to STDC, we are in the process of finalising the loan agreements and this will be reported back to Cabinet.

Also, so far as the airport loan is concerned, the report stipulates that it is not expected to be repaid in the foreseeable future. This will also be quantified in the final budget.

The Chair advised that, once the budget setting process has been concluded, we will discuss working more collaboratively and planning ahead for the future.

RESOLVED that Cabinet:-

- A. **APPROVED** the draft Budget for Mayoral Functions for 2026/27 for consultation;

	<p>B. APPROVED the proposed Concessionary Fares budget of £14.834m for 2026/27</p> <p>C. APPROVED the draft Combined Authority Revenue Budget for 2026/27 for consultation</p> <p>D. APPROVED the proposed consultation plan set out at Appendix 2</p> <p>E. APPROVED the updated Medium Term Financial Plan 2026/27 to 2029/30</p> <p>F. NOTED the draft Capital Budget for 2026/27 and revised capital programme to 2029/30</p> <p>G. APPROVED the transfers to/from reserves as set out in Table 17 of the report</p> <p>H. NOTED the forecast revenue reserves on 31 March 2027</p> <p>I. NOTED the forecast capital reserves on 31 March 2027</p> <p>J. NOTED the key financial risks for the MTFP period</p> <p>K. NOTED that the S73 Officer's S25 Statement will be included with the final budget proposals</p>
	<p>DATE AND TIME OF FUTURE MEETINGS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Friday, 20th March 2026 at 10:00am • Friday, 24th April 2026 at 10:00am <p>The Chair thanked all in attendance.</p>

REPORT TO CABINET

12 MARCH 2026

REPORT OF CORPORATE
MANAGEMENT TEAM

CABINET DECISION

Children and Young People – Lead Cabinet Member - Councillor Clare Besford

Child Poverty (2025 update report)

Summary

Appendix A outlines the progress made by the Council and its partners during 2025 to alleviate child poverty across the borough. Following the recent publication of the Government's national child poverty strategy, '[Our Children, Our Future: Tackling Child Poverty](#)' (December 2025) this report also highlights examples of actions taken by the Council which support this national agenda.

Reasons for Recommendation(s)/Decision(s)

Powering our Futures has a strong commitment outlined within the programme's design principles of reducing inequality and prioritising prevention whilst working with communities to put them at the heart of what we do, enabling them to thrive and support each other. The driver behind this work is to ensure our most vulnerable residents (our children) are supported to have 'The best start in life'.

Addressing and tackling child poverty is central to the Council's commitment to reducing poverty and inequality as set out in the [A Fairer Stockton-on-Tees Strategic Framework](#) and the [Anti-Poverty Strategy 2024-2027](#). Reducing child poverty levels also aligns with key priorities in the [Stockton-on-Tees Plan](#), namely 'The best start in life to achieve big ambitions' and 'Healthy and resilient communities'. Working alongside communities and partner this remains a firm commitment to continue to prioritise the work needed to continue achieving improved for all of our young people.

Recommendations

1. This report is for information only. Cabinet is asked to note the report and actions taken to addressing and alleviating child poverty during 2025.

Detail

Background:

1. The Stockton-on-Tees Child Poverty Network continues to meet quarterly, bringing together external partners, including Family Action, SDAIS and Moneywise, with Council

service leads to discuss the key issues children and families living in poverty are experiencing across our borough. This is a collaborative group which works to find solutions to these issues and improve the lives of our children and young people.

Key actions/achievements during 2025:

2. **Appendix A** provides details of key achievements; however notable examples include:
 - Delivery of the Free School Meals Auto-enrolment project, resulting in almost 400 children being registered and an increase of almost £500,000 in pupil premium.
 - Implementation of a year-round offer for residents to obtain free pre-loved uniform from any of the borough's Family Hubs.
 - 10,286 children/young people attended the borough's Holidays Are Fun Activity Programme (which provides healthy meals, enrichment activities and free childcare places to children from low-income families).
 - Targeted work undertaken in North Thornaby as part of the wider Early Intervention and Prevention project.
 - Direct support to families at key points in the year – for example, through the Back to School Campaign & the Second Dance Prom Project, helping to ease family financial pressures associated with children returning to school and the costs of prom season.

Consultation and engagement

3. As previously noted, (para 1) the Council engages with partners to inform its anti-poverty work.

Next Steps

4. Further detail on our ongoing approach for 2026 is detailed within **Appendix A** (sections 3 & 4). In summary key actions will include:
 - Using the Crisis and Resilience Fund (CRF) to deliver rapid, preventative, and targeted support to households, particularly families with children, at risk of financial crisis.
 - Targeting eligible families with children to help them access the Warm Homes Discount scheme and signposting them to help maximise their incomes.
 - Supporting primary schools with the rollout of free breakfast clubs.
 - Promoting the changes to free school meal eligibility to schools, parents/carers and undertake the Council's third auto-enrolment project.
 - Continuing to support young people and families to access free uniform and prom outfits.
 - Providing targeted intervention and events to support families most in need.

Name of Contact Officer: Jane Edmends

Post Title: Assistant Director – Housing and A Fairer Stockton-on-Tees

Telephone number: 01642 526682

Email address: jane.edmends@stockton.gov.uk

This page is intentionally left blank

Stockton-on-Tees Child Poverty Update Report 2025-2026

1.0 Introduction

1.1 In the borough of Stockton-on-Tees, child poverty figures indicate that 20.9% of children are living in poverty, which is higher than the national average of 17%. Additionally, 45.9% of children from Stockton Town Centre are living in poverty, compared to 2% of children from the Northern Parishes.¹

1.2 Powering our Futures has a strong commitment outlined within the programme's design principles of reducing inequality and prioritising prevention whilst working with communities to put them at the heart of what we do, enabling them to thrive and support each other. The driver behind this work is to ensure our most vulnerable residents (our children) are supported to have 'The best start in life'.

1.3 Addressing and tackling child poverty forms part of the Council's commitment to reducing poverty and inequality through the A [Fairer Stockton-on-Tees Strategic Framework](#) and the [Anti-Poverty Strategy 2024-2027](#). Reducing child poverty levels also aligns with the priorities outlined in the [Stockton-on Tees Plan](#), namely 'The best start in life to achieve big ambitions' and 'Healthy and resilient communities'.

1.4 The Stockton-on-Tees Child Poverty Network continues to meet quarterly, bringing together Council staff and external partners to discuss the key issues children and families living in poverty are experiencing across our Borough. This is a collaborative group which also works to find solutions to these issues and improve the lives of our young people. A member of the Fairer Stockton-on-Tees team also represents SBC at the North East Child Poverty Commission and sits on the Commission's Executive Group.

1.5 This report outlines the progress made by the Council and its partners in 2025 to alleviate child poverty across the Borough. Reflecting on the recent publication of the Government's national child poverty strategy, '[Our Children, Our Future: Tackling Child Poverty](#)', the report also identifies some of the Council's key responses.

2.0 Key Achievements 2025

The following examples highlight the range of activity across the Council and with partners in 2025. Further information is provided in Appendix 1.

2.1 **Family Action Supporting Families Fund:** In April, through support provided by the FSOT team, Stockton Family Action and Outreach Service received £2000 from the Banks Group to provide to children and families who are engaging with their services which has made a made a meaningful difference to children and families providing essential items, reduce financial pressure on households, and create opportunities for positive family activities.

2.2 **Kit Out Campaign:** Sports clothing and equipment were provided to 40 families (identified by local schools) for free to encourage them to get active together.

2.3 **Here to Help Summer Family Fun Day Event:** In July, around 750 residents attended the second Summer Family Fun Day. Over 200 new and around 750 preloved uniform items

¹ Key Economic Statistics, *Stockton-on-Tees Council Plan 2024*.

were collected and distributed. 200 new and 300 preloved books, 100 filled back to school backpacks and around 1000 hygiene products and accessories were also distributed.

2.4 School Uniform Support: Pre-loved school uniform is now available to collect from any of the 4 Family Hubs. This provides a year-round offer that families and professionals can access when needed.

2.5 Back to School Campaign: During Summer 2025, the Council worked in partnership with the Junction Multibank to provide 600 backpacks to children and families across the Borough. The backpacks ranged in design so that they could not be identified as 'free backpacks' and to avoid stigma.

2.6 Free School Meals Auto-Enrolment Project: This cross-directorate project, resulted in almost 400 pupils being auto-enrolled for free school meals in 2025, with an increase in almost £500,000 in pupil premium for schools across the Borough.

2.7 Holidays Are Fun (HAF) Activity Programme: 14,166 free HAF sessions were booked and 10,286 were attended. Over 1600 unique children engaged with the programme, more than 1100 of which were free school meal eligible.

2.8 A Second Dance Prom Project: In May 2025, Council staff partnered with Bright Minds Big Futures (BMBF), Wellington Square, Catalyst, and Additional Lengths salon to host a preloved prom event. 160 outfits were donated (plus shoes and bags) and 32 two young people left with dresses and suits for their proms, easing financial pressure for families.

2.9 Early Intervention and Prevention – North Thornaby: As part of targeted early intervention and prevention projects in North Thornaby, and following resident feedback, two new sessions have been recently launched at the Victoria Community Hall by the CE team aimed at families with toddlers.

2.10 Stockton Rotary Club Winter Coat Collection: Council staff supported the Stockton Rotary Club to introduce their first 'Wrap Up' campaign by liaising with Tees Active to set up collection points and then arranged distribution of the 724 (300+ for children and young people) winter coats, fleeces and scarves via Council services and local VCSE organisations.

2.11 Community Gift 2025 – Over 600 festive hampers were created to give to families and individuals across Stockton-on-Tees.

2.12 Christmas Toy Appeal - 337 toys were received from the Junction Multibank via the Community Gift and in partnership with VCSE organisations working with vulnerable families.

3.0 Stockton's Response to the National Child Poverty Strategy

3.1 The national child poverty strategy was published in December 2025, outlining the Government's commitment to tackling child poverty. The following section evidences the Council's response to several key commitments outlined in the national child poverty strategy. Further information is provided in Appendix 2.

3.2 The Revenues, Benefits and Welfare Service have, and will continue to play, a key role in maximising the impact of the above-inflation increase to Universal Credit by supporting take-up of those residents that are now eligible for Universal Credit following the increase and also ensuring correct entitlement, preventing income loss, and linking families to wider

financial support. This approach helps ensure that increases in national benefit rates turn into sustainable improvements in household income and child poverty outcomes.

3.3 The Revenues, Benefits and Welfare Service have supported the implementation of the Fair Repayment Rate by supporting families to manage and reduce debt and linking households to wider financial support. The Service continually works with families to reduce debts that sit outside of Universal Credit deductions including rent arrears and Council Tax as well as maximising incomes through targeted take up. This approach has helped ensure reduced deductions turn into meaningful increases in disposable income and improved outcomes for children living in poverty.

3.4 The Revenues, Benefits and Welfare Service support the extension of the Warm Homes Discount. We will, in 2026, target eligible families with children to help them access the scheme and provide a link to help them maximise their income. This approach aims to reduce fuel poverty and improve the wellbeing of children living on low incomes.

3.5 The Council will use the Crisis and Resilience Fund (CRF) to deliver rapid, preventative, and targeted support to households, particularly families with children, at risk of financial crisis. By combining emergency assistance with advice and wider local services, the Council's scheme, currently in development, will help increase financial resilience, protect families from hardship, and prevent children from falling into or deeper into poverty.

3.6 September 2025 was the final stage of the rollout of 30 hours funded childcare for parents with children aged from 9 months to 2 years old. Take-up of the funded hours has been high, for the autumn term 2025, 982 two year olds and 1086 under two's were accessing a place.

3.7 The Free Breakfast Clubs early adopter programme commenced in April 2025 to test and learn before national rollout. Stockton has five primary schools taking part in the early adopter programme. A phased national rollout will commence from April 2026, schools with 40% or higher FSM rate were invited to apply by the deadline date of 5 December. Five primary schools in Stockton have been selected to join the programme. From September 2026 another 2000 primary schools will be invited to apply to the programme.

3.8 Four Stockton primary schools were awarded funding for the first phase of the school-based nursery (SBNs) programme. Applicants can apply for up to £150k of capital funding to create new or additional nursery places.

3.9 The Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeping strategy was refreshed and launched in July 2025, and the new Housing Strategy is programmed for Cabinet in March 2026. The Council is currently exploring how to accelerate affordable housing strategy within the borough, this includes for example exploring the use of 4 surplus LA sites and working with Registered Providers and housebuilding to maximise funding bids into the Homes England Social and Affordable Homes Programme (grant funding to support affordable housing delivery).

3.10 The Stockton and Portrack area has recently been named as a Phase 2 Pride in Place Programme (PiPP) area. The PiPP is a new government funding programme, aimed at working closely with local communities to decide how to regenerate their local area. We are in the early stages of engaging with our local communities to determine generation and future investment priorities.

4.0 Ongoing Activity

4.1 The following examples demonstrate the Council's ongoing commitment to addressing and tackling child poverty.

4.2 Following the 2025-26 prom project launch event in October 2025, six pop-up shop events have been arranged between November 2025 and May 2026 (appendix 3). This provides young people and families with several opportunities to obtain free or affordable ('pay as you feel') prom outfits and accessories. Free hair and nails workshops are also being planned in partnership with local colleges.

4.3 As part of the Early Intervention and Prevention work in North Thornaby, community engagement activity continues with residents and Mandale Mill Primary School with activities such as cooking sessions and craft sessions. Funding secured from Northern Powergrid for a 'Growing Together in Thornaby' project will link the work being undertaken by Community Engagement Officers in North Thornaby with local schools and the Thornaby Warm Welcomes.

4.4 In response to the Government's introduction of a limit of three branded school uniform items (through the Children's Wellbeing and Schools Bill), guidance will be regularly communicated to Stockton governors, trustees and senior leaders of maintained, academy and free schools across primary and secondary phases via Governor Pupil Premium Training, Education Matters, Governor Briefings. Pre-loved uniform will continue to be available in all Family Hubs all-year round and at the Summer 2026 Here to Help event.

4.5 The Council's free school meals auto-enrolment project group is currently planning how the upcoming eligibility changes can be promoted to schools, parents and carers. With an expected increase in free school meals claims to be processed, the project group is also evaluating when the auto-enrolment project should be undertaken in 2026, taking into account staff capacity and resource pressures.

4.6 Employment and training support continues to be provided through targeted programmes, such as the Government-funded Tees Valley Youth Guarantee Trailblazer, with 129 registrations and 65 placements already secured for young people in Stockton. The Employment and Training Hub's 'Hub on Tour' continues to provide support to residents across the Borough.

4.7 Through continued partnership working with The Multibank, Council staff and partners, will provide free essential items to young people and families in need across the Borough.

5.0 Conclusion

5.1 Through coordinated action across the Council and partners, thousands of children and families in Stockton-on-Tees have received vital support that eases financial pressure and improves wellbeing. In 2025, initiatives delivered essential items such as school uniforms, winter coats, toys, and stigma-free backpacks; provided access to over 15,500 enriching activities with nutritious meals; and secured additional funding for families in crisis. The Free School Meals auto-enrolment project alone generated more than £480,000 in pupil premium, strengthening educational opportunities.

5.2 Community events and targeted interventions have reduced isolation, increased engagement with local services, and promoted dignity by removing stigma. These efforts represent a sustainable, year-round approach that meets immediate needs while building resilience and stronger community networks. Looking ahead, service changes through Early Intervention and Prevention aim to create lasting improvements for families. These local actions align with national policy and reinforce the Council, and its partners, shared commitment to tackling child poverty and promoting dignity for all families.

Appendix 1: Key Achievements 2025 - Additional information

Family Action Supporting Families Fund: Additional funding of £1500 in the form of Amazon vouchers has been provided by Family Action. The following provides an example of the life-changing impact this fund has already had on families:

Supporting a Young Family Facing Medical Challenges

A young family, recently relocated to the area from India, due to the father's company-sponsored work placement. Following a critical medical emergency, where the family's three-month baby stopped breathing, resulting in an urgent hospital visit, the family were provided with a baby sleep monitor. This device, placed under the cot mattress, will alert the mother if the baby stops breathing during sleep. The monitor has offered both practical and emotional support, allowing the mother to rest more easily and reduce her anxiety. This in turn, has supported her to care for her other children.

Additionally, she has accessed support through a Family Action befriending volunteer, who helped her register at the local library and connect with baby and toddler groups at the family hub and in the wider community. This has reduced the family's social isolation, helped her build friendships, and established a local support network. Her 3-year-old daughter now regularly attends these groups, where she interacts with children her age and has made significant progress in her English-speaking skills, boosting her confidence and supporting her early development.

Here to Help Summer Family Fun Day Event: The event provided access to support available within communities and encouraged residents to engage with and participate in the free activities on offer. 25 support agencies, services and providers attended, each engaging with up to 150 individuals.

Feedback included:

- One young parent told a member of the team that this event was 'a huge help' for her since she would save on the cost of getting her daughter's new uniforms and had chance to talk to people giving information and advice.
- One lady said she remembered attending the event last year and how much it had helped her with school uniform costs. She was able to take uniform for her children and a selection of toiletries.

School Uniform Support: In partnership with Thirteen Housing, uniforms were distributed via small pop-ups during the summer holidays. Staff have also fulfilled several individual requests via professionals working with families.

Holidays Are Fun (HAF) Activity Programme: During Summer 2025, there were over 15,500 bookable free HAF sessions available for eligible school age children across Stockton. Each session included enriching activities and a hot nutritious meal. Additionally, the HAF team also encouraged providers to add paid spaces on our booking system for the first time and 105 of these sessions were booked and attended. There were 53 different activities available, including sports, games, arts and crafts, gymnastics, music and dance, outdoor bushcraft, swimming, ice skating, martial arts, filmmaking, horse riding and paddle sports.

Appendix 2: Stockton's Response to the National Child Poverty Strategy - Additional Information

(note – wording in italics is taken from the Government's national child poverty strategy, '*Our Children, Our Future: Tackling Child Poverty*'.)

Announced a £1 billion package (including Barnett) for a new Crisis and Resilience Fund in England, giving councils funding to protect households from falling into crisis - The current, and final, Household Support Fund scheme being operated by the Council is providing targeted, flexible support to around 5,000 over low-income households with children. Support includes cash payments, vouchers, and wider essentials to help families meet immediate costs such as food, energy, and other daily necessities, reducing the risk of crisis for children and their families.

Expanded government funded childcare to working families in England, for children from the age of nine months backed by thousands of new school-based nursery places - The previous government announced an expansion to funded childcare in their spring budget 2023. Capital funding was awarded to councils to create places to meet the increased demand. To date, 229 new places have been created with this funding in private nurseries and childminders, and an additional 30 school nursery places from the school-based nursery capital grant.

Begun rolling out free breakfast clubs in England, to support parents to boost their working hours - The Children's Wellbeing and Schools Bill included a requirement for all primary schools to ensure that all children on roll in reception class to year 6 are provided with access to a free breakfast club before the start of the school day which lasts for a least 30 minutes and includes food. The aim of the measures is to give all children, regardless of their circumstances, a great start to the school day, helping break down barriers to opportunity. The free breakfast club will also support parents with the cost of living and support parents to work the jobs and hours they choose.

Increased the Early Years Pupil Premium in England by an unprecedented 45% from £388 per child per year to £570, boosting early learning and development - DfE uplifted the early years pupil premium (EYPP) by over 45%, increasing EYPP rates from 68p per hour in 2024-25 to £1 per hour in 2025-26, equivalent to up to £570 per eligible child per year. This applies to all eligible children aged from 9 months to 4 years old for the first 15 hours of funded childcare. A further uplift has been announced for 2026/27 which will see the rate increased to £1.15/hour. The purpose of EYPP is to improve the educational outcomes of socio-economically disadvantaged children who are eligible for free early years entitlements in an early- years setting.

Started delivering the school-based nursery (SBNs) programme to create tens of thousands of places in school-based nurseries, helping more families access funded childcare and giving children the best start in life in England - The government committed to expanding SBNs across England, with the SBN Capital Grant 2024 to 2025 marking the first phase in its long-term commitment. The primary aim for the first stage was to build more capacity into the early education sector by using surplus space in school buildings made available by falling primary school rolls, where the space may not be needed in the near future for primary provision.

Appendix 3 - A Second Dance Promotional Leaflet



A SECOND *Dance*

Thursday, 1-4pm, 5 Wellington St.
Launch Party
A second dance launch party gives you the chance to try on and pick the perfect prom attire, from suits to dresses and everything in between. Pay what you feel and look amazing!

Oct
30
2025

Wednesday, 3-5:30pm
5 Wellington St.
Pop Up Shop

Nov
26
2025

Wednesday, 3-5:30pm
5 Wellington St.
Pop Up Shop

Jan
14
2026

Wednesday, 1-4pm
5 Wellington St.
Pop Up Shop

Feb
25
2026



A SECOND *Dance*

Wednesday, 1-4pm
5 Wellington St.
Pop Up Shop

Apr
08
2026

Wednesday, 1-4pm
5 Wellington St.
Pop Up Shop

Apr
15
2026

Wednesday, 1-4pm
5 Wellington St.
Pop Up Shop

May
27
2026

Wellington Square Management Centre is a prom donation drop off point from Mon-Sat 9am-12pm



REPORT TO CABINET

12 MARCH 2026

REPORT OF CORPORATE
MANAGEMENT TEAM**CABINET DECISION**

Children and Young People – Lead Cabinet Member – Councillor Clare Besford

**Procedure for admission of pupils to
Primary & Secondary schools in
September 2027****Summary**

This report outlines the admission arrangements the Local Authority (LA) is proposing, for entry into both primary (Reception) and secondary (Year 7) schools in September 2027. To comply with legislation for admission in September 2027, the report includes the co-ordinated timetable, the Published Admission Number (PAN) for all Primary and Secondary Schools for that year and the LA's proposed Admission Policy (Oversubscription Policy) for Community maintained and Voluntary Controlled (VC) schools for entry in September 2027.

Reasons for Recommendation(s)/Decision(s)**Recommendations**

The main legislation (Chapter 1 of Part 3 of SSFA 1998) requires the LA to publish information annually and to be available for parents when they apply for a place at primary and secondary schools. The information must comply with the new School Admissions Code 2021. The LA **must**, as the admission authority determine, i.e., formally agree its admission arrangements, even if it hasn't changed from the previous year and a consultation has not been required. These arrangements therefore must be determined by **28 February 2026** for admission to Primary and Secondary schools in September 2027.

Cabinet is asked to agree:

1. The proposed Co-ordinated Admissions Scheme for Primary, Secondary, Voluntary Aided (VA) schools, Academies and Free School (points 4-5 and Appendix 1).
2. The proposed PANs for Primary and Secondary schools for September 2027 (points 6-8 and Appendix 2).
3. The proposed Admission Policy for September 2027 (point 9-11 and Appendix 3).

Detail

1. The School Admissions Code (The Code) updated 1st Sept 2021 outlines the overall principles behind setting admission arrangements. It states that:

*'In drawing up their admission arrangements, admission authorities **must** ensure that the practices and the criteria used to decide the allocation of school places are fair, clear, and objective. Parents should be able to look at a set of arrangements and understand easily how places for that school will be allocated.'* (The Code, page 7 paragraph 14)

2. When changes are proposed to admission arrangements, all admission authorities **must** consult on their admission arrangements (including any supplementary information form) that will apply for admission applications the following school year. Where the admission arrangements have not changed from the previous year there is no requirement to consult, subject to the requirement that admission authorities **must** consult on their admission arrangements at least once every 7 years, even if there have been no changes during that period.' (The Code, page 18 paragraph 1.45)

In summary:

- We will be rolling forward the current 2026/27 timetable and dates for the 2027/28 admissions rounds.
 - We will be providing an update on the Published Admission Numbers (PAN) of all Stockton schools for the 2027/28 academic year.
 - We are not proposing any amendments to the School Admissions Policy for the 2027/28 bulk rounds for admission across Stockton-on-Tees maintained community and voluntary controlled schools.
3. The LA consulted with a range of key partners and stakeholders including Schools, Governing Bodies, neighbouring authorities, Diocesan representatives, parents/carers, and the public.

CO-ORDINATED ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS AND TIMETABLE - 2027/28

4. The LA is responsible for administering a co-ordinated scheme for the area in relation to all maintained community, voluntary controlled, voluntary aided schools and Academies including Free Schools. The purpose of the co-ordinated admission scheme is to ensure that, as far as is reasonably practicable, every parent of a child living in the LA area who has applied for a school place in the normal admission round receives an offer of one school place on the same day.
5. The LA plans to roll forward the current co-ordinated scheme in operation for 2026/27 admissions round apart from minor date changes. The LA act as a clearing house for the allocation of places by the relevant admission authorities in response to the Common Application Forms. The LA will only decide with respect to the offer or refusal of a place in response to any preference expressed on the Common Application Form where:

- it is acting in its separate capacity as an admission authority; or
- an applicant is eligible for a place at more than one school, or
- an applicant is not eligible for a place at any school that the parent has nominated.

Appendix 1 attached provides further detail of the proposed Co-ordinated Admission arrangements timetable – 2027/28.

PUBLISHED ADMISSION NUMBERS (PAN)

6. It is expected that the number of Secondary school Year 7 places available in the borough for September 2027 will be **2,586**, with no proposed amendments.
7. It is expected that the number of Primary school Reception places available in the borough for September 2027 will be **2,525**, this includes the two proposals listed below. Due to the continued low birth rate across the borough, we have seen a steady fall in pupils requiring a reception school place. In response, a number of schools have already successfully reduced their reception intake numbers in recent years, for entry in September 2027, the LA are not proposing any further PAN reductions from its remaining Community schools.
8. There are two Academy Trusts that have consulted on reducing their school PANs from 60 to 45 for Admission in September 2027, namely:
 - a. The Northen Education Trust (NET) have proposed to reduce the PAN of Norton Primary Academy from 60 to 45.
 - b. AdAstra Academy Trust have proposed to reduce the PAN of Rosebrook Primary Academy from 60 to 45.

Appendix 2 provides the proposed PANs for September 2027 in Community, VA, Academies and Free Schools and highlights those schools to be considered for expansion and remodelling.

ADMISSION POLICY FOR SEPTEMBER 2027 for Primary and Secondary Community and Voluntary Controlled (VC) Schools in Stockton-On-Tees.

9. We are **not** proposing any amendments to the current version of the Admissions Policy being applied to 2026/27 admissions for the remaining Stockton-on-Tees maintained community and voluntary controlled schools (that applies if the schools are oversubscribed).
10. It should also be noted that Academy Trusts (Admission Authority) generally propose a range of amendments to their respective admission arrangements. Most are consulted upon as per the Code requirement to consult on their admission arrangements at least once every 7 years.

11. These proposed amendments will help clarify and clear up some criteria held within their respective admission arrangements. These proposals are available on each Trust's / school's website.

Appendix 3 provides further detail on the proposed LA's Admission Policy for September 2027 for Community and Voluntary Controlled schools only, that will give priority to applications for admission to a school if that school is oversubscribed.

12. The attached documents once agreed (determined) will be available on the Councils website at the following link [Admissions arrangements - Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council](#).

Community Impact and Equality and Poverty Impact Assessment

13. None

Corporate Parenting Implications

14. None

Financial Implications

15. None

Legal Implications

16. The Council as Local Education Authority has a duty under The Education Act 1944 to ensure a sufficient supply of school places to meet the needs of the children and young people resident in the borough.

Risk Assessment

17. Determining the LA's School Admissions arrangements for 2027/28 is categorised as low to medium risk. Existing management systems and daily routine activities are sufficient to control and reduce risk.

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

18. Not ward specific. The draft School Admissions arrangements for 2027/28 were sent to all Cllrs for consideration as part of the consultation process timeline.

Background Papers

19. None

Name of Contact Officer: Darren Coulton

Post Title: Team Manager Sufficiency, Schools & SEND

Telephone number: 01642 526415

Email address: d.coulton@stockton.gov.uk

Appendix 1

THE ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS FOR COMMUNITY, VOLUNTARY CONTROLLED, VOLUNTARY AIDED, ACADEMY & FREE PRIMARY & SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN STOCKTON-ON-TEES FOR SEPTEMBER 2027

The purpose of this document is to provide information for Elected Members, Governing Bodies, and other Local Authorities, the Diocese, Parish Councils, and parents on the admission arrangements for community / voluntary controlled, voluntary aided, academy and free schools both primary / secondary sectors in Stockton-on-Tees for the school year 2027/28.

The updated School Admissions Code (the Code) was updated in September 2021 and applies to admissions to all maintained schools and Academies. The Code is made under section 84 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 ('SSFA 1998'). The Code has been made following consultation under Section 85 (2) of the SSFA 1998 and after being laid before Parliament for forty days. Admission authorities must ensure that their determined admission arrangements for 2027 comply with the mandatory provision of the Code. The admission arrangements for Stockton on Tees, laid out in this report for 2027/28, are compliant.

CO-ORDINATED ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS

PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS

**(Community, Voluntary Aided, Academies and Free
Schools)**

Includes:

Applications for Primary Schools

Applications for Secondary Schools

In year transfer requests

2027/28

Introduction

1. The 1998 Act, as amended by the Education Act 2002, has introduced new statutory requirements for every Local Authority (LA) to draw up a scheme covering every maintained school in its area. Stockton-On-Tees LA has drawn up a full co-ordinated admissions scheme for the main rounds for Primary and Secondary applications and 'in year' transfer requests for the academic year 2027/28.

Interpretation

2. In this scheme:

"the LA" means Stockton on Tees Borough Council acting in their capacity as local education authority.

"the LA area" means the area in respect of which the LA is the local education authority.

"the CAF" means Common Application Form.

"primary education" has the same meaning as in section 2(1) of the Education Act 1996.

"secondary education" has the same meaning as in section 2(2) of the Education Act 1996.

"primary school" has the same meaning as in section 5(1) of the Education Act 1996.

"secondary school" has the same meaning as in section 5(2) of the Education Act 1996.

"school" means a community, foundation, or voluntary school (but not a special school) which is maintained by the LA.

"VA schools" means those schools which are voluntary-aided church schools.

"Academy" means a publicly funded state school.

"Free School" means a publicly funded state school.

"admission authority" in relation to a community and voluntary controlled school means the LA and, in relation to a VA schools and Academies, means the governing body of that school.

"determination year" means the academic year (i.e., the period from 1 August to the following 31 July) immediately preceding the offer year. This is the academic year in which admission authorities determine their admission arrangements.

"admission arrangements" means the overall procedure, practices, criteria, and supplementary information to be used in deciding on the allocation of school places and refers to any device or means used to determine whether a school place is to be offered.

"in-year admission" means any application for a place in a school in any year of education that is received after 1 September except in the case of admission into Reception and Y7 in which case these will be treated as the 'normal' round of admissions up to the end of the Autumn term.

"nearest appropriate school" is defined as the school closest to the home address with places, unless your child is a baptised Catholic then a place would be offered at the nearest Roman Catholic School with places.

Compliance with the Code

3. It is the responsibility of admission authorities to ensure that admission arrangements are compliant with this Code. Where a school is their own admission authority, this responsibility falls to the governing body or Academy Trust.
4. Section 88P of the SSFA 1998 requires local authorities to make reports to the Schools Adjudicator about such matters connected with relevant school admissions as required by the Code.
5. Objections to the admission arrangements of both maintained schools and Academies can be made to the Schools Adjudicator whose decisions are binding and enforceable.
6. The Secretary of State may refer the admission arrangements of any school to the Schools Adjudicator at any time if the Secretary of State considers that they do not or may not comply with the mandatory requirements of this Code or the law.
7. The Schools Adjudicator may investigate the admission arrangements of any school that the Adjudicator considers do not or may not comply with the mandatory requirements of this Code or the law.
8. Any decision of the Schools Adjudicator will be binding on the admission authority. The admission authority **must**, where necessary, revise their admission arrangements to give effect to the Schools Adjudicator's decision within two months of the decision (or by **28 February** following the decision, whichever is sooner), unless an alternative timescale is specified by the Adjudicator. An Adjudicator's determination is binding and enforceable. Where admission authorities fail to implement decisions of the Adjudicator the Secretary of State may direct the admission authority (either the governing body, the local authority, or Academy Trust) to do so under Section 496 or 497 of the Education Act 1996 or the Funding Agreement.
9. The table below sets out the admission authority for each type of school in England.

Type of School	Who is the admission authority?	Who deals with complaints about arrangements?	Who is responsible for arranging / providing for an appeal against refusal of a place at a school?
Academies	Academy Trust	Schools Adjudicator	Academy Trust
Foundation Schools	Governing Body	Schools Adjudicator	Governing Body
Voluntary aided Schools	Governing Body	Schools Adjudicator	Governing Body
Community Schools	Local Authority	Schools Adjudicator	Local Authority
Voluntary Controlled Schools	Local Authority	Schools Adjudicator	Local Authority

Applying for a school place

10. There will be a standard form known as the Common Application Form (CAF) which will be used for the purpose of admitting pupils into the reception class for primary school and the first year of secondary education in the determination year. In the main rounds for applications for primary and secondary places, an on-line facility will be set up to enable parents to apply for places online. A separate form known as the 'In-Year Application for a school place or a change of school place' will be available for any applications made for an "in year transfer" into any year group. There is no on-line facility yet although a form can be requested by contacting the School Admissions team via email school.admissions@stockton.gov.uk or by phoning 01642 526605.
11. The on-line application / CAF and 'In-Year Application for a school place or a change of school place' form must be used as a means of expressing one or more preferences for the purposes of section 86 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998, by parents permanently resident in the LA area who wish to express a preference for their child:
- (a) To be admitted to a school within the LA area (including VA schools, Academies and Free School).
 - (b) To be admitted to a school located in another LA's area (including VA schools and Academies).
12. The on-line application / CAF and 'In-Year Application for a school place or a change of school place' form will:
- (a) Invite parents to express up to three preferences with Secondary only providing the option to apply for four preferences by completing the form including, where relevant, any schools outside the LA's area, in rank order of preference.
 - (b) Invite parents to give their reasons for each preference.
13. The CAF will:
- (a) Specify a closing date (for the determination year) and where it must be returned.
14. The LA will make appropriate arrangements to ensure:
- (a) That the on-line application / CAF is available on request from the LA and the 'In-Year Application for a school place or a change of school place' form will be available from the LA; and
 - (b) That a written explanation of the scheme is available from the LA and on their website.
15. All preferences expressed on the on-line application / CAF are valid applications. The governing body of a VA school / Academy can require parents who wish to nominate, or who have nominated their school on the CAF, to provide additional information on a supplementary form only where the additional information is required for the governing body to apply their oversubscription criteria to the application. Where a supplementary form is required, this will be requested after the VA schools / academies have received information from the LA about who has applied for their schools. Information requested on the supplementary form should be returned by the parent to the individual school by the due date specified by the school.
16. Where a school receives a supplementary form, it will not be regarded as a valid application unless the parent has also completed either the Stockton on Tees on-line application / CAF

or, if resident in another area which has a CAF, their home area's common application form, and the school is nominated on it. Where supplementary forms are received directly by VA schools / Academy, the school must inform the LA immediately so it can verify whether a CAF or neighbouring area's CAF has been received from the parent and, if not, contact the parent and ask them to complete one. In these circumstances, the school should also send the LA a copy of the supplementary form if so requested. Under the requirements of the scheme, parents will not be under any obligation to complete an individual school's supplementary form where this is not strictly required for the governing body to apply their oversubscription criteria.

17. Very few Voluntary Aided schools / Academies governing bodies have opted out of the co-ordinated admissions scheme for in year transfers, a list of these schools will be made available for parents by September 2027 on the Stockton website. Parents are still required to complete an application form from the LA and schools need to inform the parents and the LA of the outcome of the request.

Processing of CAFs

18. Completed CAFs (online or paper) should be returned to the LA:

- (a) For secondary schools by the **31 October 2026***. The LA will enter information for all the schools within the Borough onto their system and forward information for applications to Academy Trust / VA schools and other LAs during the week commencing the **9 November 2026**.
- (b) Primary schools by the **15 January 2027***. The LA will enter information for all the schools within the Borough onto their system and forward information for applications to Academy Trust / VA schools and other LAs during the week commencing **25 January 2027**.
- (c) Online applications – the facility to apply for a school place on-line will be open during the time for application – **7 September 2026** to midnight on the **31 October 2026** for secondary and for primary **9 November 2026** to midnight on the **15 January 2027**.

**If the closing date falls on a Saturday or Sunday, any applications received through the post, on the Monday morning after that date, will be classed as on time. Any others received after this will be classed as late.*

Allocation of places

19. Places will be allocated using the Equal Ranking Scheme* for Primary and Secondary by all admission authorities within Stockton on Tees.

**Equal Ranking means that all the preferences written on the CAF or on-line form will be considered as a separate application for each school.*

SECONDARY ADMISSIONS - Determining offers in response to the CAF

20. The LA will act as a clearing house for the allocation of places by the relevant admission authorities in response to the CAFs. The LA will only make any decision with respect to the offer or refusal of a place in response to any preference expressed on the CAF where:

- (a) It is acting in its separate capacity as an admission authority, or.
- (b) An applicant is eligible for a place at more than one school, or.
- (c) An applicant is not eligible for a place at any school that the parent has nominated.

21. The LAs system for online applications will become 'live' from the **7 September 2026** to midnight on the **31 October 2026** with the closing date for return of paper CAFs also the **31 October 2026**.
22. **Commencing from 9 November 2026** the LA will notify the admission authority for each of the schools of every application that has been made for that school. Where parents have requested a place at a school outside of the LA area, the information will be forwarded to the relevant admission authority/authorities. All VA schools and Academies should plan to gather information required from parents and set up admission committees for allocation of places.
23. During the first two weeks of **January 2027** - VA schools, other LAs and Academies, should aim to inform LA of the allocation of places for all applications received in the priority order of their admission policy. Any applications which are refused also need to be listed in order of priority.
24. The LA compares lists and considers all preferences from the parent and if first preference is refused then will look to see where 2nd, 3rd or 4th preferences can be accommodated. The lists will be sent back to the VA schools and Academies for their approval before finalising allocations. Liaison will take place with VAs, other LAs and Academies until the allocation of places is resolved for each application, as required.
25. **By the 31 January 2027** - the LA will match ranked lists for all schools and:
- (a) Where the child is eligible for a place at only one of the nominated schools, that school will be allocated to the child.
 - (b) Where the child is eligible for a place at two or more of the nominated schools, they will be allocated a place at whichever of these is the highest ranked preference.
 - (c) Where the child is not eligible for a place at any of the nominated schools, they will be offered a place at the nearest appropriate school with a vacancy or asked to contact School Admissions for an alternative school.
26. **On 1 March 2027 (or the next working day)** the LA will post letters (2nd class post) to parents to let them know which school has been allocated to their child. If they have applied on-line, they will receive an email on the 1 March or the next working day. The letter will also tell them of their statutory right to appeal if they have been refused a place at their preferred school.
- Parents will need to complete an Appeal Form online at [Appeal a school place decision - Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council](#) else request a paper Appeal Form and return to Appeals Service, Stockton-On-Tees Borough Council, Dunedin House, Columbia Drive, Thornaby, Stockton-on-Tees, TS17 6BJ within **20 school days upon** receipt of the form.

PRIMARY ADMISSIONS - Determining offers in response to the CAF

27. The LA will act as a clearing house for the allocation of places by the relevant admission authorities in response to the CAFs. The LA will only make any decision with respect to the offer or refusal of a place in response to any preference expressed on the CAF where:
- (a) It is acting in its separate capacity as an admission authority, or.
 - (b) An applicant is eligible for a place at more than one school, or.
 - (c) An applicant is not eligible for a place at any school that the parents have nominated.

28. The LAs system for online applications will become 'live' from the **9 November 2026** to midnight on the **15 January 2027** with the closing date for return of paper CAFs also the **15 January 2027**. Packs for admission to Primary School will be distributed to all parents. Applications are to be made on common application form and all applications returned to LA.

29. **Commencing from 25 January 2027** – the LA will notify the admission authority for each of the schools of every application that has been made for that school. Where parents have requested a place at a school outside of the LA area, the information will be forwarded to the relevant Local Authority. After this date all VA schools and Academies plan to gather information required from parents and set up admission committees for allocation of places.

30. **During the week ending the 5 March 2027** VA schools, Academies and other LAs inform the home LA of allocation of places for all applications received in the priority order of their admission policy. Any applications which are refused also need to be listed in order of priority.

The LA compares lists and considers all preferences from the parent and if first preference is refused, look to see where 2nd or 3rd preferences can be accommodated. The lists will be sent back to the VA schools and Academies for their approval before finalising allocations.

Liaison will take place with VA, Academies and other LAs schools until the allocation of places is resolved for each application, as required.

31. **By week commencing the 15 March 2027** - the LA will match ranked lists for all schools and:

- (a) Where the child is eligible for a place at only one of the nominated schools, that school will be allocated to the child.
- (b) Where the child is eligible for a place at two or more of the nominated schools, they will be allocated a place at whichever of these is the highest ranked preference.
- (c) Where the child is not eligible for a place at any of the nominated schools, they will be offered a place at the nearest appropriate school with a vacancy or asked to contact School Admissions for an alternative school.

32. **On the 16 April 2027 (or the next working day)** the LA will post (2nd class) out a letter to parents informing them of their child's allocated school. If they have applied on-line, they will receive an email on the 16 April or next working day. The letter will tell them which school has been allocated and their statutory right to appeal if they have been refused a place at their preferred school.

Parents will need to complete an Appeal Form online at [Appeal a school place decision - Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council](#) else request a paper Appeal Form and return to Appeals Service, Stockton-On-Tees Borough Council, Dunedin House, Columbia Drive, Thornaby, Stockton-on-Tees, TS17 6BJ within 20 school days upon receipt of the form.

Secondary & Primary Co-ordinated Admissions timetable 2027/28

SECONDARY	
w/c 7 September 2026	Online applications become live and CAFs and other information to parents.
31 October 2026	Closing date for online applications and for return of CAFs.
w/c 9 November 2026	Lists of applications sent to VA schools, Academies & Free School(s) and other LAs.
w/e 15 January 2027	VA schools, Academies & Free School(s) return full list of applications ranked according to their oversubscription criteria. Other LAs inform LA of preferences they can allocate. Liaison between admission authorities to resolve offers.
31 January 2027	Finalise allocations and further liaison as necessary.
1 March 2027	Or next working day - allocation letters sent out from LA to all parents via 2 nd class post offering places and giving reasons for refusals and right of appeal. Email sent to parents who applied on-line.
May/June 2027	Appeal hearings held.

PRIMARY	
w/c 9 November 2026	Online applications become live and CAFs and other information to parents.
15 January 2027	Closing date for online applications and for return of CAFs.
w/c 25 January 2027	Lists of applications sent to VA schools, Academies & Free School(s) and other LAs.
w/c 1 March 2027	VA schools, Academies & Free School(s) return full list of applications ranked according to their oversubscription criteria. Other LAs inform LA of preferences they can allocate. Liaison between admission authorities to resolve offers.
w/c 15 March 2027	Finalise allocations and further liaison as necessary.
16 April 2027	Or next working day - allocation letters sent out from LA to all parents via 2 nd class post offering places and giving reasons for refusals and right of appeal. Email sent to parents who applied on-line.
June/July 2027	Appeal hearings held

No CAF received by the LA

33. Where no CAF is submitted for primary or secondary school, the child will be offered a place at the nearest appropriate school with a vacancy or will receive a letter from the LA requesting that they make contact to discuss further.

Late applications

34. CAFs received after the closing date will be dealt with after all the other applications have been looked at unless there is a good reason, e.g., if a family moves into the area. If that is the case, the application can be considered along with all of those that came in on time if the allocations have not been started.

The LA will continue to co-ordinate applications for admission in September 2027 for any late applications for primary or secondary, received e.g., after the closing date and post offer date up until the start of that school year.

Waiting lists

35. The LA will maintain a waiting list for all oversubscribed maintained Stockton on Tees Schools. The waiting list will be open for all Primary and Secondary schools for the duration of the next academic term (1st September to 31st December). Places will be allocated, if they become available, in accordance with the LAs published oversubscription criteria.

VA schools, Academies and Free Schools are required to keep a waiting list for at least the Autumn Term of 2027, if places become available at their school, the governing body will allocate places from their own oversubscription criteria and inform the LA. The LA will write to parents informing them of the decision.

36. Where the LA can offer a place to a non-Stockton-on-Tees child from the Waiting List, we will liaise with the home LA, who will write to the parent to confirm the place.

In Year admission to primary & secondary schools

37. Applications for either a primary or a secondary school place outside the normal admissions round are treated as 'in-year' admissions.

38. Requests are regularly received from parents to transfer their child to an alternative school, and it can be for a variety of reasons. In certain cases, it does not always benefit the child or the school and so the Local Authority has laid out procedures which are followed upon receipt of such a request.

39. If you pay your Council Tax to Stockton Borough Council and you want to change your child's school you will need to complete an 'In-Year Application for a school place or a change of school place' form for each child who you want to transfer.

(a) If you are moving away from Stockton to another Local Authority you still need to complete a Stockton transfer form and we will liaise with the other authority. Once they have considered your application, we will contact you with the decision.

(b) If you are moving into the Stockton area you will need to contact your Local Authority for their application form unless you are moving from abroad where, if you contact School Admissions on 01642 526605 or email school.admissions@stockton.gov.uk then a form can be posted or emailed to you.

40. School transfers can take between 10 and 15 school days to complete (were possible) but if there are any issues with the request this can make the process longer.

(a) We will send your transfer form and any other information that you send us to both your current school and your preferred school.

(b) If we receive more than one application on the same day for the same school (that is still maintained by the LA) and year group, we will apply our own over-subscription criteria.

(c) It may be if you have not discussed any concerns with your current school that the Head Teacher requests you attend a meeting before we can process your application any further, as it is not always in your child's best interest to change schools. It is your responsibility to ensure that your child attends their current school until a new school place has been agreed.

41. If you are applying for a Voluntary Aided school or an Academy then their Governing Body or Academy Admissions panel will consider your application and let us know the decision. They may apply their own Admissions Policy to any applications that they have received. We will contact you on their behalf.
42. The School Admissions Code (1 September 2021) added that all 'admission authorities must inform the LA whether they intend to be part of the LA in-year co-ordination scheme. Almost all schools in Stockton have chosen to this.
43. The LA will, on request provide information to prospective parents about the places still available in all schools within the borough.
44. The Code also states that, apart from designated grammar schools, all maintained schools, and academies, including schools designated with a religious character, that have places available **must** offer a place to every child who has applied for one, without condition or the use of any oversubscription criteria, unless admitting the child would prejudice the efficient provision of education or use of resources. For example, admission authorities **must not** refuse to admit a child solely because:
- (a) they have applied later than other applicants.
 - (b) they are not of the faith of the school in the case of a school designated with a religious character.
 - (c) they have followed a different curriculum at their previous school; or
 - (d) information has not been received from their previous school.
45. Where an applicant is offered a school place following an in-year application, and the offer is accepted, arrangements should be made for the child to start school as soon as possible, particularly where the child is out of school.

ADMISSION NUMBERS**Admissions for September 2027****Primary Schools**

Planning area	Name of school	Type of school	2026	2027
Billingham & Wolviston				
	Bewley	Academy	45	45
	Billingham South	Community	60	60
	High Clarence	Academy	15	15
	Oakdene	Academy	45	45
	Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary RC	Academy	20	20
	Pentland	Academy	30	30
	Prior's Mill CE	Academy	60	60
	Roseberry	Community	60	60
	St John the Evangelist RC	Academy	20	20
	St Joseph's RC	Academy	30	30
	St Paul's RC	Academy	30	30
	Wolviston	Academy	15	15
	Wynyard CE	Free School/Academy	60	60

Planning area	Name of school	Type of school	2026	2027
North Stockton				
	Crooksbarne	Academy	45	45
	Frederick Natrass Primary Academy	Academy	30	30
	Hardwick Green Primary Academy	Academy	30	30
	Harrow Gate Primary Academy	Academy	60	60
	Norton Primary Academy	Academy	60	*45
	Rosebrook	Academy	60	*45
	St Gregory's Catholic Academy	Academy	30	30
	St John the Baptist CE	Voluntary-Controlled	30	30
	St Joseph's RC	Academy	40	40
	St Mark's Elm Tree CE	Academy	60	60
	The Glebe	Community	55	55
	Tilery	Community	45	45
	Whitehouse	Academy	45	45
	William Cassidi CE	Voluntary-Aided	29	29

*Please note the Admission Authority Trust have proposed to reduce the PAN

Planning area	Name of school	Type of school	2026	2027
Central Stockton	Bowesfield	Community	60	60
	Fairfield	Community	60	60
	Hartburn	Academy	90	90
	Holy Trinity Rosehill CofE	Voluntary-Aided	30	30
	Mill Lane	Community	30	30
	Oxbridge Lane	Community	30	30
	St Bede's Catholic Academy	Academy	30	30
	St Cuthbert's RC	Academy	30	30
	St Patrick's RC	Academy	30	30
	The Oak Tree Primary Academy	Academy	30	30

Planning area	Name of school	Type of school	2026	2027
Thornaby	Bader	Academy	45	45
	Christ the King RC	Academy	60	60
	Harewood	Academy	60	60
	Mandale Mill	Community	60	60
	St Patrick's RC	Academy	50	50
	Thornaby CE	Academy	60	60
	Village	Academy	30	30

Planning area	Name of school	Type of school	2026	2027
Ingleby Barwick	Barley Fields	Academy	90	90
	Ingleby Mill	Community	60	60
	Myton Park	Community	30	30
	St Francis of Assisi CE	Academy	60	60
	St Therese of Lisieux RC	Academy	30	30
	Whinstone	Academy	60	60

Planning area	Name of school	Type of school	2026	2027
Eaglescliffe & Yarm	Durham Lane	Community	30	30
	Egglecliffe	Academy	30	30
	Junction Farm	Academy	60	60
	Kirklevington	Academy	20	20
	Layfield	Academy	27	27
	Levendale	Academy	30	30
	Preston	Academy	29	29
	St Mary's CE	Academy	15	15
	The Links	Academy	30	30
	Yarm	Academy	60	60

Secondary Schools

Planning area	Name of school	Type of school	2026	2027
Billingham & Wolviston	Northfield	Community	330	330
	St Michael's Catholic Academy	Academy	180	180

Planning area	Name of school	Type of school	2026	2027
Stockton North & Central	Ian Ramsey CE Academy	Academy	237	237
	North Shore Academy	Academy	180	180
	Our Lady and St Bede Catholic Academy	Academy	210	210
	Outwood Academy Bishopsgarth	Academy	180	180
	The Grangefield Academy	Academy	210	210

Planning area	Name of school	Type of school	2026	2027
Stockton South	All Saints CE Academy	Academy	180	180
	Conyers Academy	Academy	224	224
	Egglecliffe School	Academy	235	235
	Ingleby Manor Free School & Sixth Form	Academy / Free School	150	150
	St Patrick's Catholic Academy	Academy	120	120

	Thornaby Academy	Academy	150	150
--	------------------	---------	-----	-----

If demand dictates it after all Admission arrangements have been determined, certain schools may choose to admit above their Admission Number to meet any ‘bulge year’ – this does not constitute an increase in its agreed Admission Number thereafter.

Please be aware that other primary and secondary schools across the Borough may convert to Academy status during this application round.

Appendix 3

Admission Policy for September 2027 for Primary and Secondary Community and Voluntary Controlled (VC) School in Stockton-on –Tees

All governing bodies are required by Section 37 of the Children and Families Act 2014 to admit to the school a child with an Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plan that names the school. **This is not an oversubscription criterion.** This relates only to children who have undergone statutory assessment and for whom a final EHC Plan has been issued.

Where there are more applications for a school than there are places available, places will be allocated in order using the oversubscription criteria below:

<p>CRITERIA (In priority order)</p>	<p>EXPLANATORY NOTES</p>
<p>1. Looked after children¹ and all previously looked after children, including those children who appear (to the admission authority) to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted². Previously looked after children are children who were looked after but ceased to be so because they were adopted³ (or became subject to a child arrangements order⁴ or special guardianship order⁵).</p>	<p>¹ A 'looked after child' is a child who is (a) in the care of a local authority, or (b) being provided with accommodation by a local authority in the exercise of their social services functions (see the definition in Section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989) at the time of making an application to a school.</p> <p>²A child is regarded as having been in state care outside of England if they were in the care of or were accommodated by a public authority, a religious organisation, or any other provider of care whose sole or main purpose is to benefit society.</p> <p>³This includes children who were adopted under the Adoption Act 1976 (see Section 12 adoption orders) and children who were adopted under the Adoption and Children Act 2002 (see Section 46 adoption orders).</p> <p>⁴Child arrangements orders are defined in Section 8 of the Children Act 1989, as amended by Section 12 of the Children and Families Act 2014. Child arrangements orders replace residence orders and any residence order in force prior to 22 April 2014 is deemed to be a child arrangements order.</p> <p>⁵See Section 14A of the Children Act 1989 which defines a 'special guardianship order' as an order appointing one or more individuals to be a child's special guardian (or special guardians).</p>
<p>2. Pupils who have a brother or sister permanently living at the same address, who are still at the school when the pupil begins. Please note – this only applies to siblings who are of compulsory school age, not younger siblings who attend a nursery setting attached to a school (Primary applications only)</p>	<p><u>We define brother or sister as follows:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A brother, sister, stepbrother, stepsister, adopted brother or sister, or children of partners who are permanently living at the same address as a family unit. In all cases, the parent who receives the Child Benefit for those children must permanently live at that address with the children. • We will consider brothers or sisters who live in separate households because the parents are separated and have shared responsibility for the children under conditions covering exceptional social or medical reasons. This does not include separate families living together in the same property. • If there are other family situations where there are different carers, e.g., aunts, uncles or grandparents, each case will be considered individually.

<p>3. Pupils permanently resident i.e., the address at which the child is registered for child benefit, who expresses a preference for that school (proof of address may be required) within the admission zone who have returned a Common Application Form by the closing date (31st October for Secondary applications and 15th January for Primary applications).</p>	<p>When a school is oversubscribed with in-zone applications i.e., there are more applications from children living in the admission zone of the school than there are places available, we will allocate places:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> to children permanently living in the admission zone (Criterion 3) according to their distance from the school measured in a straight line “as the crow flies” (Criterion 4).
<p>4. Pupils who live closest to a particular school measured in a straight line “as the crow flies”.</p>	<p>The LA uses a Geographic Information System, known as GIS, to identify and measure the distance from the central point of the home to the central point of the school. The distance is measured electronically from the central point of the school taken from the council maintained Local Land and Property Gazetteer, LLPG, (the same point for all applications) to the central point of the home (including flats) also taken from the LLPG. The GIS undertakes all measures in the same way for every applicant, to ensure consistency and fairness.</p>

The oversubscription criteria will be available on our website in September for parents for admission in September 2027.

N.B. please note for primary schools, attendance at a school nursery does not guarantee a place in the reception class of that school.

This page is intentionally left blank

REPORT TO CABINET

MARCH 2025

REPORT OF CORPORATE
MANAGEMENT TEAM

CABINET INFORMATION ITEM

Children & Young People - Lead Cabinet Member – Councillor Clare Besford

SCHOOL PERFORMANCE 2024 – 2025 FOR VULNERABLE PUPILS

Summary

This report presents a summary analysis of vulnerable pupil performance in the academic year 2024-2025 for all key stages and all providers in the Borough. It is informed by the latest available data, some of which remains unvalidated and compared to national and regional averages where they exist. It includes performance outcomes for:

1. Pupils in receipt of Pupil Premium Funding.
2. Performance by gender.
3. Performance by ethnicity.
4. Children and Young People in Our Care.
5. Children with a Social Worker.
6. Children with Special Needs.
7. Children from Service Families.
8. Attendance and exclusion figures for Stockton.

Strong attainment outcomes for vulnerable pupils are achieved in Stockton-on-Tees despite significant underlying structural inequalities.

In interpreting the performance of vulnerable groups, it is important to acknowledge that the Borough continues to experience some of the most pronounced neighbourhood-level inequalities in the country, which is often masked by Borough-wide averages. These inequalities intersect with the wider system challenges highlighted through our work on Early Intervention and Prevention (EIP), which identifies an estimated 2,205 adults experiencing Severe and Multiple Disadvantage (SMD) locally each year.

Many of the vulnerabilities seen among our children and young people such as suspensions, poor attendance, SEND, social care involvement and unstable housing are understood to be early indicators of future risk, underlining the critical importance of whole-family, place-based and early intervention approaches.

Together with our partners, we are working to strengthen the collective system response by removing organisational boundaries, improving multiagency data sharing, aligning resources, and building a shared “One Voice” approach around prevention.

This strategic alignment ensures that work to improve educational outcomes is supported by wider efforts to address the root causes of inequality, stabilise families experiencing complex lives, and create the conditions for long-term positive change.

Reasons for recommendations

Key Headlines:

- **Overall attainment for vulnerable groups shows positive direction of travel**, with notable improvements for disadvantaged pupils, girls, non-white pupils, and pupils with SEND.
- **Stockton frequently outperforms national benchmarks** across multiple groups and all key stages.
- **Gender outcomes are strong**, with both boys and girls performing well compared with national figures and holding high regional rankings.
- **Children in Our Care achieve well**, especially at EYFS and KS4, supported by strong partnership work from the Virtual School.
- **Children with a Social Worker show improving trends** in key areas including suspensions and attendance.
- **SEND outcomes at KS2 and KS4 have strengthened**, both for pupils with EHCPs and for those receiving SEN Support.
- **Exclusions practice is increasingly effective**, with no permanent exclusions in special schools and several exclusions prevented through early intervention and challenge.
- **Attendance work is having measurable impact**, with primary and special school attendance performing better than national/regional levels and secondary attendance improving. However, **PRU attendance is a significant concern**, with very high persistent and severe absence.
- **Suspensions and attendance challenges continue** for Children in Our Care and for Children with a Social Worker.
- **Early Years outcomes for children with SEND remain below national**, despite progress elsewhere.
- **Permanent exclusions remain too high**, especially in KS3, and numbers have increased slightly overall.
- **Access to specialist services** (e.g., EP and Speech & Language) remains a barrier for some groups.

Recommendations

Recommended that the report be noted.

Detail

In Stockton in 2025*:

1. Disadvantaged

- a) 30.7% of pupils aged 4–16 in Stockton are disadvantaged (and entitled to Pupil Premium), this is **2.9% above the national figure** (27.8%). Rates vary widely by school (2.9%–83.1%, Spring Census 2025).
- b) 27.9% of primary pupils are FSM Ever6, **3.2% above the national average** (24.7%), with school-level variation between 2.2%–76.3%.

- c) 28.7% of secondary pupils are FSM Ever6, **2.9% above the national average** (25.8%), ranging between 15.5%–79.5%.
- d) Disadvantaged pupils perform worse than their peers, and long-term disadvantaged pupils perform worst of all. 12% of pupils in the North East are long-term disadvantaged, compared to 15% in London.
- e) 28.4% of children in Stockton live in poverty (2022/23), slightly below the UK rate (30%). This represents a 2.9% increase since 2014/15 (25.5%), while the UK rate is unchanged over the same period.
- f) Many disadvantaged pupils face additional challenges (SEND, EAL, social care involvement, poor attendance). All SEND schools are 13%–50% above the LA average for disadvantage.

2. Children in Our Care (CIOC):

- g) 1.25% of pupils are CIOC, 0.58% above the national rate (0.67%).

3. Special Educational Needs (SEND):

- h) 13.5% of pupils have SEN Support plans; this is 0.4% **below the national average** (13.9%)
- i) 5.2% of pupils have an Education, Health & Care Plan (EHCP), **matching the national average**

4. English as an Additional Language (EAL):

- j) Although the proportion of EAL pupils is increasing, it remains **below the national average**. Primary: 8.9%, 14.4% below national (23.3%). Secondary: 7.5%, 11.4% below national (18.9%).

5. Assessment Context:

- k) No statutory reporting at the end of KS1.
- l) KS2 progress data is unavailable in 2025 due to the absence of KS1 assessments during COVID.

*Based on the spring census

DISADVANTAGED PUPILS

Disadvantaged Pupils (DS) in this report are defined as those in receipt of Free School Meals at some point within last 6 years, and who have been eligible for Pupil Premium funding. Disadvantaged pupils perform worse than their peers, and long-term disadvantaged pupils perform worst of all.

1. WHAT HAS WORKED WELL

- a) The attainment of DS pupils in 2025 has improved compared to 2024 in KS2 reading and the KS4 4+EM benchmark.
- b) The attainment of DS pupils in Stockton is higher than the national and regional average for DS pupils at the end of the EYFS (GLD), in Y1 phonics, all of the end of primary benchmarks and the KS4+EM benchmark.
- c) The attainment of non-disadvantaged (NDS) pupils in Stockton in 2025 was above national average for all benchmarks in both primary and secondary.

- d) The gap between DS and NDS pupils in Stockton has reduced for the KS4+EM benchmark

The following approaches have supported these improvements:

- a) A continuous focus on raising the attainment of DS pupils through all our networks and CPD for schools.
- b) Robust challenge and support around pupil outcomes for all our maintained schools.
- c) Enhanced focus on improving the attainment of DS pupils through work to address the recommendations of the appreciative inquiry: 'Narrowing the Gap in Educational Attainment'

2. AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT/CHALLENGES

- a) Although both groups attained above the national average, the gap between DS and NDS pupils in Stockton has widened at the end of the EYFS, and for reading, writing and the combined reading, writing and maths (CRWM) benchmarks at the end of KS2.
- b) Opportunities to engage with some schools that are part of Multi-Academy Trusts (MATs) are limited

GENDER

The overall challenge is to ensure that the gap in performance between girls and boys is minimised and that attainment for both groups is strong.

3. WHAT HAS WORKED WELL

- a) The attainment of girls remains above national average for all EY and KS2 benchmarks. The 1.5% improvement in girls' attainment of GLD and the 3.3% improvement in girls' reading at the end of KS2 mean that the performance of Stockton girls was at least 2.1% higher than the national average across EY and KS2.
- b) Both boys and girls in Stockton outperform their peer groups nationally on all benchmarks.
- c) The Stockton boy/ girl gap is narrower compared to the national boy/ girl gap in KS2 attainment for maths and CRWM, and KS4 (4+EM) benchmarks.
- d) The attainment of boys ranked first in the North East for GLD, and first equal for writing and CRWM at KS2.
- e) The attainment of girls ranked first in the North East for GLD and for reading at KS2.

4. AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT/CHALLENGES

- a) Although the attainment gap for GLD between boys in Stockton and the national figure has narrowed (0.1% compared to 2.1% in 2024), this is due to a lower proportion of boys in Stockton achieving GLD in 2025. A similar picture is reflected in maths at the end of KS2. In both cases, however, boys' attainment remains above national average.
- b) The KS2 reading gap between boys and girls exceeds the national average (7.2% compared to a national average of 5.9%). While both groups improved on 2024 outcomes and remain above national benchmarks, girls' improvement outpaced that of boys.

PERFORMANCE BY ETHNICITY

The overall challenge is to ensure that the gap in performance between ethnic groups is minimised and that attainment for all groups is strong.

5. WHAT HAS WORKED WELL

- a) The attainment of both non-white and white pupil groups at the end of EYFS is above the national average and the gap between the groups is one of the smallest in the region.
- b) Non-white pupils in Stockton outperformed this group nationally on every measure, except maths at KS2.
- c) White pupils in Stockton outperformed this group nationally on every measure
- d) Non-white pupils in Stockton outperformed white pupils in Stockton on every measure at KS2 and KS4.
- e) The attainment of non-white pupils in reading at the end of KS2 has improved by 4.4%, contributing to an overall improvement for the CRWM benchmark. This improvement places Stockton joint first in the region for these benchmarks.
- f) The gap between white and non-white pupils in reading at KS2 has closed in comparison with 2024 (0.2% compared to -2.6% in 2024)

6. AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT/CHALLENGES

- a) The narrowing of the KS2 maths gap between white and non-white pupils is primarily due to a decline in performance among non-white pupils, rather than an improvement in outcomes for both groups.
- b) The KS2 CRWM gap between white and non-white pupils has widened, and it is now slightly wider than the national average.

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN OUR CARE

1.25% pupils are identified as Children in Our Care (CIOC). This is 0.58% higher than the national average of 0.67%.

7. WHAT HAS WORKED WELL

- a) The number of children in care, in each cohort, when assessments are carried out can often be so small that comparisons with other larger cohorts of children (for example regional and national cohorts) can be very misleading. The changing nature and stability of these cohorts can also make comparisons difficult.
- b) Outcomes for Children in our Care (CIOC) are well above national outcomes for a Good Level of Development (GLD) at the end of Reception
- c) The performance of CIOC is broadly in line with the national outcomes for CIOC at the end of KS2
- d) Performance at the end of KS4 was above national outcomes for the benchmark.
- e) Attendance figures for CIOC, although lower than they were prior to the pandemic in 2019, are above national figures for this vulnerable group and all three attendance measures (overall absence, persistent absence and severe absence) have improved
- f) Robust challenge and support from the Virtual School to schools and other professionals, promotes high quality educational experiences for CIOC.
- g) A comprehensive training programme organised and delivered by the Virtual School provides high quality support for schools

- h) Personal Education Plan completion has remained stable at 92.5% although quality of plans has slightly decreased in the top category (Green) from 79% to 77%.
- i) The Virtual School, through strong partnerships with schools, have avoided several permanent exclusions for CIOC. This is achieved through good relationships, allowing for professional challenge and using a problem-solving approach to support appropriate alternative provision for these children.

8. AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT/CHALLENGES

- a) Suspensions are still well above the national rate for all CIOC.
- b) Attendance remains below pre-pandemic levels.
- c) Availability of support from Educational Psychology and for Speech and Language remains a challenge.

CHILDREN WITH A SOCIAL WORKER

The Virtual School has extended duties for children known (or previously known) to social care. Since the implementation of the renewed inspection framework in November 2025, schools are increasingly encouraged to identify and report on the performance of this vulnerable group.

The analysis below relates specifically to the performance of children in need (CIN) and children with child protection plans (CP).

9. WHAT HAS WORKED WELL

- a) Early Years outcomes for Children in Need (CIN) are above national CIN measures
- b) Attainment for Children in Need (CIN) in the primary phase is in line with or above those for all Children in Need nationally
- c) Children in Need and Children on a Protection Plan achieve higher than this group nationally for the KS4 benchmark
- d) The suspension rate for CIN and CP is showing an improving trend from 2023/24 to 2024/25
- e) Attendance figures are in line with national figures for this group of children

10. AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT/CHALLENGES

- a) Children With a Social Worker (CWSW – including those known to social care within the last six years) still achieve significantly worse academically than non-CWSW. This reflects the national picture.
- b) Attendance figures for CWSW are below the figure for all children and below the figure for CIOC. This reflects the national picture.
- c) Suspensions for CWSW are above the figure for all children and above the figure for CIOC. CWSW make up a disproportionate number of those suspended or permanently excluded.
- d) A continued area for development for this group is to continue to promote this group of children as a group in their own right, and to share their challenges through the FOCUS dashboard and accompanying analysis.

CHILDREN IDENTIFIED AS HAVING SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

As of 4th December 2025, 2751 children in Stockton had an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP). 955 of these were in primary and 1074 in secondary. 70.3% of the plans (1934) were for boys and 29.7% (817) for girls.

Communication and Interaction is the most prevalent primary need. Autistic Spectrum Disorders (ASD) are identified in 652 EHCPs and Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN) in 632.

Cognition and Learning is the second most prevalent area of primary need. Moderate Learning Difficulties (MLD) is identified in 554 plans, Specific Learning Difficulties (SPLD) in 81 plans and Physical Disability (PD) in 108. Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) is the primary need identified in 482 plans.

1150 children with an EHCP attend a mainstream school while 756 have a specialist placement.

11. WHAT HAS WORKED WELL

- a) Outcomes for pupils with an EHCP at the end of KS2 have improved in reading, writing and maths. For the combined measure (CRWM), they were marginally above the national average at 9.3% which was a 3.5% improvement in comparison with 2024.
- b) Outcomes for pupils with an EHCP at the end of KS4 have also improved by 3.5%, representing attainment above the national average for this vulnerable group.
- c) The performance of pupils with a SEN Support Plan at the end of KS2 has improved, particularly in reading. 53.6% achieved at least the expected level in reading, a 7.1% improvement on the previous year.
- d) Outcomes for pupils with a SEND Support Plan were above the national average in all the KS2 benchmarks.

12. AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT/CHALLENGES

- a) 3.3% of children with an EHCP achieved GLD at the end of Early Years. While this is an improvement in comparison with 2024, it remains below national average (4% in 2025).
- b) The outcomes for children in the Early Years with a SEND Support Plan are also below the national average. 23.8% of children achieved GLD, which was 1.8% lower than in 2024 and 2.6% below the national average
- c) At the end of KS4, the proportion of pupils with a SEND Support Plan who achieved the KS4 4+EM benchmark fell slightly to 42.9%. However, this is still 4.4% above the national average.

CHILDREN FROM SERVICE FAMILIES

From the DfE's Pupil Premium data based on spring 2025 schools census the total number of children from service families in Stockton was 386 pupils (22 fewer than the previous year). Of these, 189 were registered in primary schools, 194 in secondary schools, 3 in a special school and none at the Pupil Referral Unit (PRU).

The number of children from service families in each primary school, including special schools, eligible for this Pupil Premium funding ranged from 0 to 15 pupils and 4 to 30 pupils for secondary schools.

According to the 2025 spring census there are 49 primary schools, 13 secondary schools and 2 special schools which have children from service families on their roll.

As cohorts in each school are very small, analysis of academic achievement and pupil need is carried out on a school-by-school basis.

PERMANENT EXCLUSIONS AND SUSPENSIONS

The top two reasons for permanent exclusion during the academic year 2024/25 were persistent disruptive behaviour or physical assault against adults or peers. Persistent disruptive behaviour was the most frequent reason for permanent exclusion in secondary aged pupils. Physical assault against an adult was the most common reason for permanent exclusion in primary aged pupils.

We have continued to see permanent exclusions for a 'one off incident' where a child has breached a school's behaviour policy. Any instances of permanent exclusion are carefully reviewed by the Local Authority, and we work closely with schools to explore and promote alternative approaches wherever possible. The majority of suspensions are because of Disruptive Behaviour, this is overwhelmingly the case in secondary schools. We believe that a co-ordinated CPD programme informed by our recent work on the potential correlation between behaviour policies and number of suspensions will help to reduce these suspensions over time.

13. WHAT HAS WORKED WELL

- a) We have continued to have no permanent exclusions from our special schools during the academic year 2024/25.
- b) Several permanent exclusions were avoided through the vulnerable learners and placement & governance teams collaborating with schools to support, or by offering rigorous challenge at pupil disciplinary meetings for permanent exclusions.
- c) We have continued to deliver annual training for governors and headteachers so that they are up to date with current legislation relating to their statutory duty regarding exclusions from schools and academies.
- d) Following the appreciative inquiry during 2023-24, which was multi-agency in its approach and identified high exclusions/suspensions as a key area for development, work with schools continued during the academic year 2024/25 to explore ways to reduce the number of suspensions and exclusions for pupils across Stockton.

14. AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT/CHALLENGES

Exclusions

- a) During the academic year 2024/25, 116 children in Stockton were permanently excluded. 13 of these exclusions were for primary aged pupils and 103 were for secondary aged pupils. This was an 11.54% increase overall, with an 85.71% increase for primary schools and a 6.19% increase for secondary.
- b) Unfortunately, this year, we have continued to see permanent exclusions of primary aged children. We continue to use our Pathway Development Centre (PDC) Model to support children in KS1 & KS2 who have been permanently excluded or who are at risk of permanent exclusion and require a short-term placement within PDCs.
- c) In Stockton, boys are still more likely to be excluded than girls. However, we have seen a rise in the number of girls permanently excluded, and the final figure is slightly increased in comparison to last year (from 26 in 23/24 to 29 in 24/25).

- d) Despite the ongoing work with schools, the number of children permanently excluded in Stockton during the academic year 2024/2025 was marginally higher than in the previous year. This is mirrored both regionally and nationally, particularly in Key Stage 3. During the academic year 2024/25, Year 9 saw the highest number of permanent exclusions in Stockton. Figures are also high for Year 8 and Year 10.

Suspensions

- a) The use of suspensions has increased within the borough since we had a full return to school following Covid at the beginning of the Autumn 2021 term. It has continued to increase during the last academic year.
- b) The number of days lost to learning is high and can equate to weeks, months and academic years of education lost when looking at the total. During the academic year 2024-25, the days lost to suspension in Stockton schools totalled 13,807. This equates to approximately 73 academic school years.

ATTENDANCE

The latest DfE published data for autumn term 2024 and spring term 2025 combined is used in this report to give comparisons with national data. The information details the data for overall absence, persistent absence and severe absence across the school phases. Comparisons are with the data from autumn 2023 and spring 2024.

15. WHAT HAS WORKED WELL

- a) A sustained strategic focus on reducing secondary absence within Stockton has resulted in a measurable narrowing of the gap between national and regional attendance benchmarks. The comprehensive analysis undertaken through the Appreciative Inquiry has enabled the identification of priority areas and facilitated more integrated and aligned working practices between schools and Local Authority teams. This collaborative approach has underpinned continued improvements in attendance. In addition, the ongoing operation of attendance networks, coupled with the delivery of targeted school support meetings, has been instrumental in securing further progress and maintaining an upward trajectory in attendance performance

PRIMARY SCHOOL ATTENDANCE: AUTUMN AND SPRING TERMS 2024-25

- b) Overall absence in Stockton primary schools is 4.7% (*a 0.2% improvement*) and is better than the national average by 0.4%. In comparison to local statistical data Stockton is performing better than the regional average of 4.9%
- c) Persistent absence is 11.7% (*a 2.7% improvement*). This is better than the national average of 13.3% and the regional average of 12.8%.
- d) Severe absence is 0.6% (*a 0.1% improvement*) This is better than the national average of 0.9% and better than the regional average of 0.7%.

SECONDARY SCHOOL ATTENDANCE: AUTUMN AND SPRING TERMS 2024-25

- e) Overall absence in Stockton secondary schools was 9% (*an improvement of 0.6%*). This has narrowed the gap with the national average of 8% and is the regional average of 8.8%.
- f) Persistent absence in Stockton is 25.4% (*an improvement of 2.4%*)

SPECIAL SCHOOL ATTENDANCE: AUTUMN AND SPRING TERMS 2024-25

- g) Stockton special schools' overall absence is 12%. It is 0.7% better than the national average and 0.5% better than the regional average.

- h) Persistent absence in Stockton special schools is 29.6% (*a 2.6% improvement*). This is 5.6% better than the national average and 2% better than the regional average.
- i) Severe absence in Stockton is 5.2% (*a 2.4% improvement*). This is better than the national average of 6.4% and the regional average of 7.1%.

PUPIL REFERRAL UNIT (PRU) SCHOOL ATTENDANCE: AUTUMN AND SPRING TERMS 2024 - 25

- j) Stockton has one PRU. The relatively small number of pupils makes comparisons difficult, however overall absence has increased by 13.4% to 63%. This is 21% worse than both the national and regional averages.
- k) Persistent absence at the PRU has also increased by 2.9% to 97.7%. This is significantly higher than the national average by 15.8% and 13.7% higher than the regional average.
- l) Severe absence in the PRU is 60.6%. This is an increase of 8.6%. It is significantly higher than the national average by 21.6% and 16.6% higher than the regional average.

16. AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT/CHALLENGES

- m) Although overall, persistent and severe absence in Stockton secondary schools has improved over the last two years it remains higher than the national and regional average, and is therefore an area for further development.
- n) Levels of overall absence, persistent absence and severe absence in the PRU continue to be a concern. The PRU was judged by Ofsted to be inadequate for 'behaviour and attitudes' (which includes attendance) and for 'leadership and management'. It is therefore receiving additional monitoring and support.

WHAT WE ARE DOING TO ADDRESS THESE CHALLENGES

Consultation and engagement

1. This report is for information only; the contents cover the outcomes at the end of each key stage for Stockton-on-Tees's pupils identified within each vulnerable group.
2. There has been no consultation as this report is for information only.

Next steps

- 1) Throughout the academic year 2025-26, the Education, Inclusion and Achievement Team (EIA) will:
 - a) Continue to address the recommendations in the Appreciative Inquiry of 2024 which focused on Narrowing the Gap in Educational Attainment. This work includes developing partnerships beyond the EIA team and making best use of available resources.
 - b) Continue to make intelligent use of data to drive strategic priorities.
 - c) Continue to promote the need to plan strategically to meet the needs of vulnerable groups and, wherever possible, work with leaders from maintained schools and MATs to share best practice through a wide range of networks.
 - d) Further develop the CPD offer for schools and settings from EIA as a whole to ensure that it is clearly focused on supporting practitioners to meet the needs of vulnerable groups.
 - e) Launch the Inclusive Education Frameworks and provide targeted support where appropriate.

- f) Develop the School Readiness strategy and work in partnership to improve Early Years outcomes (particularly for the most vulnerable) through the DfE Best Start in Life funding.
- g) Continuing a strategic programme collaborating across Council services (including the innovative and proactive Skills for Success programme) to reduce suspensions and exclusions and improve attendance.
- h) Continue to provide additional support and challenge to the PRU, working collaboratively with the trust that runs it and with the DfE.
- i) Work in partnership with schools to ensure our CWSW and CIOC receive the right support at the right time to achieve academically and improve their wellbeing

Name of Contact Officer: Majella McCarthy
Post Title: Director of Children's Services
Telephone number: 01642 524994
Email Address: Majella.mccarthy@stockton.gov.uk

This page is intentionally left blank

REPORT TO CABINET

DATE 12/03/2026

REPORT OF CORPORATE
MANAGEMENT TEAM

CABINET DECISION

Children and Young People - Lead Cabinet Member – Councillor Claire Besford

Stockton-on-Tees Best Start in Life Plan 2026–2031

Summary

This report provides an overview of the Stockton-on-Tees Best Start in Life Plan 2026–2031. The plan sets out the Borough's vision, strategic priorities and commitments for improving outcomes in the earliest years of a child's life spanning pregnancy to age five.

Reasons for Recommendation(s)/Decision(s)

The plan aligns with the Government's Giving Every Child the Best Start in Life policy and delivers on both local and national ambitions to improve school readiness, reduce inequalities and strengthen early years provision. It also reflects the commitment to the development of Best Start Family Hubs, supported by DfE Best Start grant funding provided to each local authority to expand and enhance accessible, high-quality services for families. The plan supports priorities within the Stockton-on-Tees Plan, particularly priority one - the best start in life to achieve big ambitions.

Recommendations

1. Cabinet is asked to approve the Stockton-on-Tees Best Start in Life Plan 2026 – 2031.

Detail

1. As part of national policy direction, Stockton-on-Tees has been set ambitious targets by Government for the proportion of children achieving a Good Level of Development (GLD) by the end of reception. By the 2027/28 academic year, at least 78.5% of children are expected to achieve a GLD, with a specific target of 63.1% for children eligible for Free School Meals (FSM). For context, in 2024/25, 69.6% of children in Stockton-on-Tees achieved a GLD, compared with 53.8% of children eligible for FSM. The Best Start in Life plan aims to align and mobilise our collective resources to support progress toward these targets, which will serve as core metrics for monitoring performance and assessing impact over the lifetime of the plan.
2. The Stockton-on-Tees Best Start plan identifies five strategic priorities:
 - **Foundations for a Healthy Childhood** – supporting healthy routines, nutrition, immunisation, physical activity and home safety.

- **Home Learning and Play** – supporting parents to integrate play, talk and learning into daily life.
 - **Speech, Language and Communication** – promoting early communication skills and streamlining pathways for additional support.
 - **High Quality Early Years Education** – ensuring access to high quality provision, inclusive practice and sufficient childcare places.
 - **Emotional Health and Wellbeing** – supporting secure parent child relationships, early identification of needs and access to appropriate programmes.
3. To support delivery, each priority has a named lead and a multi-agency working group responsible for driving actions forward and ensuring progress is monitored effectively. The development of the Best Start Family Hub – a requirement of DfE Best Start funding - is a central component in delivering the plan and has its own multi agency working group.

Next Steps & Governance

4. SBC Communications Team are leading on the design and formatting of the plan, which has been produced in accordance with the Council's policy and standards for the publication of strategies.
5. As part of the terms of the Best Start Grant, the plan must be published on our website by 31st March 2026 in line with DfE requirements, and this includes adherence to the national 'Best Start' branding.
6. An annual delivery plan will outline how partners across the local system will implement the priorities set out in this strategy, including the key milestones, actions and performance measures required to monitor progress and impact. The delivery plan will be overseen and coordinated by the Best Start Strategic Group with regular reporting to the Families First Partnership Board and Health and Wellbeing Board.

Community Impact and Equality and Poverty Impact Assessment

7. An Equality and Poverty Impact Assessment has been completed. No groups with protected characteristics will be negatively impacted by the implementation of the strategy. Individuals with a disability, experiencing pregnancy and maternity & low income and disadvantaged families may be positively affected.

Corporate Parenting Implications

8. The Best Start in Life (BSIL) Plan 2026–2031 directly supports these responsibilities by strengthening early identification, targeted intervention, and access to high-quality early years support for children in care and those with a social worker.

Financial Implications

9. Initial Best Start Development Grant funding has been received by the Local Authority to support with the implementation of the Best Start Agenda. Subsequent funding is due to be received annually from April 2026.

Legal Implications

10. The Best Start in Life (BSIL) Plan 2026–2031 supports the Council in meeting its statutory duties relating to early childhood development, safeguarding, early education, health integration,

and SEND. There are no new or additional legal risks arising directly from the approval of the plan

Risk Assessment

11. The implementation & delivery of the plan will be managed through existing governance structures coordinated by the Best Start Strategic Group with regular reporting to the Families First Partnership Board and Health and Wellbeing Board.

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

12. The Best Start in Life Plan 2026 – 2031 will support families across all wards of the Borough. A programme of family and stakeholder engagement and feedback took place during December 2025 – January 2026 which has informed the development of the plan.

Background Papers

13. Draft Best Start in Life Plan (2026-2031).

Name of Contact Officer: Jane Smith

Post Title: Head of Service – Children Strategy & Commissioning

Telephone number: 01642 527237

Email address: jane.smith@stockton.gov.uk

This page is intentionally left blank

Stockton-on-Tees Best Start in Life Plan

2026-2031



Delivered by



Stockton-on-Tees
BOROUGH COUNCIL



**North East and
North Cumbria**



Contents

Foreword	3
Welcome	4
What evidence tells us	5
Our vision	6
Our priorities.....	7
Priority 1: Foundations for a healthy childhood	8
Priority 2: Home learning and play	9
Priority 3: Speech, language and communication	11
Priority 4: High-quality early years education	13
Priority 5: Emotional health and wellbeing.....	15
Best Start Family Hub offer	18
Delivering the strategy: Monitoring progress and impact.....	20
Thank you	21
Glossary of abbreviations.....	22

Foreword



I am delighted to introduce the ‘Stockton-on-Tees Best Start in Life Plan 2026–2031’. At its heart, this plan reflects our shared belief that every child deserves the chance to grow, learn and flourish — and that every family should feel supported, confident and cared for from pregnancy through to age five.

The early years shape so much of who we become. When children are surrounded by encouragement, kindness and opportunities to play and explore, they build strong foundations that carry them into school, adolescence and adulthood. This plan recognises just how precious these early moments are, and sets out a clear, hopeful and practical way for us to work together to reduce inequalities and help every child thrive.

One of the most inspiring parts of this plan is how it has been created. Families, practitioners, health colleagues, early years providers and community partners have walked alongside us throughout its development. Parents and carers have shared their experiences generously and honestly — telling us what helps, what could be better and what truly makes a difference. Their voices have shaped this plan, and I am deeply grateful to every family who contributed.

Together, we are united in our commitment to improving school readiness across the Borough. We know it is a key marker of children’s wellbeing, early development and future opportunities. This plan sets out the collective steps we will take to help every child enter Year 1 feeling confident, supported and excited to learn.

Finally, I want to offer my heartfelt thanks to our dedicated partners and to everyone who works every day to support children and families across Stockton-on-Tees. Your compassion, expertise and unwavering commitment are what make this plan not just possible, but full of promise.

Councillor Clare Besford

Cabinet Member for Children & Young People

Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council

Welcome

Welcome to the 'Stockton-on-Tees Best Start Plan 2026–2031', which sets out how partners across the Borough will work together to give every child the best possible start in life, from pregnancy through to age five.

The Best Start Plan sets out our shared vision, ambitions and priorities for supporting children and families in Stockton-on-Tees. It reflects our joint commitment to building a strong, joined up system of support that works alongside families and communities, strengthens early help and prevention and helps improve outcomes for children in their earliest years.

The Best Start Plan has been co-produced with a wide range of partners who share a collective responsibility and commitment to improving outcomes for children and families. This includes:

- Families
- Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council
- Stockton Parent Carer Forum (SPCF)
- North East & North Cumbria Integrated Care Board (NENCICB)
- Providers of NHS services including Harrogate and District NHS Foundation Trust (HDTF), North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust (NTH) and Tees, Esk and Wear Valleys NHS Foundation Trust (TEWV)
- Early education providers including private, voluntary and independent settings and schools
- Voluntary and Community Sector organisations

Partnership working and coproduction are central to how this plan will be delivered, underpinned by a shared determination to learn, adapt and continuously improve our system so that it truly meets the needs of children and families in Stockton-on-Tees. To achieve this, we have worked hand in hand with partners across the children's system and with families themselves

We have actively gone out into communities to speak with families face-to-face, through focus group sessions in Family Hubs and conversations in settings they know and trust, as well as undertaking wider online consultation. These interactions have allowed us to capture, in families' own words, what matters most to them and what they need from services. Their insights have strengthened our understanding of the barriers they encounter and the support that makes the greatest difference, enabling us to coproduce a plan that reflects real needs, values family strengths, and sets a shared direction that partners and families feel ownership of.

Note: In this strategy, the term 'parent' is used inclusively to refer to any significant adult in a child's life and should be understood interchangeably with 'parent/carer'.

What the evidence tells us

Why the first five years matter

The first five years of a child's life are incredibly important. What children experience during this time – and the support their families receive – shapes their learning, their confidence, their health and their future. Over recent years, a growing body of evidence has shown just how much early experiences affect children's development, their wellbeing and even their long-term life chances.

The World Health Organisation (WHO) (2018) reminds us that the period from pregnancy to age three is particularly important, as a baby's brain grows faster at this time than at any other stage. By age three, around 80% of the brain has already formed. This makes the early years a window of opportunity to build strong foundations for a child's lifelong health and wellbeing.

How children grow and learn

Children are born ready to learn, but they need the right environment and supportive relationships to help them reach their potential. From the very beginning, babies learn through the everyday interactions they have with the people who care for them—being talked to, played with, cuddled, listened to and loved.

By just six months, babies can recognise sounds and start to link them with objects and ideas. But to turn these sounds into language, they need people around them who talk, read, sing and play. These small, everyday moments help babies understand the world, feel safe and start building relationships that support their emotional wellbeing and learning.

As children grow, attending high-quality early education also helps prepare them for school and gives them skills that last well into primary school and beyond.

Why early support matters

We know that if a child falls behind in the early years, it can be harder for them to catch up later. Small gaps in learning, communication and development can become bigger over time and may affect their confidence and the opportunities they have as they grow. This is why early support for children and families is so important. When concerns are spotted early and families receive the right help at the right time, many children catch up quickly with their peers and continue to thrive.

Our vision

Our vision for children and young people living in the Borough is that they are given the best possible start in life, in an inclusive community where everyone can thrive as set out in the **Stockton-on-Tees Plan**: www.stockton.gov.uk/council-plan-2024.

We will work hard to prevent children and families from experiencing the impact of poverty, creating a bright and healthy future with a shared sense of belonging. We will ensure that all children, young people and families are supported to achieve their full potential through our early years, health and wellbeing, childcare and education system. We know that when communities work together to support children's health, wellbeing and development, they're doing much more than helping in the early years. They're giving children a strong start in life and building the solid foundations that lead to happier, healthier families and a brighter future for everyone.

The work we're doing now is all about giving children the best life chances from the very beginning. By helping them grow, learn and play well in their early years, we can reduce barriers and help them feel confident, supported and ready for the world as they get older. A 'best start' means children are more likely to do well in school, enjoy better health throughout their lives and have more opportunities when they become adults.

Our Best Start Plan also supports the national policy direction with the Government, who have made early years development and school readiness a national priority through their **Giving every child the best start in life** policy:

www.gov.uk/government/publications/giving-every-child-the-best-start-in-life.

By the end of the 2027/28 academic year:

- We want to see more children in Stockton-on-Tees starting school ready to learn, with the skills and confidence they need to make the most of their early education. To help achieve this, we have been set an ambitious goal by the Department for Education for at least 78.5% of children to reach a Good Level of Development (GLD) by the end of Reception by 2028
- For children eligible for Free School Meals (FSM), our aim is that at least 63.1% achieve a GLD by the end of Reception by 2028. This reflects our belief that no child should be left behind and that every child deserves the same strong start and the same opportunities to do well, both now and in the future.

Our priorities

To achieve our vision, we have identified five key priorities. These are based on an understanding of local needs, evidence of what works at this vital stage of development and what families and partners have told us matters most.

These are:

1. Foundations for a healthy childhood

We will help children eat well, stay active and build healthy habits from the very start.

2. Home learning and play

We will support families to make learning and play fun and part of everyday life at home.

3. Speech, language and communication

We will support children to develop the skills they need to communicate confidently.

4. High-quality early years education

We will ensure every child has access to great early learning experiences that help them grow and learn.

5. Emotional health and wellbeing

We will support families to ensure their children feel happy, safe and ready to learn.



Priority 1: Foundations for a healthy childhood

We will help children eat well, stay active and build healthy habits from the very start.

Why is this a priority?

Giving children a healthy start in life is one of the best things we can do for their future. Simple, everyday things like eating well, being active, getting enough sleep, keeping up with vaccinations, and having safe, consistent routines—make a huge difference to a child’s development, confidence and wellbeing.

Good nutrition helps children grow and learn, safe sleep keeps babies protected, and regular play and physical activity support strong bodies and healthy minds. Making homes safe reduces accidents, and routine immunisations protect children from serious illnesses. Together, these healthy habits help children feel their best and get ready for learning as they grow.

We want every family to feel supported in building these habits from the very beginning. By making sure parents and carers have clear, accessible information and the right help when they need it, we can reduce avoidable illness and make sure all children have the same chance to be healthy and happy. These priorities will guide our work to improve children’s early health and ensure every child in Stockton-on-Tees has the best possible start in life.

What actions are we committing to?

We will:

- Support breastfeeding, guide families through healthy weaning, and promote access to Healthy Start vouchers.
- Encourage simple, daily active play for babies and toddlers, and help families reduce screen time in the early years.
- Make it easier for families to keep up with childhood vaccinations and provide clear information about vaccine schedules, including the new chickenpox vaccine.
- Help parents build warm, responsive relationships and create consistent routines that make children feel safe and supported.
- Share clear advice on safe sleep—day and night—and support families who may not have stable or suitable sleeping arrangements.
- Provide practical guidance on home safety, car seat use, water safety, choking risks, and day-to-day ways to keep children safe as they become more active.

Priority 2: Home learning and play

We will support families to make learning and play fun and part of everyday life at home.

Why is this a priority?

Home learning and play make a big difference to children's early development. Simple things like talking, playing and spending positive time together help build children's language, communication and thinking skills. These everyday interactions give children the best start and help them feel safe, confident and ready to learn.

Families are central to helping children develop good learning habits. By building play and learning into home routines, parents and carers can support their child's development whether they are at home, in early years settings or out in the community. We will ensure all activity is inclusive, culturally sensitive and accessible for children and families with additional needs.

This work supports the Best Start in Life aim to reduce inequalities and help every child be ready for school. It's important that all families can access support. When parents can't get to local groups or services, other ways of reaching them should be offered so they can still take part in home learning.

What actions are we committing to?

We will:

- Codesign practical home learning actions with families and partners, ensuring they are realistic, culturally relevant, and grounded in lived experience
- Develop simple, accessible resources that help parents integrate play, talk, and learning into everyday routines, for example, talking to your child in the park, supermarket, or on the school run.
- Provide workshops and digital sessions that model effective home learning activities, including visual role modelling that parents can easily replicate at home.
- Build parental confidence by offering supportive, strengths-based guidance that recognises families' existing skills and knowledge
- Increase accessibility and inclusion by offering sessions in early years settings and nurseries, which are places parents already trust and providing alternative time slots for working families.
- Promote awareness and consistent messages through community engagement, local campaigns, and shared communication across partners.

- Target support for families facing barriers to engagement, including those unable to access place-based settings. Provide flexible, personalised options for learning at home or in the community.
- Signpost families to local opportunities such as libraries, playgroups, children and Family Hubs, and community groups and help these groups understand and reinforce home learning principles.



Priority 3: Speech, language and communication

We will support children to develop the skills they need to communicate confidently.

Why is this a priority?

The ability to talk, understand words and communicate with others is a vital part of how children learn, shaping their health, wellbeing and future success. These early skills help children express their feelings, build friendships, manage their emotions and enjoy learning as they grow.

We know that the everyday interactions children have with their parents, carers and the adults closest to them make the biggest difference. Talking together, sharing stories, playing, and spending time together helps children to develop strong speech, language and communication skills.

Most children will make great progress when the adults around them feel confident supporting communication from an early age. Some children, however, may need a little extra help along the way. When this happens, early support can make a big difference and help close gaps before they get bigger. For a smaller number of children who have more complex or ongoing communication needs, specialist support should be quick, easy to access and closely connected to the help families are already receiving.

What actions are we committing to?

We will:

- Share simple, consistent messages with parents about how to support early communication at home, making sure these are easy for Stockton-on-Tees families to access through antenatal sessions, Family Hubs and early years settings. We will also regularly check with parents to understand how useful these messages are, so we can make sure they reach all families and make a real difference.
- Develop a simple, easy to understand offer that explains what support is available from pregnancy through the early years.
- Ensure early years practitioners, health professionals and wider teams that work with families feel confident in supporting babies' communication from birth. This includes training, practical tools and resources that show what good early communication practice looks like.
- Continue to introduce and grow evidence-based programmes that help children develop strong language skills early on.

- Strengthen how the Healthy Child Programme and education work together around the 2–2½ year developmental review. Families will receive a clear, coordinated response from health visitors, early years settings and, where needed, specialist Speech and Language Therapy (SALT).



DRAFT

Priority 4: High-quality early years education

We will ensure every child has access to great early learning experiences that help them grow and learn.

Why is this a priority?

Quality early years experiences help to build the strong foundations children need for future learning, confidence and success. When children spend time in high-quality early years settings—such as nurseries, childminders and playgroups, they are given a safe, welcoming space where they can explore, be curious and learn through play.

In these settings, children have lots of opportunities to discover new things, develop their language and communication, build early problem-solving skills and grow their independence. They can play outdoors, try activities that spark their imagination, and learn how to share, take turns and work together.

Just as importantly, early years settings help children build trusting relationships with adults and make their first friendships. These early social experiences help children feel confident, secure and ready for school when the time comes.

What actions are we committing to?

We will:

- Support early years settings to give children the best possible experiences, and we will challenge them where needed to help make sure quality keeps improving.
- Provide support and challenge to early years settings to ensure that they meet the needs of children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and their families
- Help nurseries, schools and childminders share information with each other so children get joined up support that meets their individual needs.
- Continue to offer the Stockton-on-Tees Healthy Schools and Healthy Settings Programme to support early years to take a 'whole setting' approach to promoting the wellbeing of their children and workforce.
- Ensure that Stockton-on-Tees has sufficient high quality, affordable, and flexible childcare places across the Borough to meet the needs of all parents and their children.
- Ensure there are sufficient free early years funded places and work to ensure childcare is accessible to all children including those from those who may need extra support.

- Actively promote the early learning entitlement for 2-year-olds to eligible families and make it easier for parents to find, understand and access their free childcare place.
- Work together so that the Healthy Child Programme and early years settings can share information, helping us understand and support each child's needs in the best way.
- Keep offering training, resources and development opportunities to help early years staff strengthen their skills and expertise.



Priority 5: Emotional health and wellbeing

We will support families to ensure their children feel happy, safe and ready to learn.

Why is this a priority?

A child's emotional wellbeing is just as important as their physical health. When children feel safe, loved and supported, they are better able to learn, build friendships, try new things and cope with life's ups and downs. Helping children feel emotionally secure early in life gives them strong foundations for their future health, learning and happiness.

Parents' and carers' wellbeing matter too. From pregnancy onwards, how parents feel can have a big impact on their baby's development. When parents receive the right support, whether that's during pregnancy or once their baby is born, it can help strengthen the bond with their child, support healthy brain development and build positive routines that make family life feel easier.

By focusing on emotional health and wellbeing for both children and parents, we can reduce inequalities, make sure families feel connected to the right services, and give every child the best chance to develop, learn and reach their full potential.

What actions are we committing to?

We will:

- **Make it easier for both mums and dads to talk about how they're feeling from pregnancy onwards. By checking in early and regularly, we can offer support that feels right for each family and help parents feel more confident and connected.**
- **Work closely with families, early years settings and health professionals to notice any early signs that a child may need extra support with their emotions, behaviour or development. This helps us put help in place sooner, before small worries become bigger challenges.**
- **Work alongside families, recognising their strengths, values and what's already going well. Our support will build on these strengths—listening, encouraging and helping families find solutions that work for them.**
- **Actively promote a range of antenatal and early y-years programmes through our Family Hubs. By making these opportunities easy to find and access, we will help families feel confident, connected and supported right from the start.**

- Use the Mental Health Needs Assessment we have recently carried out to help shape and improve the support we offer to families, utilising what the data shows about emotional health needs across Stockton-on-Tees, ensuring the help available is relevant, accessible and in the right places.



DRAFT

Where are we now?



Education	The proportion of children in Stockton-on-Tees achieving a Good Level of Development at foundation stage is currently 69.6% . FSM - currently 53.8% .
	170 Children aged 0-5 have an active Education, Health & Care Plan
	Percentage of children at expected level in Communication & Language and Literacy areas of learning is 70.1% .

Childcare		
1,005 Under 2s accessing a funded place	925 2 year olds accessing a funded place	1,618 3 and 4 year olds accessing a funded place

Health		
8.4% Smoking at time of delivery	95.5% New Birth Visits within 14 days	4.5% New Birth Visits after 14 days
24.2% Totally breastfed at 6-8 weeks 	23.4% Reception prevalence of overweight (including obesity) 	12,585 A&E attendance, 0-4 
95.7% Development Reviews at 6-8 weeks	96.1% Development Reviews at 12 months	96.5% Development Reviews at 2 – 2.5 years

Best Start Family Hub offer

Stockton-on-Tees' Best Start Family Hubs are part of the national Family Hub programme, giving families a welcoming place to find help, advice and support all in one place. From pregnancy and the early years through to adolescence (and up to age 25 for young people with special educational needs and disabilities), Family Hubs bring local services together to make life easier for families. Whether it's support with infant feeding, child development, emotional wellbeing or parenting, families can access the right help at the right time, close to home. The Best Start Family Hub offer is focused on giving every child the best possible start in life, reducing inequalities and helping parents and carers feel confident and supported as their children grow.

Over the next five years, Stockton-on-Tees will develop a network of Best Start Family Hubs — places where families can easily find help, advice and support, all under one roof. Family Hubs will support families from pregnancy, through the early years, and into adolescence, and will also offer help up to age 25 for young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). By bringing services together, we aim to make it simpler for families to get the right support at the right time, close to home.



Using local data on child development, early education, and family need, Redhill has been chosen as the first Best Start Family Hub in Stockton-on-Tees. This means that families in Redhill and the surrounding area will be the first to benefit from a more coordinated, welcoming and easy-to-navigate offer of support. Redhill will also lead the way in trying out new ideas around Home Learning and Play, helping parents and carers feel confident supporting their children's learning and development at home.

Partnership working will be at the heart of everything we do. Family Hubs will bring together health services, early years providers, schools, voluntary and community groups, and wider council services. By working as one team, we can make sure families experience a smoother, more joined-up journey, reducing the need to repeat their story, avoiding duplication, and ensuring support is offered when it is most needed.

Our long-term ambition is simple:

To give every child in Stockton-on-Tees the best possible start in life, reduce inequalities, and help parents and carers feel supported as their children grow. The development of Redhill Family Hub is the first step in building a strong and sustainable network of support for families across the Borough.



Delivering the strategy: Monitoring progress and impact

Progress and impact against our commitments will be measured through a delivery plan with clear milestones and performance measures to track the difference being made for children and families. This plan will be refreshed each year so that we can build on what is working well, respond to new challenges and ensure our actions stay targeted and effective.

Delivery and oversight of the action plan will be led by the Best Start Strategic Group, which brings together partners from across Children’s Services (including Early Help, Social Care and SEND), Strategy and Commissioning, Public Health, Education and Early Years, the Local Parent and Carer Forum, the NHS (including maternity, health visiting and community paediatrics), and the voluntary and community sector. Each priority will be supported by a working/implementation group, with a named lead responsible for driving delivery and providing regular progress updates to the Families First Partnership Board & Health and Wellbeing Board.



Thank you

We would like to express our sincere thanks to all our partners across health, education, early years and the voluntary sector for their continued commitment to improving outcomes for children and families in Stockton-on-Tees.

Most importantly, we want to thank the families who supported the development of this plan by sharing their experiences, ideas and hopes for the future. Through conversations in Family Hubs, early years settings and online, families told us what makes a difference and how services can work better together.

As one parent shared during a face-to-face session, **“The parenting groups at the Hub have really helped us connect and learn new ways to interact with our little one, it’s made such a difference at home.”**

Another parent told us, **“The Family Hub is somewhere you can ask questions and get accurate support without feeling judged, that really matters.”**

Feedback like this has guided our priorities and strengthened our commitment to working alongside families as true partners.

Looking ahead, we are excited about what we can achieve together. With the continued dedication of our partners, the passion of our early years workforce and the invaluable insight of families, we are building a system that gives every child in Stockton-on-Tees the strongest possible start. This plan marks the beginning of the next chapter, one where support is joined-up and families are at the heart of every decision we make. By working together, we can create a future where children grow up happy, healthy and confident, with the foundations they need for lifelong wellbeing and success.



Glossary of abbreviations

Abbreviation	Meaning
BSIL	Best Start in Life – the approach and programme focused on improving outcomes for children from pregnancy through the early years.
EY / Early Years	Early Years – the period from pregnancy to age five, including early education and childcare.
FSM	Free School Meals – support provided to eligible families, often used as an indicator of disadvantage.
GLD	Good Level of Development – a measure of children’s development at the end of Reception, covering areas such as communication, physical development and personal, social and emotional development.
HDFT	Harrogate and District NHS Foundation Trust – an NHS provider delivering services such as health visiting.
ICB	Integrated Care Board – part of the NHS responsible for planning and funding local health services (North East and North Cumbria ICB).
NTH	North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust – NHS provider delivering hospital and community health services.
PCF	Parent Carer Forum – a group representing the views and experiences of parents and carers of children with additional needs.
SEND	Special Educational Needs and Disabilities - A child or young person has special educational needs and disabilities if they have a learning difficulty or disability that means they need health and educational support.
SALT	Speech and Language Therapy – specialist support for children with speech, language and communication needs.
WHO	World Health Organisation – an international organisation focused on global public health.

REPORT TO CABINET

12 MARCH 2026

**REPORT OF CORPORATE
MANAGEMENT TEAM**

CABINET DECISION

Children and Young People – Lead Cabinet Member – Councillor Clare Besford

Consideration of LA Appointment

Summary

To consider an appointment of Local Authority Governor.

Reasons for Recommendation(s)/Decision(s)

Vacancy to be filled for a Local Authority governor at Bowesfield Primary School.

Recommendations

1. To consider the appointment of a Local Authority governor for Bowesfield Primary School Cllr Sufi Mubeen.

Detail

1. There was a vacancy to be filled for a Local Authority governor at Bowesfield Primary School. Cllr Sufi Mubeen to be considered for the position.

Criteria:

- Knowledge of the local community
- Commitment to Education.

Community Impact and Equality and Poverty Impact Assessment

2. Not applicable.

Corporate Parenting Implications

3. There are no Corporate Parenting Implications associated with this report.

Financial Implications

4. There are no Financial Implications associated with this report.

Legal Implications

5. There are no Legal Implications associated with this report.

Risk Assessment

6. Not applicable

Wards Affected and Consultation with Ward/Councillors

7. Not applicable

Background Papers

8. None.

Name of Contact Officer: Sophie Hewitson

Post Title: School and Governor Support

Telephone number: 07384538085

Email address: Sophie.Hewitson@stockton.gov.uk

REPORT TO CABINET

March 2026

**REPORT OF CORPORATE
MANAGEMENT TEAM**

CABINET DECISION

Lead Cabinet Member – Councillor Nigel Cooke

Environmental Sustainability & Carbon Reduction Strategy (ES&CRS) 2022-32 Annual Monitoring Report

Summary

Climate change poses a real threat to society and biodiversity. We are already seeing the increasing impacts of flooding, high winds, heat waves, significant wildfires and species collapse. If we wish to limit climate change by reducing carbon emissions, we need to act, building on the work already achieved.

Local authorities are increasingly expected to play a central role in responding to climate change but are often constrained by severe resource limitations. Given current financial pressures, we are simply not able to take on the full breadth of climate-related responsibilities that national policy sometimes assumes.

However, the reality is that significant and potentially dangerous changes in weather patterns are already locked in due to existing global emissions. These impacts—more frequent extreme heat, flooding, coastal surges, and storm events—will continue to intensify over the coming years.

As a local authority, we have a statutory and moral duty to protect our residents, safeguard essential services, and maintain the conditions for local economic activity. This means that, irrespective of our capacity to act on mitigation measures, we will inevitably be required to strengthen the resilience of our local infrastructure.

Therefore, our focus in the coming years must shift toward:

- Prioritising climate adaptation and resilience, recognising that these measures will be essential to keep people safe and services functioning.

- Investing in the robustness of critical systems—transport, energy, water, digital connectivity—even where funding is limited, by embedding resilience into every decision, project, and procurement opportunity.
- Advocating for the necessary resources, so that local authorities are properly equipped to meet the challenges that are already unfolding.

Climate change is no longer a distant threat—it is a present and escalating risk. Our primary responsibility now is to ensure our communities can withstand the impacts that are already inevitable.

Stockton Council’s Environmental Sustainability and Carbon Reduction Strategy (ES&CRS), adopted in 2022 sets out the direction we need take and describes the actions that would contribute to the achievement of net zero. The Council has made significant progress within the resources available, achieving a steady decline in carbon emissions over a long period. However, substantial additional investment will be required in the coming years if we are to remain on target for Net Zero by 2032.

Continued concentration on measures to improve our energy efficiency and reduce emissions from our assets and fleet, are an urgent priority, alongside investing in solar energy generation and counterbalancing natural solutions.

Reasons for Recommendation(s)/Decision(s)

This report is to update Cabinet upon the actions following the adoption of the Environmental Sustainability and Carbon Reduction Strategy 2022-32.

Cabinet is also invited to study the data which indicates the reduction of greenhouse gasses over a sustained period and the highlighted position of carbon emissions for the authority relative to targets.

Recommendations

1. That Cabinet note the annual monitoring report.

Detail

1. In 2022 the Council implemented the Environmental Sustainability and Carbon Reduction Strategy 2022-32. The aim of the strategy is for the Council to become Net Zero by 2032, and Borough wide by 2050.
2. The strategy seeks to make a difference in three ways.
 - a. By focusing on Council operations and infrastructure
 - b. Through the delivery of strategies, policies, and work programmes, and
 - c. By influencing others.
3. The strategy has set four overarching aims for environmental sustainability and carbon reduction.

<p>Aim 1: Achieve net zero greenhouse gas emissions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A) Reduce energy demand wherever possible B) Accelerate the shift towards use of sustainable energy C) Take other action to reduce harmful emissions D) Capture and store carbon in woodlands and other natural habitats 	<p>Aim 2: Protect and enhance the natural environment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A) Protect, extend and connect areas of natural habitat and help address the decline in native species. B) Help to improve air quality by reducing harmful emissions. C) Take action to improve water quality and reduce local demand for water
<p>Aim 3: Use all resources efficiently and minimise waste</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A) Ensure sustainable purchasing and procurement of goods and services. B) Maximise the use of existing resources, minimise waste and achieve high levels of re-use and recycling. C) Minimise litter and waste crime and encourage responsible disposal of waste. 	<p>Aim 4: Adapt to the impacts of climate change.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A) Ensure essential services and operations are resilient to the likely future impacts of climate change. B) Increase the preparedness and resilience of local communities and businesses. C) Plan and adapt the built and natural environment to withstand the impacts of climate change.

Fig 1: strategy objectives.

Total emissions and change over time.

4. SBC reduced emissions by **1626.60T** from the previous year, with end recorded emissions of 5425.40T

5. SBC had a target to reduce emissions for 2024/25 by 881.5t from previous year of 7052T to 6170T to meet the Net Zero target by 2032, this means that during 2024/25 SBC succeeded in reducing the required emissions from the previous year.

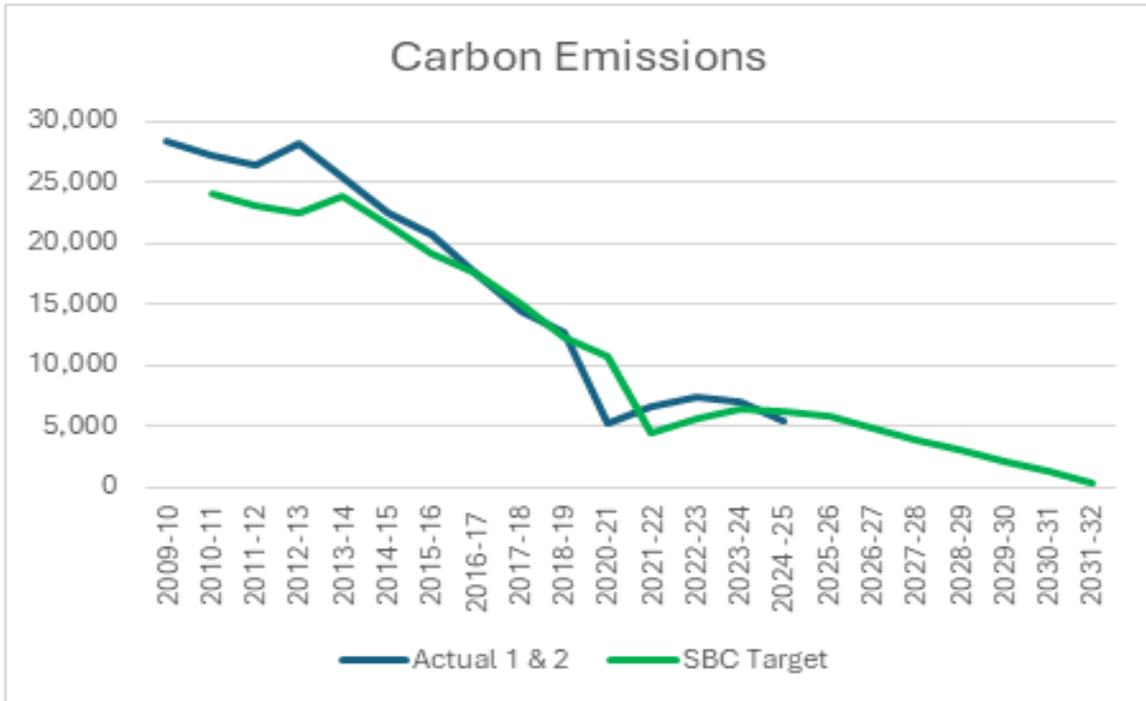


Fig 2: Carbon emissions since 2009/10

6. However, there has been little change in the way that SBC has used energy and fuel consumption. 2024/25 saw an increase in energy use which could be attributed to projects such as improvement in Preston Park and increase use of EV chargers at Cowpen Depot, there are a couple of other unusual increases that are being investigated by the Energy Team as possible anomalies that need further investigation.
7. Although there has been an increase in energy use, the emissions from purchased electricity are 0, as all electricity use was supplied by EDF on a 100% nuclear, green energy tariff.
8. Previous years supplies have been mixed fuel and there was no way to determine what percentage of use was from clean energy, leading to emissions from all purchased electricity and streetlighting calculated with the standard conversion factor of 0.207
9. Without the green energy tariff, the total emissions for 2024/25 would have been an increase on the previous year by approx. 1000T from 7052T to 8678T, which would have meant that the SBC emissions target would have been missed.
10. There is no guarantee that future energy tariffs on the NEPO framework will continue to be 100% green / clean energy and may return to mixed fuel in future years. However, procurement will always ask for a green / clean energy tariff during a tender process.

11. Gas use is still the biggest contributing factor to carbon emissions for SBC with just over half the total emissions, and fuel use a very close second with 49%.

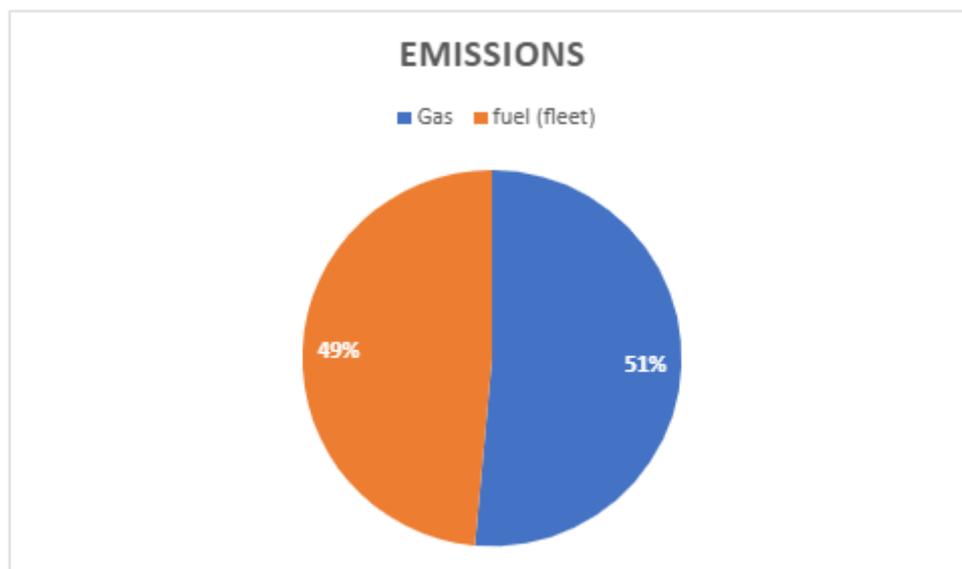


Fig 3: Breakdown of carbon emission sources

12. Scope 3 emissions are defined by the Greenhouse Gas Protocol as all indirect emissions that are not included in Scope 1 (direct emissions from owned or controlled sources) and Scope 2 (indirect emissions from the generation of purchased energy).
13. Scope 3 emissions as provided by Oxygen Insights procurement tool, identifies that Scope 3 emissions at 48.09 K t. this is the highest over the last 5 years, however this data is purely based on spend and a calculation is given to a particular service spend i.e residential care or construction etc.
14. The Scope 3 data can give an indication on focus areas, however, does not account for the potential efficiencies and emission saving technology being used in those areas. For example, a care home might be operationally net zero using renewables, but the actual SBC spend on residential care may be calculated as a Scope 3 emission.
15. Due to the discrepancies in the Scope 3 data, it is not currently considered in the overall targets for SBC Net Zero. However, this is something that continues to be considered with new technologies and reporting tools being developed and it is expected to be a reporting requirement in the future.

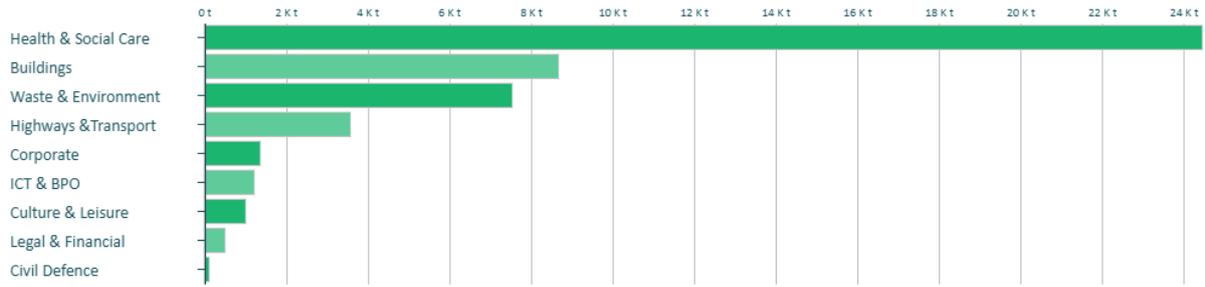
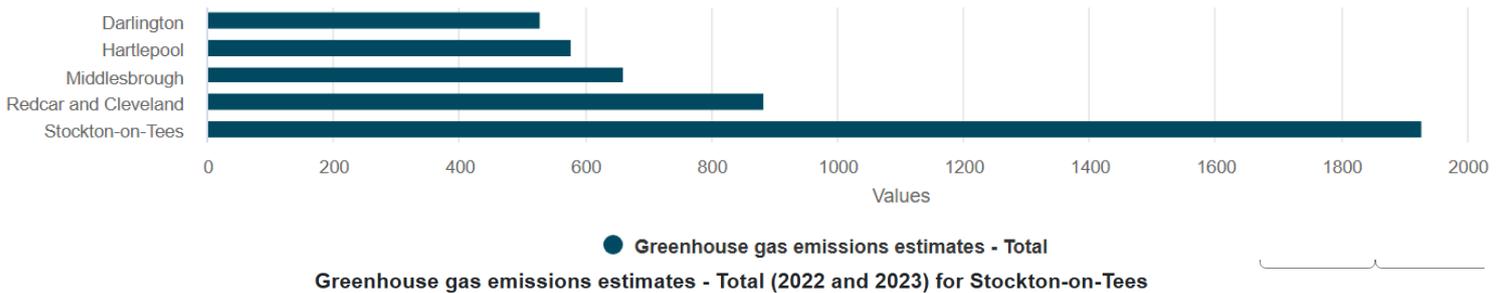


Fig 4: Scope 3 carbon emissions by service area

16. Borough Wide greenhouse gas emissions show that there has been a positive reduction on the previous year's data. However, the last data available from national Government is two years old. The figure covers borough-wide emissions for all major sectors (Industry, domestic, transport, agriculture etc) In comparison to neighbouring local authorities, Stockton-on-Tees has the highest emissions, and this is attributed to being a high industrial area.

Total greenhouse gas emissions 2023 for Stockton-on-Tees and Combined authorities



Greenhouse gas emissions estimates - Total (2022 and 2023) for Stockton-on-Tees

Total greenhouse gas emissions				
Kilotonnes				
Period	Stockton-on-Tees	Minimum for Tees Valley combined authority	Mean for Tees Valley combined authority	Maximum for Tees Valley combined authority
2022	1,973.2	550.6	980.5	1,973.2
2023	1,927.4	528.6	915.6	1,927.4

Fig 5: Total greenhouse gas emissions 2023 for Stockton-on-Tees and Combined authorities.

Renewable energy:

17. Throughout 2024/25 SBC have successfully secured grant funding for renewable energy projects including the following:

- GB Energy Programme covering the cost of installing solar PV on Fairfield primary and Thornaby Academy, via a scheme called Solar for Schools. Solar of Schools has calculated significant savings on solar installations over the lifetime of the panels.

- SBC have secured the Mayoral Renewables Fund Grant for £260k which will cover costs of solar installations on Allensway and Lanark Close Care Homes, providing a saving to SBC of approximately £18K per year.
- We secured £500k of funding from Sport England to install solar PV on Billingham Forum and IB leisure, which was unanimously approved by councillors and had no objections from residents.

Engagement and partnerships

18. In 2024-25 SBC has increased community engagement and partnerships.
19. Tees Urban Nature Network –SBC was a key partner with neighbouring local authorities and the Tees Valley Wildlife Trust to secure a successful bid from Heritage Lottery Funding, National Trust and Natural England. The project will support local people to shape how the Tees Valley region’s natural environment is planned, protected and celebrated by local communities.
20. Big Community Switch – SBC has supported residents to join the Big Community Switch, a collective energy switching initiative to help residents save money on their energy bills. There were two auctions during 2025. In the June auction there were 291 registrations with a £208.00 saving per resident. In September 2025 there were a further 2393 registrations, providing a £233.00 saving per resident.
21. Warm Homes Healthy People – in 2025, 80 residents were supported with boiler repairs and servicing to ensure energy efficiency for the residents and assist towards tackling fuel poverty.
22. SBC colleagues have set up a Green Champions group, which is made up of a group of employees, from a range of service areas, who develop ideas about how to influence behavioural change, and reduce emissions within our day-to-day work. In 2025 the Green Champions group was officially recognised as an Employee Network. Behavioural change is being witnessed across the council employees, and 2025 saw the implementation of a 10p reduction in cost of a hot drink at the Dunedin Café for employees who use a reuseable cup.
23. Climate Coalitions are now established and in their second year, with 214 active members. The Coalitions have developed their own action plans which compliments the Environmental and Sustainability Carbon Reduction Strategy and assisting in part with the Council’s efforts to influence residents in reducing their carbon emissions.
24. In 2024/25 SBC hosted the second Environment Fair in Stockton High Street. This coincided with ‘Great Big Green Week’ which provided the public with the opportunity to engage with organisations such as, litter picking groups, Fairtrade, and Cleveland Beekeepers to name a few. The event was very well received from

the public and a great opportunity to help influence the Borough in reducing carbon emissions.

25. In 2025 the Council hosted the third Festival of Thrift as part of a three-year agreement at John Whitehead Park, Billingham. The festival is a celebration of sustainable living and attracts around 50,000 visitors to the region. The festival is a nationally recognised event championing sustainable living and has a very clear vision to create positive, sustainable change in people and places and the programme aims to do just that by celebrating ways to live more sustainably and look after the planet we call home. More than 80 performance art installations and over 90 independent traders and makers contributed to the festival Thrift.



26. Joint partnerships have been established between Stockton Borough Council and Teesside University. Two research PHD projects have commenced led by Mary Blackwell and Rach Butler, these are:

- *Valuing and Managing Local Authority Land for Multiple Benefits: An Ecosystem Services and Stakeholder Led Approach in Stockton-on-Tees*
- *What are the multiple risk and opportunities for local authorities' land now and under the future climate change projections? The Case of Stockton on Tees Borough Council.*

Adaptation Planning.

27. The ESCR has four main aims, with Adapting to climate change being Aim 4 of the strategy. To date most of the work in the council has worked towards the mitigation and the reduction of our own carbon emissions to enable the council to become net zero by 2032 and influence the Borough to become Net Zero by 2050.
28. Under the Climate Change Act, 2008 the Act requires a climate change risk assessment (CCRA) to be carried out every five years with a National Adaption Programme (NAP) which responds to the risk highlighted within the CCRA. At present Local Authorities were asked to voluntarily submit their report to the

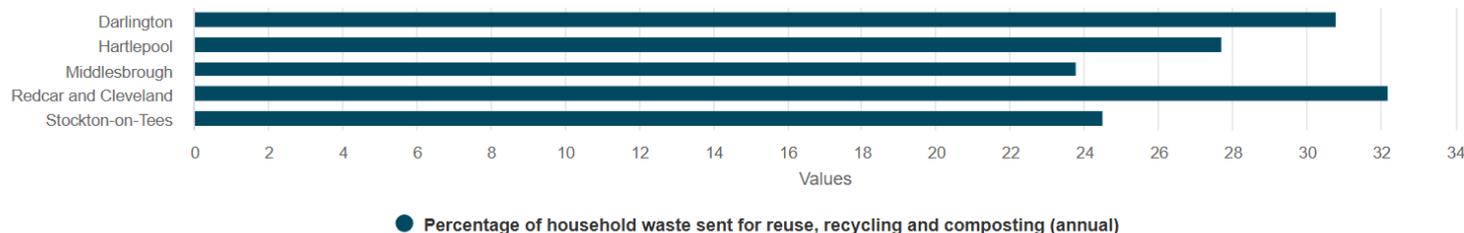
National Reporting Power (NRP) however following a successful pilot programme in 2024 it is proposed that all local authorities will have to provide a climate adaptation report as mandatory by 2029.

29. As a local authority, we owe a duty to our residents to ensure that we can continue to deliver services they rely on, despite a changing climate.

30. National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is a central government policy document that serves as a key material consideration in local planning. The framework contains guidance on climate adaptation, and recent amendments have included consideration of climate change adaptation in decision-making as well as plan-making, and a broader coverage of hazards to consider drought and overheating. Chapter 14 of the NPPF specifically focuses on “*Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change*” and states that local plans are expected to: “*take a proactive approach to mitigating and adapting to climate change, taking into account the long-term implications for flood risk, coastal change, water supply, biodiversity and landscapes, and the risk of overheating and drought from rising temperatures...*”

Waste and recycling

% household waste recycled 2023/24 for Stockton-on-Tees and Combined authorities



Powered by LG Inform Plus

Fig 6: Percentage of household waste recycled 2023/24 for Stockton-on-Tees and Combined Authorities.

31. As highlighted in the previous CMT report (March 2025) The following will be implemented in 2026.

- The Council will collect food waste and recycling every week and collect the other residual waste (non-recyclable waste that normally goes in residents' green wheeled bin) on a fortnightly basis.
- Each household will receive an additional weighted bag for the collection of dry recycling and a new 5 litre indoor and 23 litre outdoor caddy (including caddy bags) for food waste, giving every household the opportunity to increase the amount of waste that can be collected and recycled on a weekly basis.
- Work completed by WRAP on behalf of Stockton Council anticipated that a move to the fortnightly refuse collections with the introduction of a mandatory weekly food waste collection would see an increase in kerbside recycling on 12% taking

our total recycling rate to around 36%, above the average for the Tees Valley and across the North East.

Resource needs and grants

36. There are several time limited Government grants linked to carbon reduction, biodiversity uplift and climate change. There are numerous schemes to support tree planting for example. However, the required changes such as fleet decarbonisation, improvements to building efficiency, climate change adaptation and modal shifts in transport, have limited funding and are often confined to pilot projects and modest one-off grants with short lead-in times.

Further resources will be required to develop Building Decarbonisation Plans. Officers will develop costed proposals for technical work in the pursuit of Public Sector Decarbonisation funding.

Data collection

37. As highlighted previously to CMT Improvement in data collection is still an ongoing required to ensure consistency in data, to enable better analysis, comparisons with other authorities, and to identify areas where further work is required. Officers are working on systems improvements, alongside other service areas, to develop a more robust and streamline approach to data collection and analysis.
38. We expect that Environment Act legislation will require Local Authorities to deliver and evidence progress against several targets. Although these targets and duties have not yet been set, we should plan for the formalisation and integration of monitoring into wider Council performance monitoring and data analysis processes. We understand that there will be an increased requirement around data collection on waste disposal in line with the requirement for 'waste tracking,' which will essentially digitise waste disposal data. We believe that future Extended Producer Responsibility payments will be based around diverting waste from landfill and energy from waste plants.
39. It is expected that all Local Authorities will be mandatory required to report the climate adaptation and resilience planning in line with the UK Adaption reporting in 2029, following a successful pilot programme of 18 local authorities in the 2024 reporting period. Local Authorities will be required to provide an adaption plan every 5 years.
40. Saving energy can have a positive impact upon reducing emissions and finances, using less will cost less! By improving energy efficiency, the same tasks can be accomplished with less input, resulting in lower emissions and lower energy bills.
41. Due to number of decarbonisation grants that have been secured for the installation of solar PV there has been no requirement to use the prudential borrowing to fund capital investments which Council had agreed on the 19th of February 2025, in the Medium-Term Financial Plan Update and Strategy.

42. Officers continue to seek out external funding opportunities to support decarbonisation.

Consultation and engagement

Included within the report detail

Next Steps

Included within the report detail

Name of Contact Officer: Neil Mitchell

Post Title: Head of Environment, Leisure, and Green Infrastructure

Email address: neil.mitchell@stockton.gov.uk

This page is intentionally left blank

REPORT TO CABINET

12th MARCH 2026

REPORT OF
CORPORATE
MANAGEMENT TEAM

CABINET KEY DECISION

**Access, Communities and Community Safety - Lead Cabinet Member –
Councillor Norma Stephenson OBE**

MAKING NEW PUBLIC SPACES PROTECTION ORDERS FOR STOCKTON TOWN CENTRE AND NORTON TOWN CENTRE (2026-2029)

Summary

In Spring 2025, the Community Safety Select Committee published *Scrutiny Review of Welcoming and Safe Town Centres*, stating that as Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council redevelops its town centres, safe and welcoming spaces remain essential. The introduction of a Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) in 2023 for selected zones in Stockton and Norton was highlighted as a key step towards these goals. The Committee recommended evaluating the 2023 Orders, including their principles, implementation, and resourcing.

PSPOs help prevent anti-social behaviour (ASB) in public areas and are widely used across England and Wales.

The existing Public Spaces Protection Order for both Stockton Town Centre and Norton Town Centre expires at midnight on 2 April 2026. This report seeks Cabinet approval to make new PSPOs for these areas for the period 2026–2029. In determining whether to make new Orders, Cabinet must be satisfied that the statutory conditions in section 59 of the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 are met on the evidence presented. The making of a PSPO is a fresh statutory decision and there is no presumption of continuation when an Order expires.

In Stockton, proposed restrictions include failure to comply with a requirement not to consume alcohol or to surrender alcohol (commonly referred to as street drinking

controls), begging, anti-social loitering, anti-social driving/vehicle use, public urination/defecation, dogs off-lead, and dog fouling. Requirements also mandate moving temporary structures, providing personal details to officers if breaching the Order or causing ASB, and leaving the area when directed. Norton's proposed conditions include street drinking controls, begging, ASB loitering, and anti-social vehicle/bicycle use, with similar requirements for providing details and vacating the area when instructed.

This report offers Cabinet the context needed to decide on the next steps for the PSPOs in both Stockton Town Centre and Norton.

Reasons For Recommendations:

Under the Local Authorities (Functions and Responsibilities) (England) Regulations 2000 (as amended), the making of a Public Spaces Protection Order is an executive function. Consequently (unless delegated) this is therefore a matter for Cabinet.

The current PSPO will expire at midnight on 2 April 2026. The making of any new Order requires Cabinet to apply the statutory test in section 59 of the 2014 Act and to be satisfied on reasonable grounds, on the evidence presented, that the legal conditions are met

Recommendations:

Cabinet is recommended to:

1. To note the contents of the report and the considerations relevant to the making of new Public Spaces Protection Orders for Stockton Town Centre and Norton Town Centre from 3 April 2026
2. To determine, having considered the evidence and applying the statutory tests in section 59 of the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014, whether Cabinet is satisfied on reasonable grounds that the legal conditions for making a new Public Spaces Protection Order is met and, if so satisfied, to approve the making of the proposed Orders for (i) Stockton Town Centre (2026–2029) and (ii) Norton Town Centre (2026–2029)
3. To set the fixed penalty notice rate at £100.00 for breaches of the new Orders, consistent with current arrangements.
4. To delegate authority to the Director of Adults, Health & Wellbeing and the Director of Corporate Services to make such minor drafting, typographical, formatting, mapping, cross-referencing or other consequential amendments to the approved Orders as are necessary prior to making them, provided that such amendments do not alter the substance, scope,

or effect of any prohibition, requirement, or restricted area approved by Cabinet.

Detail

Public Spaces Protection Orders (PSPOs)

1. The protection of residents, businesses and visitors is a Council priority. The Council invests in Civic Enforcement and CCTV to help create welcoming and safe town centres.
2. On 20 October 2014, the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 came into force, providing a set of tools and powers to address ASB, including PSPOs.
3. A PSPO can be made where specified behaviours in a public place have a detrimental effect on the quality of life of those in the locality, are persistent or continuing, unreasonable, and justify restrictions. Conditions apply across the defined area.
4. The conditions of a PSPO can apply to everyone who uses that certain area (a 'PSPO zone'). The Council can make a PSPO in an impacted area if satisfied on reasonable grounds, that the following conditions are met, in relation to the activities sought to be regulated:
 - *that they are, or are likely to be, carried on in a public place within the Council's area;*
 - *that they have had, or are likely to have, a detrimental effect on the quality of life of those in the locality;*
 - *that the effect, or likely effect of the activities is likely to be, persistent or continuing in nature;*
 - *is or is likely to be such, as to make the activities unreasonable;*
 - *and therefore justifies the restrictions sought to be imposed by the order.*
5. The Council must comply with statutory consultation and publication requirements under the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act (Publication of Public Spaces Protection Orders) Regulations 2014, including advertising and placing clear signage on affected land to inform the public of existing controls.
6. If approved, new PSPO details must be posted on the Council's website and clearly notified on affected land within the 'PSPO zone'. Any changes or discharge of the orders should also be publicised in the same way, including the existing 2023 PSPO while it remains in force.

7. Breaching a PSPO is considered a criminal offence and can be addressed either through a fixed penalty notice (FPN) or by prosecution. If an individual faces prosecution, they may be required to pay a fine in court and comply with any additional orders imposed. The rate of the fixed penalty notice can vary from one local authority to another, but it is advisable to set the maximum rate at £100.00 which aligns with the current Order.
8. PSPOs may only have effect for a maximum period of three years. When an Order expires, the authority may make a new Order if the statutory conditions are met. The making of a new PSPO is a fresh decision.
9. Throughout each three-year term, consistent monitoring of PSPO usage will occur, supported by oversight from the existing Safer Stockton Partnership (SSP) framework, reflecting the collaborative nature of the multi-agency partnership.
10. In Spring 2025, the Community Safety Select Committee emphasized the significance of Public Spaces Protection Orders (PSPOs), noting their potential to enhance safety and create welcoming town centre environments. The Committee recommended that the Council assess the 2023 Orders by reviewing their guiding principles, implementation strategies, and resource allocation. This evaluation informed the proposals presented to Cabinet today.

Public Spaces Protection Order 2023

11. The Community Safety Select Committee's 2025 report highlighted several important observations about the 2023 Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO). The Committee recognised that while the PSPO's introduction was initially impactful, there were concerns from the Stockton Business Improvement District (BID) regarding a perceived reduction in its effectiveness over time. The Committee noted that ongoing evaluation and feedback are essential to improve the PSPO's operation. There was also discussion about whether the PSPO had simply displaced anti-social behaviour to other parts of the Borough; while one instance was noted, it was dealt with by the authorities. Initially, the PSPO had a positive effect in the town centres, but its influence appeared to diminish over time, partly due to a changing population in the area and reduced familiarity between officers and individuals present, making management of behaviours more challenging.
12. Following a Community Safety Select Committee request because of the review into 'safe and welcoming town centres', officers reviewed the 2023 Order and its procedures, then held public consultations on the 2026 draft proposals from 8 December 2025 to 9 January 2026.

Proposed 2026 Public Spaces Protection Order

13. The proposed 2026 Orders are drafted taking account of the 2023 Order, but are proposed to be made as two new Orders with distinct conditions for Stockton Town Centre and Norton Town Centre. This ensures that the restrictions proposed reflect the evidence and statutory tests applicable to each area.
14. The proposed Orders have been developed in line with our community safety initiative, Operation Shield, implemented with partner agencies including Cleveland Police, to make our town centres welcoming and safe places to visit, work, and live. The proposed Order will run in tandem with the operation and the recently introduced *Reducing the Strength Scheme* (RTS).
15. Alongside plans to strengthen PSPO conditions, we will revise our enforcement policy to ensure efficient implementation. Enforcement of the proposed new PSPOs will be shared by the Council and Cleveland Police reflecting the strengthening of our partnership working to tackle ASB and crime in both areas proposed by the order.

Stockton Town Centre PSPO

16. The proposed Stockton Town Centre PSPO will run from April 2026 to April 2029, with an expanded zone now covering identified emerging threats and ASB hotspots since 2023. New locations in the new order include Parkfield Shops, Trinity Gardens, the area around Change Grow Live , and *Splash*. The restricted areas have been reviewed to ensure no improper restriction of statutory rights of way, common land, village greens or open access land, and that owners/occupiers of affected land have been notified in accordance with section 72. The draft Order includes prohibitions and requirements, which can be summarised as below:
 - Alcohol restrictions. Under section 63 of the Act an offence arises only where an individual fails to comply with a reasonable requirement by an authorised person not to consume alcohol or to surrender alcohol or a container reasonably believed to contain alcohol. Exemptions apply to licensed premises/authorised events. For clarity, consuming alcohol is not itself an offence. The offence arises only from failing, without reasonable excuse, to comply with a requirement made under section 63.
 - Begging refers to a situation in which an individual makes verbal, non-verbal, or written requests for money, donations, or goods. This includes actions such as placing hats, clothing, or containers, in circumstances that may cause or are likely to cause harassment, alarm, or distress to others.

- Loitering and causing ASB: where a person without reasonable excuse, loiters in a manner causing or likely to cause harassment, alarm, or distress, to any person – this could apply in circumstances where a person occupies and obstructs a High Street doorway, refuses to move, and also refuses help and support from local services.
- Driving of vehicles in an anti-social manner: the driving of any mechanically propelled vehicle, moped, quad bike, off-road bike, e-scooter, or e-bike, in an anti-social manner, where such manner means that their conduct has caused or is likely to cause harassment, alarm, or distress, to any other person.
- A prohibition in relation to urinating and defecating in the street in order to simplify enforcement against such acts.
- A requirement for a person to move their motorhome or other such vehicle or temporary structure, like a tent, if an officer believes the vehicle or structure is to be used for an overnight stay in a public place. This will help us address illegal or unauthorised occupations of public land.
- A requirement for a person to place their dog on a lead, except for when a dog is exercising in *Trinity Gardens*.
- A requirement for a person to pick up dog foul in the PSPO zone.
- In applying dog-related requirements, regard will be had to animal welfare needs, available alternative exercise areas and the potential for displacement, with appropriate exemptions (e.g. assistance dogs).
- A requirement for a person to provide their personal details to an officer when they have breached the Order or are causing ASB.
- A requirement to disperse from the PSPO zone when directed to leave by an officer, where the officer believes the individual is causing or is likely to cause ASB, or has broken any of the conditions of the PSPO, in the PSPO zone.
- These provisions will be enforced only where behaviour amounts to anti-social behaviour within the meaning of section 59 and will not be used to restrict everyday sociability or penalise rough sleeping in the absence of ASB.
- Any requirement relating to temporary structures or a direction to leave will be used only where necessary and proportionate in the individual circumstances, including ensuring continued access to essential services.

Norton Town Centre PSPO 2026

17. The proposed Norton Town Centre PSPO 2026, will run from April 2026 to April 2029. Note that the zone it applies to has been altered to meet the demand of

emerging ASB concerns at Harbron Woods. This Order will include the following prohibitions or requirements:

- Alcohol restrictions. Under section 63 of the Act an offence arises only where an individual fails to comply with a reasonable requirement by an authorised person not to consume alcohol or to surrender alcohol or a container reasonably believed to contain alcohol. Exemptions apply to licensed premises/authorised events. For clarity, consuming alcohol is not itself an offence. The offence arises only from failing, without reasonable excuse, to comply with a requirement made under section 63.
 - Begging refers to a situation in which an individual makes verbal, non-verbal, or written requests for money, donations, or goods. This includes actions such as placing hats, clothing, or containers, in circumstances that may cause or are likely to cause harassment, alarm, or distress to others.
 - Loitering and causing ASB: where a person without reasonable excuse, loiters in a manner causing or likely to cause harassment, alarm, or distress, to any person – this could apply in circumstances where a person occupies and obstructs a High Street doorway, refuses to move, and also refuses help and support from local services.
 - Driving of vehicles in an anti-social manner: the riding/driving of any bicycle or mechanically propelled vehicle, moped, quad bike, off-road bike, e-scooter, or e-bike, in an anti-social manner, where such manner means that their conduct has caused or is likely to cause harassment, alarm, or distress, to any other person.
 - A requirement for a person to provide their personal details to an officer when they have breached the Order or are causing ASB.
 - A requirement to disperse from the PSPO zone when directed to leave by an officer, where the officer believes the individual is causing or is likely to cause ASB, or has broken any of the conditions of the PSPO, in the PSPO zone.
18. Cabinet will note that the provisions relating to loitering and causing ASB will be enforced only where behaviour amounts to anti-social behaviour within the meaning of section 59 and should not be used to restrict everyday sociability or directly penalise rough sleeping in the absence of ASB.
19. Cabinet will further note that any requirement relating to temporary structures or a direction to leave should be used only where necessary and proportionate in the individual circumstances, including ensuring continued access to essential services.

20. The PSPO grants officers the authority to seize any alcohol container, whether open or closed, if someone is found drinking in a public space and violating the 2026 Order. According to section 63 of the Act, an offence only occurs when the individual either refuses to follow an officer's instruction not to drink alcohol or fails to hand over alcohol or a suspected alcohol container. If these reasonable requests are ignored, the officer can issue a fixed penalty notice of £100. If prosecuted, the court may impose a fine up to the statutory maximum.
21. Enforcement would be undertaken by the Council and Cleveland Police. For repeat offenders, prosecution and/or applications for Criminal Behaviour Orders may be pursued where appropriate.

Consultation on the Draft 2026 PSPOs

22. Evidence derives from the strategic needs assessment, partner statements, and public consultation (528 responses). Headlines include strong support for addressing begging, street drinking (via the lawful section 63 route), loitering, vehicle-related ASB, and related behaviours in both areas.
23. Data and performance monitoring evidences that alcohol-related incidents reported to the Council's Civic Enforcement Service have decreased in Stockton Town Centre and Norton Town Centre compared to previous years. However, they still represent a significant problem regarding anti-social behaviour (ASB). In Stockton Town Centre, this trend, declining frequency but persistent complaints; can be seen across various activities such as begging, loitering, and defecation/urination, which have all reduced but continue to require Council attention due to the negative public perception of these areas. One notable exception is the increase in temporary structures and ASB in 2025, specifically due to repeated unauthorised encampments at *Trinity Gardens*. In Norton, most ASB issues have either declined or levelled off recently, yet they still pose considerable challenges. There is wide recognition throughout both town centres that further efforts are needed to support the ongoing reduction of these incidents and create safe spaces for the whole community to enjoy.
24. A significant amount of research has been undertaken as part of this review process. Numerous national and regional PSPOs were examined during the initial drafting, with 9 local authorities contacted by the Council's Community Safety Service in 2025 and another in 2026 for best practice discussions. The Community Safety Service has maintained ongoing communication with three of those authorities to share insights and inform revisions. Following completion of draft designs and consultations between Community Safety, Legal Services, Cleveland Police, partner agencies, stakeholders, and elected members, statutory consultations were held as part of the second phase of developing the 2026 proposals. Cabinet should note that some material is hearsay-based; the

weight to be attached should reflect factors including contemporaneity, corroboration, and any risk of undue influence in line with civil evidence principles.

25. As part of this development, the Council has consulted with:

- The Cleveland Police and Crime Commissioner (statutory requirement);
- The Chief Constable of Cleveland Police (statutory requirement);
- Stockton Police Command Team;
- Businesses in both Stockton Town Centre and Norton Town Centre;
- Internal Stockton on Tees Borough Council departments, relevant to this workstream;
- The Safer Stockton Partnership;
- Local Members of Parliament (MPs) and;
- Local elected members (Councillors);
- Local landowners whose land is covered by the Orders (statutory requirement).
- Local support and recovery services engaged with the Operation Shield community safety initiative.

26. The public consultation took place between 8 December 2025 and 9 January 2026. The public consultation was carried out in-person and online. Paper copies of the survey were held in local libraries, whilst employees from the Council went out on foot in Stockton Town Centre and Norton Town Centre, filling the survey out with members of the public on the street, and the staff working in local businesses. This occurred whilst our robust communication strategy promoted the digital survey online, utilising various social media platforms and online engagement which resulted in 130,372 views, 122 comments.

27. Overall, 528 either full or partial responses were received for the consultation, with 18 paper copies coming from the libraries and being incorporated into the overall results. A full in-depth breakdown of the consultation report is available in the background papers for this report however key highlights include:

- The consultation revealed that 92.66% of participants identified begging as an issue in Stockton Town Centre, compared to 86.61% in Norton.
- A total of 95.24% reported street drinking as a problem in Stockton Town Centre, while 76.89% said the same for Norton.

- Support for street-drinking controls and begging (through a PSPO), with respondents believing it would increase their sense of safety, was expressed by 87.3% regarding Stockton and 82.59% regarding Norton.
 - Concerns over people loitering while intoxicated, swearing, blocking doorways, or behaving intimidatingly were noted by 92.65% in Stockton Town Centre and 77.23% in Norton. Additionally, 88.67% in Stockton and 86.16% in Norton supported measures in a PSPO to address these issues and felt it would make them feel safer.
 - Anti-social vehicle use, including e-bikes, scooters, and off-road bikes, was cited as a problem by 80.32% in Stockton Town Centre and 81.77% in Norton. Support for a PSPO to combat this showed 83.07% approval in Stockton and 83.55% in Norton, with many believing it would improve safety.
 - Public urination and defecation in Stockton Town Centre were found to be a problem by 71.94% of respondents, and 79.48% favoured introducing a PSPO to address these concerns.
 - Regarding overnight stays in tents or vehicles or setting up tents for anti-social behaviour in communal spaces in Stockton Town Centre, 67.67% identified it as a concern, and 67.92% supported using a PSPO to tackle this, believing it would enhance safety.
 - Worries about dogs off their leash affected 70.52% of respondents in Stockton Town Centre, while 85.12% felt dog fouling was an issue. A PSPO promoting responsible dog ownership received 84.83% support, with respondents believing it would make public spaces safer.
 - When asked if Authorised Persons like Civic Enforcement Officers and Police Officers authority should have to demand personal details from those breaching the PSPO or committing ASB for effective enforcement, 95.62% supported this for Stockton and 93.33% for Norton.
 - Support for giving Authorised Persons the power to disperse those who breach the Order or engage in ASB in the proposed PSPO was 97.4% for Stockton and 94.22% for Norton.
28. Cabinet should give the weight it considers appropriate to each item of evidence, including materials compiled prior to the formal statutory consultation period. Cabinet must be satisfied on the totality of the evidence that the conditions in section 59 are met.
29. Public consultation confirmed officers assessment of issues in both town centres and supported our proposed PSPO and other measures to enhance safety and make these areas more welcoming.

30. Based on consultation results, partner and stakeholder feedback, and the Councils strategic needs assessment, this report invites Cabinet to determine whether to make the proposed PSPOs. The Council has also considered alternative or less-restrictive options (including targeted enforcement, outreach, licensing tools and injunctions) and will continue to use these alongside any PSPO to ensure a proportionate, least-restrictive approach.

Evidence Available to Cabinet

31. A substantial and diverse body of evidence has been gathered from frontline council services, local businesses, partner agencies, cultural and faith organisations, and the police. This material indicates that a range of behaviours including but not limited to street drinking, begging, anti-social loitering, intimidation, vehicle-related disorder, drug- and alcohol-related nuisance, urination and defecation in public spaces, temporary structures associated with ASB, and irresponsible dog control continue to occur within defined areas of Stockton Town Centre and Norton Town Centre. These behaviours are consistently reported across independent sources as having a detrimental effect on the quality of life of residents, businesses, staff, visitors and vulnerable groups, and are described as persistent, recurring, and unreasonable in their impact. Evidence highlights obstruction and intimidation of the public, harm to business operation and customer confidence, degradation of the public realm, environmental health issues, and reduced feelings of safety particularly among families, older people and those using key transport routes or community facilities. Public consultation results further demonstrate strong community support for proportionate measures to address these issues.
32. It remains for Cabinet, as the statutory decision-maker, to consider this evidence in the round and determine whether it is satisfied on reasonable grounds that the legal tests in section 59 of the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 are met, and that the proposed restrictions are necessary and proportionate at this time
33. For transparency and to support Cabinet in applying the statutory tests in section 59, the evidence base has been organised into three Evidence Packs.
 - Pack 1 contains representations from statutory consultees;
 - Pack 2 contains evidence from relevant Council services; and
 - Pack 3 contains representations from external consultees including businesses, community organisations and civic partners.

Cabinet will note that Pack 3 contains sensitive and commercially confidential information relating to businesses and other organisations who have contributed their views and is therefore recommended for consideration as exempt under Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

34. Cabinet must determine the appropriate weight to apply to each pack when assessing whether the statutory conditions for making a PSPO are met.

Community Impact And Equality And Poverty Impact Assessment

35. The Equality and Poverty Impact Assessment identifies both potential positive impacts and potential adverse impacts on certain groups. Cabinet must have due regard to those impacts in determining whether the proposed measures are justified and proportionate.

Corporate Parenting Implications

36. This report has been assessed and does not contain any corporate parenting implications.

Financial Implications

37. Strengthening and expanding PSPO provisions in Stockton and Norton Town Centres will not have significant financial impact. While staff may be temporarily reassigned to educate the public during renewal, this is not expected to be ongoing. Limited capital costs for signage will be covered by existing Community Safety resources.

Legal Implications

38. Section 5 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1988 sets out that the Council and local police, and its partners, have a joint responsibility for preventing and reducing crime and disorder in their area, as responsible authorities. As a Council, we can therefore be required to utilise all tools conferred to us, as a local authority, through legislation, to meet this responsibility. Making an effective PSPO and accompanying implementation strategy, is one such way we can do this.
39. The Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014, provides the Council with powers to combat anti-social behaviour. The Council needs to ensure that the powers are used in a reasonable, consistent, appropriate and proportionate manner and must comply with the consultation requirements set out.
40. Section 59 of the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 (“the Act”) provides the authority with the power to make a PSPO, if satisfied on reasonable grounds that two conditions are met (the ‘legal tests’). Section 60 of the Act provides that a PSPO shall not have effect for longer than 3 years, unless extended under this section. Section 61 provides a power to vary a PSPO by increasing or reducing the restricted area; or by altering or removing a prohibition or requirement included in the Order or adding a new one.

41. Section 72 details the requirements for convention rights, consultation, publicity, and notification. The authority must also consider articles 10 and 11 of the ECHR (HRA), carried out the necessary consultation, publicity and notification before making, extending, varying or discharging a PSPO.
42. Under Section 66 of the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014, an individual who lives in the restricted area or who regularly works in or visits that area, may apply to the High Court to question the validity of a PSPO. The grounds on which an application under this section may be made are either that the local authority did not have the power to make the order, or to include prohibitions or requirements imposed by the order; or that a requirement under the 2014 Act was not complied with.
43. If an application under this section the High Court is satisfied that (a) the local authority did not have power to make the PSPO, or to include particular prohibitions or requirements imposed by it, or (b) the interests of the applicant have been substantially prejudiced by a failure to comply with a requirement under the 2014 Act, the Court may quash the PSPO or any of the prohibitions or requirements imposed by it.
44. The 2014 Act provides the powers to make PSPOs. The Council must use these powers reasonably, consistently, appropriately and proportionately and must comply with consultation requirements.
45. Section 59 (legal tests), section 60 (duration), section 61 (variation), section 72 (ECHR and procedural duties), section 66 (High Court challenge) are engaged. The Order must specify the detrimental activities addressed, the prohibitions and requirements imposed, the effect of sections 63 and 67 of the 2014 Act, and the period for which the Order will have effect, in line with section 59(7)
46. In making a new PSPO, Cabinet must be satisfied on reasonable grounds that: (i) activities have been carried on in a public place within the area; (ii) they have had, or are likely to have, a detrimental effect on the quality of life of those in the locality; (iii) the effect is persistent or continuing; (iv) the effect is such as to make the activities unreasonable; and (v) the restrictions proposed are justified and proportionate. This assessment is for Cabinet as decision-maker by reference to the evidence provided.
47. In determining whether to make the proposed Orders, Cabinet must apply the statutory tests in section 59 to the current evidence base. The assessment of whether the conditions are met, and whether the proposed prohibitions and requirements are justified and proportionate, is a matter for Cabinet as decision-maker. This report summarises the evidence relied upon, but the statutory judgment rests with Cabinet. Cabinet should in particular satisfy itself that each

proposed prohibition is supported by sufficient current evidence and is necessary and proportionate at this point in time

48. An interested person may challenge the validity of a PSPO in the High Court under section 66 within six weeks of the Order being made; others may challenge by judicial review.

Legal Implications (Exempt Advice)

49. Detailed legal advice is provided in the confidential appendix. It is legally privileged and, in the Proper Officer's view, meets the exemption criteria under Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972. Cabinet is asked to consider the appendix alongside this report.
50. However, Cabinet must determine at the meeting whether the information is in fact exempt when resolving to exclude the press and public

Risk Assessment

51. While officers consider the proposed Orders capable of being justified in law, the making of new PSPOs carries litigation risk, including possible challenge in the High Court under section 66 of the 2014 Act. Principal risks relate to: (i) whether the statutory test is demonstrably satisfied on the evidence; (ii) proportionality and Articles 10/11 ECHR; (iii) Equality Act considerations; (iv) the scope and justification for restricted areas; and (v) enforceability of specific conditions. Cabinet must be satisfied that these risks are justified in light of the objectives sought.

Wards Affected And Consultation With Ward/Councillors

52. The proposed decision to make new PSPOs impacts directly on two specific wards. Consultation has been undertaken with relevant Councillors and Members of Parliament.

Background Papers

- Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council – Community Safety Select Committee Scrutiny Review of Welcoming and Safe Town Centres – Final Report (March 2025).
- Local Government Association
Public Spaces Protection Orders: Guidance for Councils (2018)

Name of Contact Officer: Adam Bateman

Post Title: Problem Solving & Partnerships Officer

Telephone number: 01642 528504

Email Address: Adam.Bateman@stockton.gov.uk

This page is intentionally left blank

REPORT TO CABINET

12th MARCH 2026

**MAKING NEW PUBLIC SPACES PROTECTION ORDERS FOR
STOCKTON TOWN CENTRE AND NORTON TOWN CENTRE (2026-
2029)**

Evidence

PACK 1 - Representations From Statutory Consultees



Postal Reply to: CLEVELAND POLICE CENTRAL HQ

St Marks House
St Marks Court
Thornaby
Stockton on Tees
TS17 6QW

Telephone: 101

3 December 2025

To Whom It May Concern

I am writing to confirm that the statutory obligation to consult regarding the proposed Public Space Protection Orders (PSPOs) for Stockton and Norton Town Centres has been fulfilled. This consultation was delegated to the Stockton District Commander, Superintendent Alan O'Donoghue (2127), who has undertaken a thorough review in partnership with Stockton Borough Council.

Having considered the evidence and recommendations provided, I am fully supportive of the proposed PSPO conditions. These measures are necessary and proportionate to address persistent crime and anti-social behaviour, and will significantly enhance the safety, wellbeing, and confidence of residents, businesses and visitors in our town centres.

Cleveland Police remains committed to working collaboratively with local authorities and partners to ensure the effective implementation and ongoing review of these Orders.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Yours sincerely

David Sutherland
Temporary Assistant Chief Constable



Police and Crime Commissioner for Cleveland
C/o St Marks House
St Marks Court
Thornaby
Stockton on Tees
TS17 6QW

Email: pcc.office@cleveland.police.uk
Website: <http://www.cleveland.police.uk>

Police and Crime Commissioner:
Chief Executive and Monitoring Officer:

Matt Storey
Lisa Oldroyd

Tel: 01642 301861
Tel: 01642 301861

28 November 2025

Dear Adam,

Stockton PSPO Consultation

When first elected as Police and Crime Commissioner, I wanted to empower Cleveland's communities by ensuring their voices were at the centre of my Police and Crime Plan. Anti-social behaviour (ASB) features prominently throughout this document in recognition that this is something communities are deeply concerned about and is an item which is regularly raised with me as part of my engagement work with members of the public. Furthermore, I am aware of the volume of ASB related issues that are reported to the COPA app each day.

The strength of our partnership working on these matters is evident, including with the Summer and Winter initiatives of Safer Streets.

I write to you today to convey my gratitude for the invitation to meaningfully consult with Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council [on 25th November 2025] and communicate the concerns and the opinions of the communities I serve as part of the local authority's development of Public Space Protection Orders (PSPOs) for Stockton town centre and Norton.

Previously, I have heard anecdotal concerns from local partners that PSPOs disproportionately criminalise people who are homeless on a broader point of their use, and nothing specific to one local authority area.

As you are aware, the homeless agenda is something I am deeply passionate about. I was pleased this consultation gave me an opportunity to communicate that the use of PSPOs with homeless people – particularly in relation to begging, temporary structures, and directions to leave – are a distant second to ensuring that every opportunity to get people into support are being maximised.

I was pleased to learn more about your plans to ensure this support is being adopted as part of the PSPO proposals. I was further assured that my concerns regarding a person's inability to pay fixed penalty notices for any breaches would result in further harm and criminality is being approached with care.

The prohibitions in relation to anti-social use of vehicles is a notable and welcome inclusion, which I believe will have the full support of the people of Stockton-on-Tees. I know this is an issue which is a cause of great concern and frustration with the public, as this is something which is regularly raised with me, and reported via the COPA app.

Through my previous engagement work – including the Transport Safety Consultation between February and March 2025 – the public reported their concerns around alcohol consumption at the fountains whilst waiting at the nearby bus stop, which is one of the town's arterial bus routes. The public have also highlighted the highly visible nuisance behaviour relating to substance misuse in this area, which I know is a matter of great concern and importance to them.

I believe references to curbing ASB through alcohol consumption will be welcomed by the public and support a wider approach to tackling broader issues in the area.

In concluding, I would like to note that my recommendations to include further information and signposting were acknowledged and that the draft document will be updated following this feedback. Particularly in relation to ensuring that people are provided with more information on how to make appeals/ complaints in respect of being dealt with through the PSPO, and how people can apply for necessary licences to ensure that they are in compliance with local requirements - for example, face-to-face fundraising.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Matt". The letters are cursive and fluid, with a long horizontal stroke at the end of the "t".

Matt Storey
Police and Crime Commissioner for Cleveland



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council,
Municipal Buildings,
Church Road,
Stockton-on-Tees,
TS18 1LB.

3rd December 2025.

Dear colleagues,

Thank you for consulting me on the proposed revisions to the Public Space Protection Orders for Stockton Town Centre and Norton Town Centre. As the Member of Parliament for Stockton North, and as a partner working closely with Cleveland Police and Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council through Operation Shield, I welcome the opportunity to provide this formal response in support.

Residents, businesses and community groups across the constituency regularly raise concerns about antisocial behaviour, visible disorder and the impact these issues have on safety and public confidence. These concerns have been persistent, detrimental to the quality of life in both towns, and unreasonable in their continued impact. The proposed PSPOs respond to problems that have developed over time and which require coordinated and proportionate intervention.

In Stockton Town Centre, the most frequent and longstanding issue brought to my office is street drinking and the disorder associated with it. I hear from businesses whose customers are deterred from entering their premises, from staff who feel unsafe when opening or closing, and from residents who avoid parts of the town centre because of the atmosphere created by groups drinking in public. Even with the Council's successful "Reducing the Strength" scheme, which has made a meaningful difference, unmanaged street drinking continues to undermine efforts to regenerate the High Street and attract visitors. Given the scale and duration of these problems, and their clear impact on the community and local businesses, I support the introduction of a strengthened PSPO in Stockton Town Centre prohibiting the drinking or carrying of open containers of alcohol in public places.

In Norton Town Centre, residents and traders frequently report concerns about intimidating behaviour in and around the Green, the High Street and local transport points. Reports of nuisance behaviour, verbal aggression, alcohol-related disorder and environmental issues such as littering and urination have all been brought to my attention. These problems disrupt the welcoming environment that Norton is known for and have persisted long enough to warrant action. Families tell me they sometimes avoid parts of the town centre, and businesses describe feeling the consequences of repeated incidents. For these reasons, I

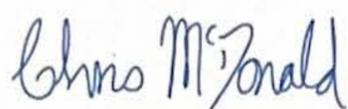
Chris McDonald MP
chris.mcdonald.mp@parliament.uk
telephone: 01642 772277

support the proposed PSPO provision which would allow officers to act where behaviour is likely to cause harassment, alarm or distress in Norton Town Centre.

Based on the evidence provided, the concerns expressed by the public, and my own engagement with residents, businesses, Cleveland Police and local partners, I confirm my support for the proposed PSPO conditions for both Stockton Town Centre and Norton Town Centre. These measures will reinforce wider partnership work already underway and will help ensure that our town centres are safe, welcoming and able to thrive as part of the ongoing regeneration of the borough.

Please let me know if any further information is required.

Yours sincerely,



Chris McDonald MP

Member of Parliament for Stockton North

Chris McDonald MP
chris.mcdonald.mp@parliament.uk
telephone: 01642 772277

REPORT TO CABINET

12th MARCH 2026

**MAKING NEW PUBLIC SPACES PROTECTION ORDERS FOR
STOCKTON TOWN CENTRE AND NORTON TOWN CENTRE (2026-
2029)**

Evidence

PACK 2 - Evidence From Relevant Council Services

Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council

Public Spaces Protection Order (No.2) 2026 – Stockton Town Centre

Evidence Report – **Restricted**

This document has been prepared to evidence incidents recorded within land identified in the proposed revised extended “Restricted Area” of the Public Spaces Protection Order (No.2) 2026 – Stockton Town Centre. Consequently, the document also evaluates the PSPO 2023 in Stockton Town Centre.

Evaluation period: April 2022 – November 2025

Please note types of incidents within the document are recorded as perceived by the member of the public, council officer, authorised officer or via CCTV at the time of the event. Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council’s (SBC) Community Safety team believe that the activities listed in this document have had a detrimental effect on the quality of life of those in the locality and that the effect, or likely effect, of the activities is, or is likely to be, of a persistent or continuing nature; and is, or is likely to be, such as to make the activities unreasonable and justifies the restrictions imposed.

General Summary

The current Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) was sealed on 23rd February 2023, following a Cabinet decision and introduced into Norton Town Centre, to tackle problem street drinking and aggressive begging, which were two aspects of anti-social behaviour that were contributing to high levels of reports across the town centre.

(i) Definition of the PSPO – Aggressive Begging

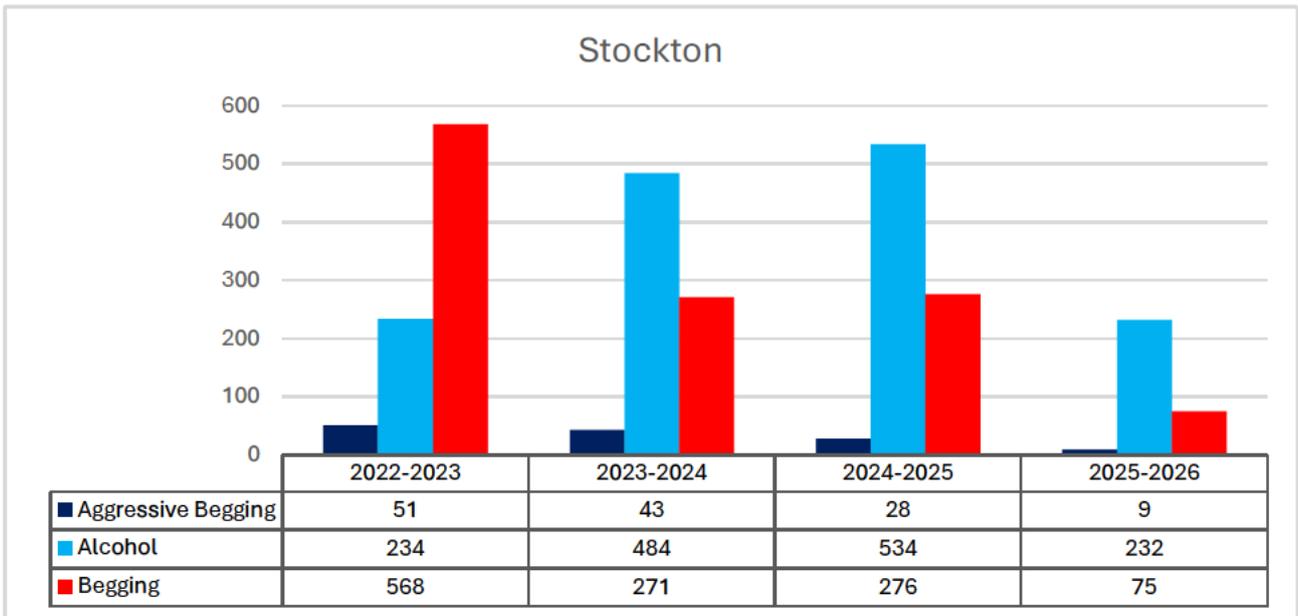
No person shall aggressively beg within the designated areas. Aggressive begging includes, but is not limited to, begging in a manner which a reasonable person would perceive to be threatening, intimidating or aggressive, or following a member of the public.

(ii) Definition of the PSPO – Street Drinking

No person shall consume alcohol within the Designated Areas in circumstances where an Authorised Person has directed them not to do so in the reasonable belief that such a direction is necessary

*If an Authorised Person reasonably believes that a person:- is, or has been, consuming alcohol in breach of the prohibition, or intends to consume alcohol in circumstances in which doing so would be a **breach of such prohibition, he or she may impose a requirement upon that person.** In practice, the street drinking prohibition was only enforced when there was an added element of associated anti-social behaviour (e.g. spitting, swearing, littering, etc.).*

Table 1 overleaf identifies the total number of incidents occurring during the reporting period relevant to the current order occurring within the Restricted Area.



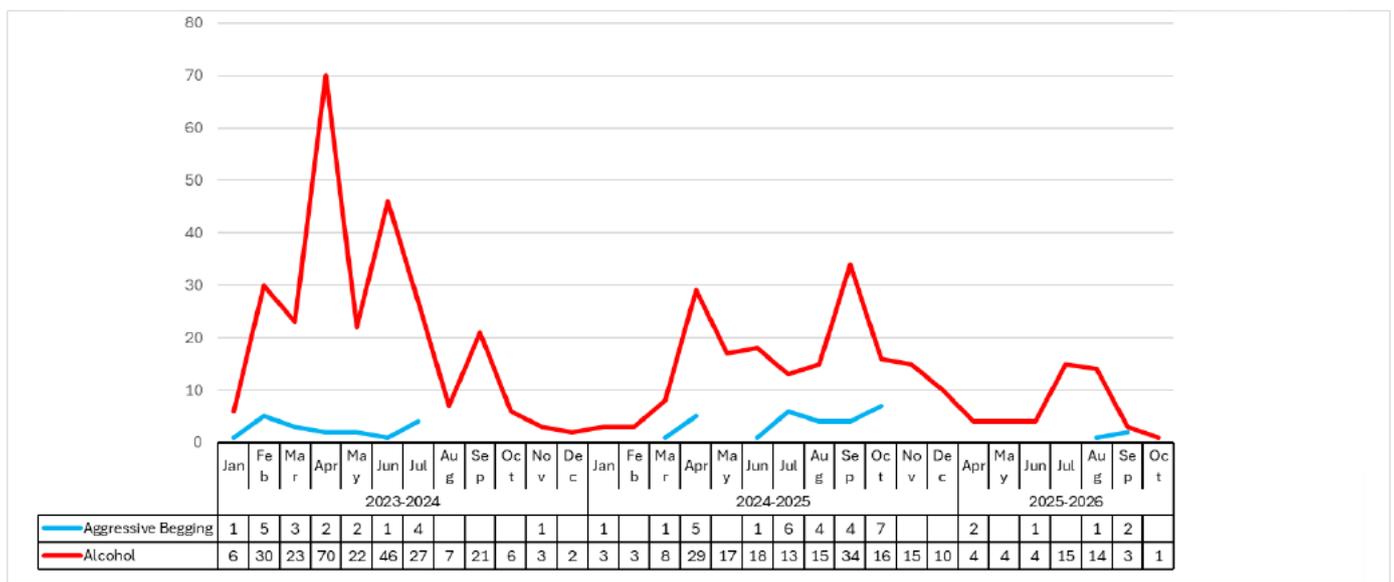
Totals following the introduction of the PSPO:

- **Begging** decreased by **52%** in 2023-2024, however increased by **2%** in 2024-2025. To date, begging within the Restricted Area is showing a **73%** decrease on the rolling year.
- **Aggressive Begging** decreased by **16%** in 2023-2024, and by **35%** in 2024-2025. To date, aggressive begging within the Restricted Area is showing a **68%** decrease on the rolling year.
- **Alcohol** increased by **107%** in 2023-2024 and by **10%** in 2024-2025. To date, alcohol within the Restricted Area is showing a **57%** decrease on the rolling year.

Continuous reporting of these events deemed a positive due to proactive monitoring by officers and confidence of members of the public/local business in reporting issues.

PSPO Actions 2023 - 2025

The graph overleaf illustrates the pattern of PSPO incidents recorded by month within Stockton Town Centre. Due to the nature of the incident, officers have deemed a breach of the PSPO has occurred and PSPO action being taken against the individual/individuals;

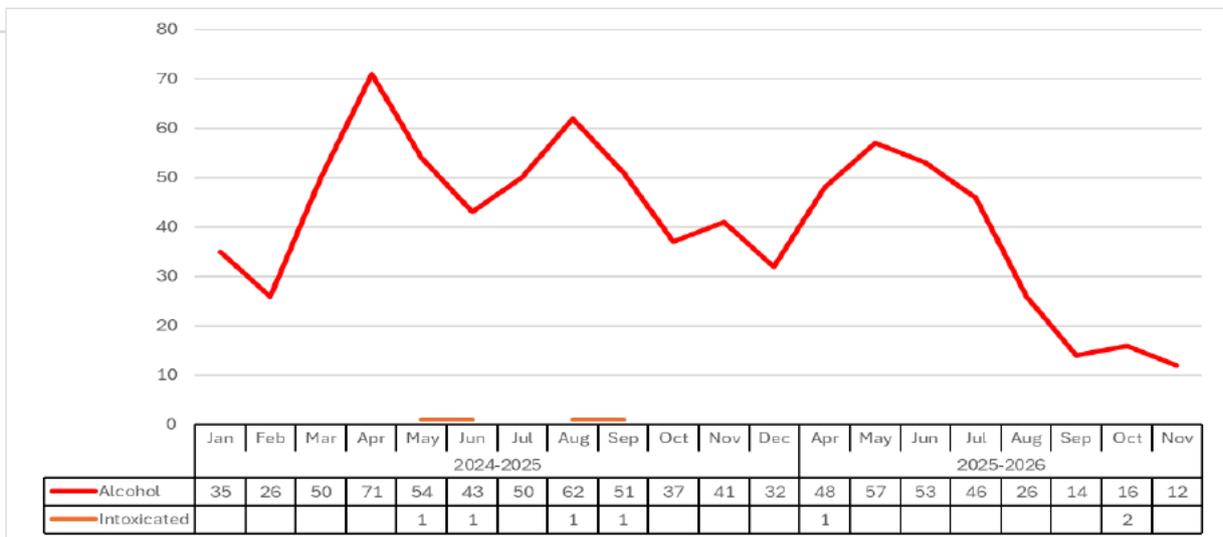
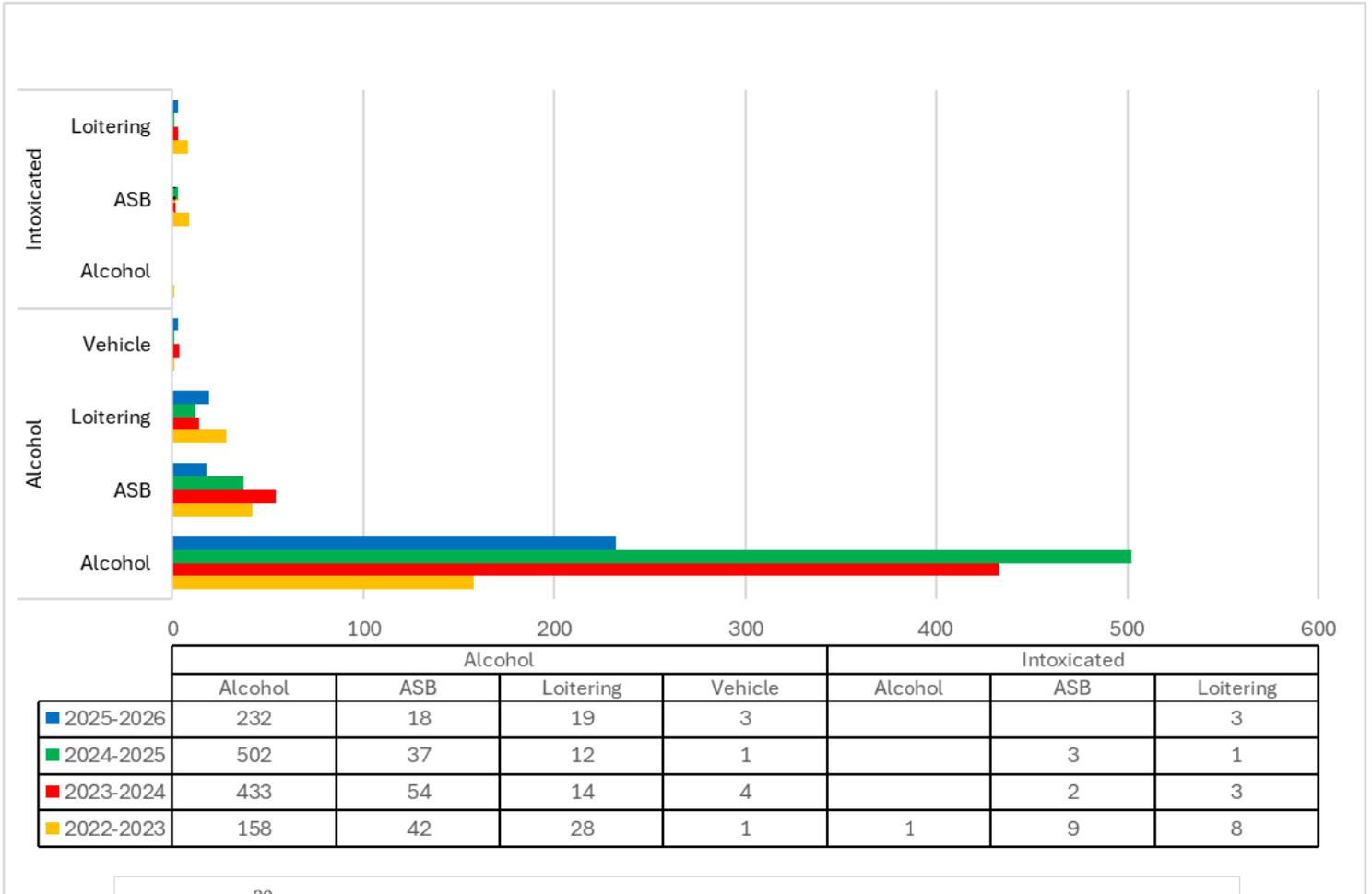


Evidence – the prohibition in relation to alcohol consumption

Alcohol consumption within the Restricted Area continues to impact on those working/visiting or residing in the area across the reporting period.

The table below documents the levels of incidents identified where ‘alcohol’ has been perceived as being the major category type of the occurrence or the consumption of alcohol is a factor in the behaviour of those involved, i.e. ASB incident occurring however the person committing the incident is perceived by the reporting person to be conducting themselves in a manner linked to alcohol consumption.

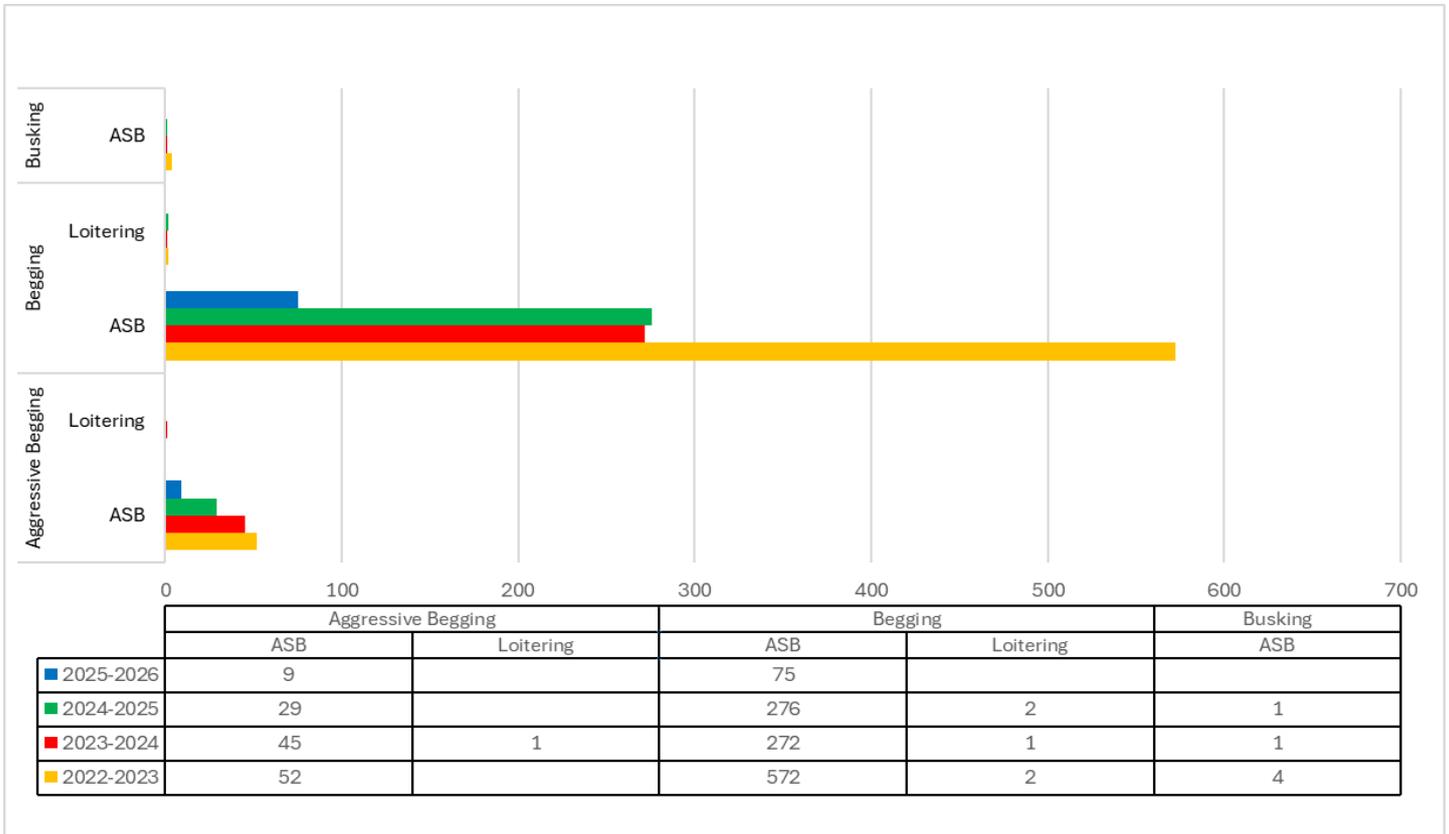
The graph below shows the monthly timeline of alcohol incidents recorded over the periods April 2024 to March 2025 and April 2025 to November 2026.



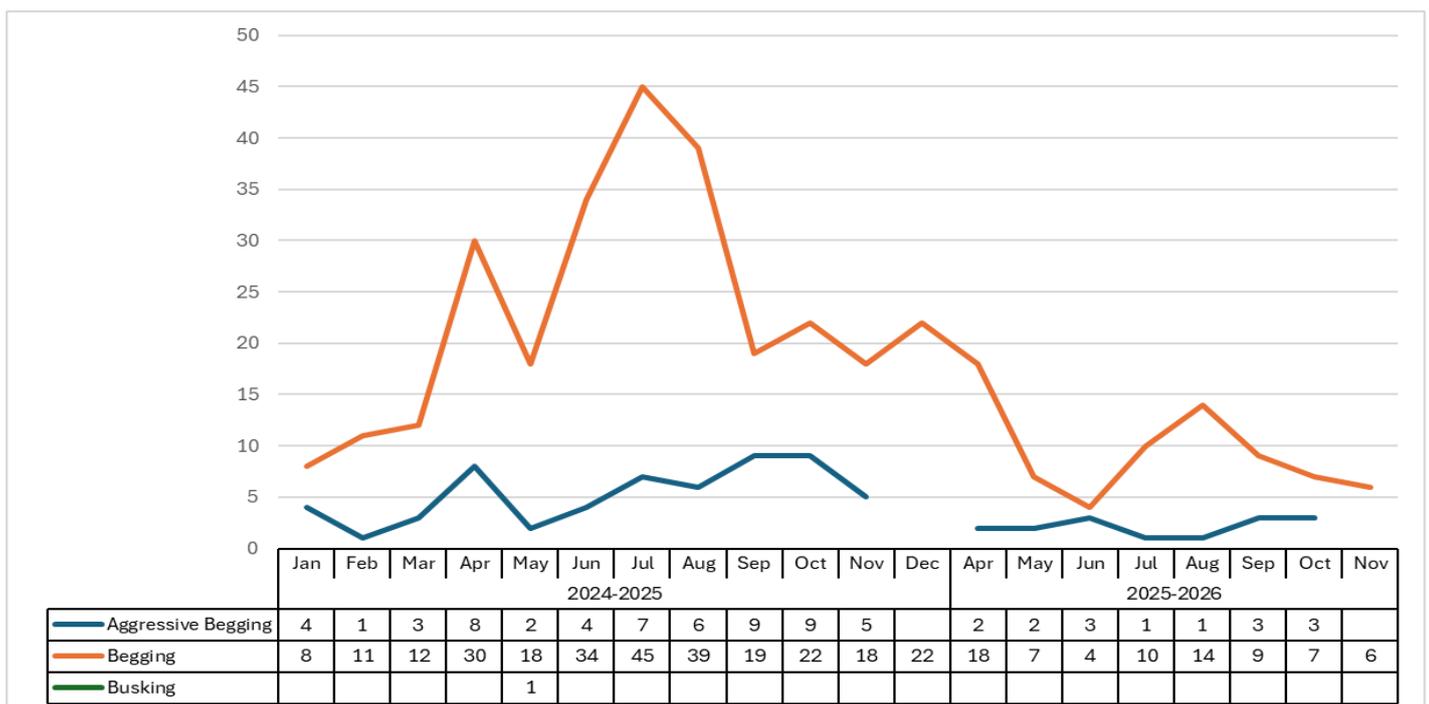
Evidence – the prohibition in relation to begging

Begging within the Restricted Area continues to directly impact on businesses within Stockton Town Centre and those working, visiting or residing in the area, across the reporting period. The text recorded within the analysis highlights consistent feelings of harassment, alarm and distress, felt by the reporting person.

The tables below documents the level of incidents identified where ‘begging’ has been perceived as being the major category type or is a factor in the behaviour of those involved.



The graph below shows the monthly timeline of begging related incidents recorded over the periods April 2024 to March 2025 and April 2025 to November 2026.



Evidence – the prohibition in relation to ASB related loitering

“A person commits an offence if at any time they loiter, sit or lay, without reasonable excuse in a manner causing or likely to cause harassment, alarm, or distress, to any person within the Restricted Area”

Analysis indicates a consistent pattern of behaviour of individuals who choose to hang around/congregate in groups around locations within the Stockton Town Centre area, which is perceived as being intimidating to businesses and causing harassment, alarm and distress to the public visiting the town. The data highlights those involved choose to migrate to the same repeat locations within the Restricted Area on a daily/weekly basis, congregating, at times, in large groups, and acting in an anti-social manner which prevents other members of the public from accessing the same area.

To understand the nature of the occurrence reported, a deep-down analysis has been completed to obtain the behaviour trends of those involved in the reports. The findings resulted in additional sub-incident types being included in the tables below, as to demonstrate the nature of behaviour occurring.

Table 1 below illustrates examples of occurrences of loitering only (no other behaviour pattern involved), and those who choose to sleep , or lay, or sit within a location. The majority of incidents of ‘sleep/ lay’ over the reporting period have occurred within doorways of businesses preventing access obstruction of a doorway/business premises.

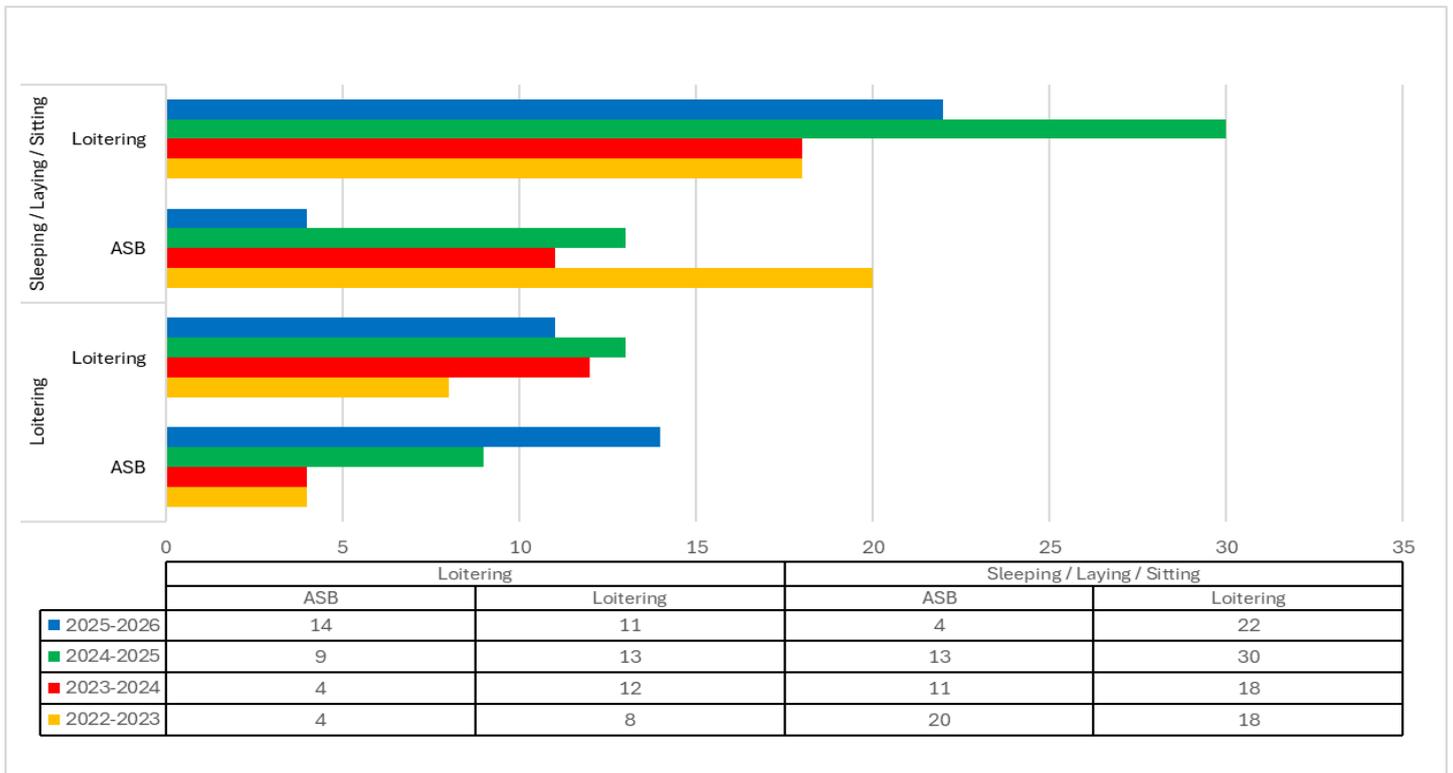


Table 2 overleaf illustrates examples of occurrences of additional behaviour patterns of aggressive behaviour (examples include verbal abusive to each other, fighting, shouting and screaming), nuisance, protesting and ‘suspicious behaviour.’

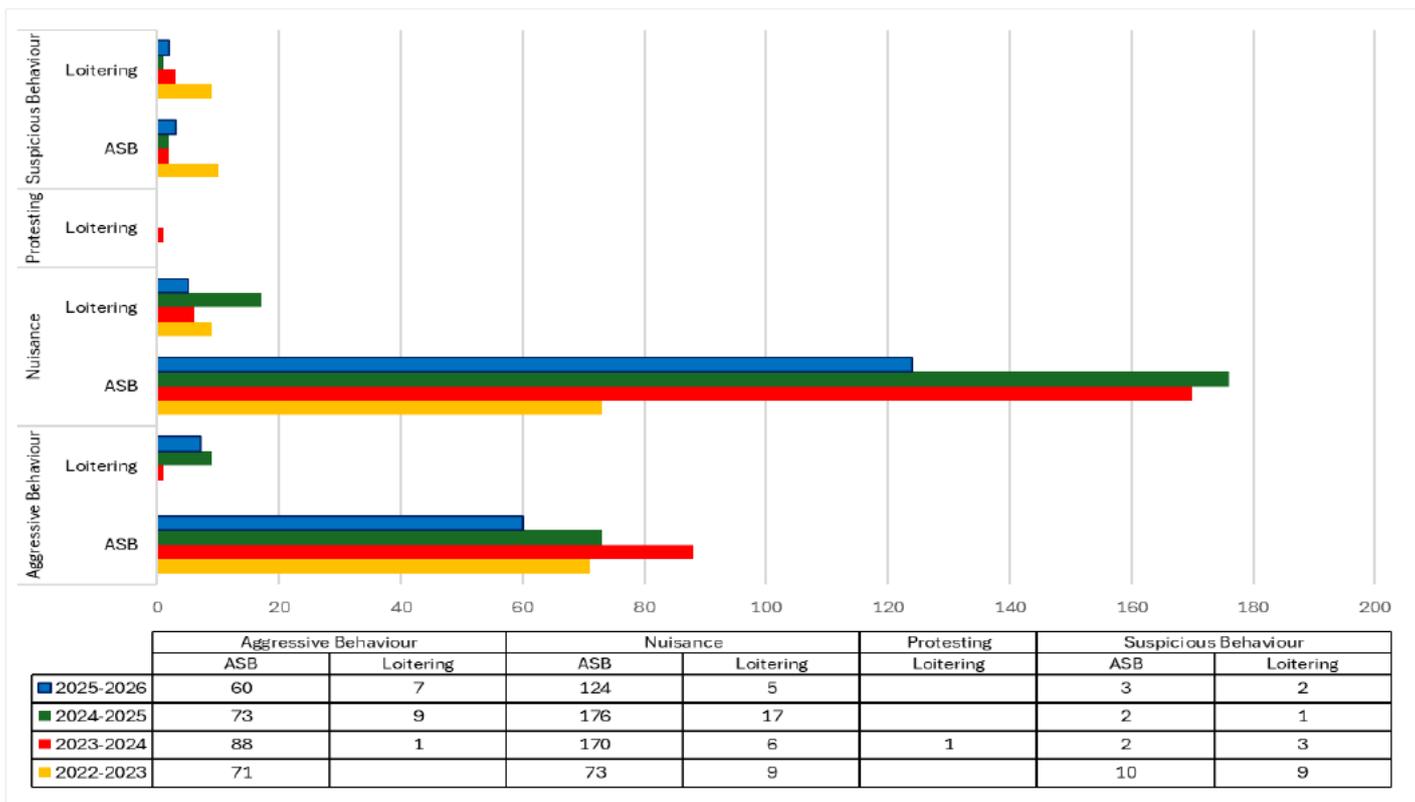
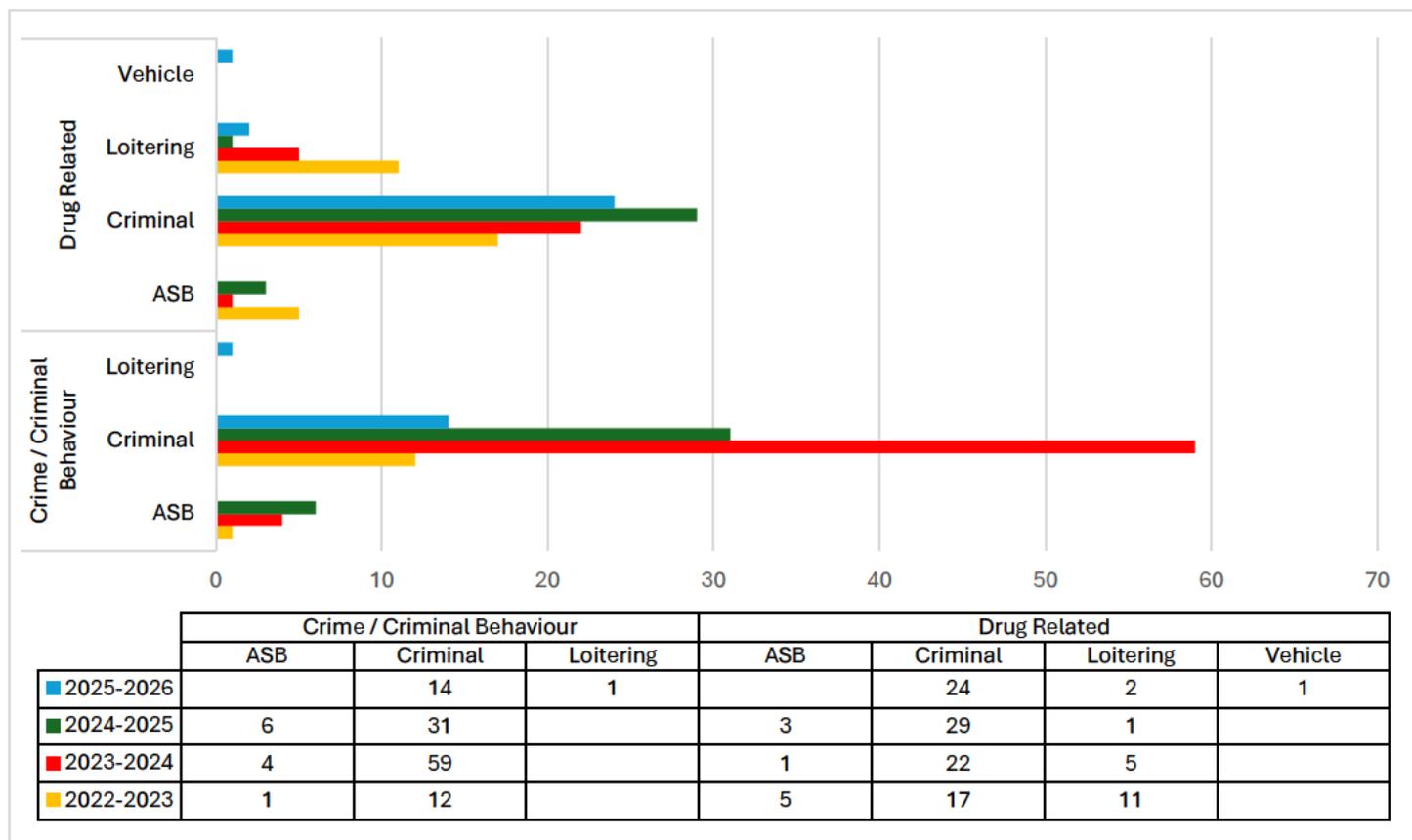
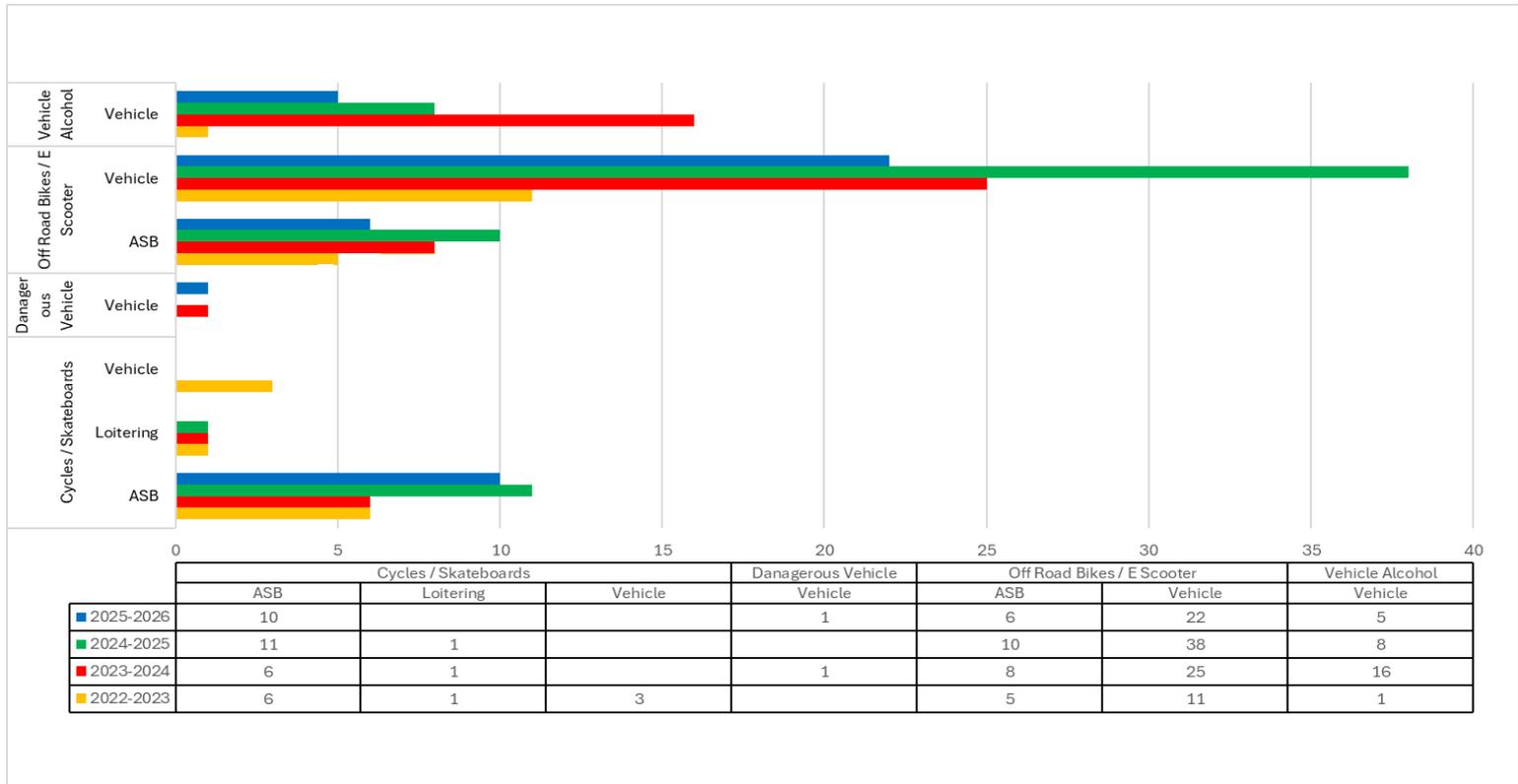


Table 3 below illustrates examples of occurrences of groups congregating/ loitering within the Restricted Area, however it also indicates an additional recorded code/behaviour pattern of ‘criminal issues,’ i.e. potential shoplifting or drug activity, such as dealing. Analysis shows examples of High Street shops reporting known individuals persistently loitering at the front of the store with the intent to shoplift/refuse to move on when asked.



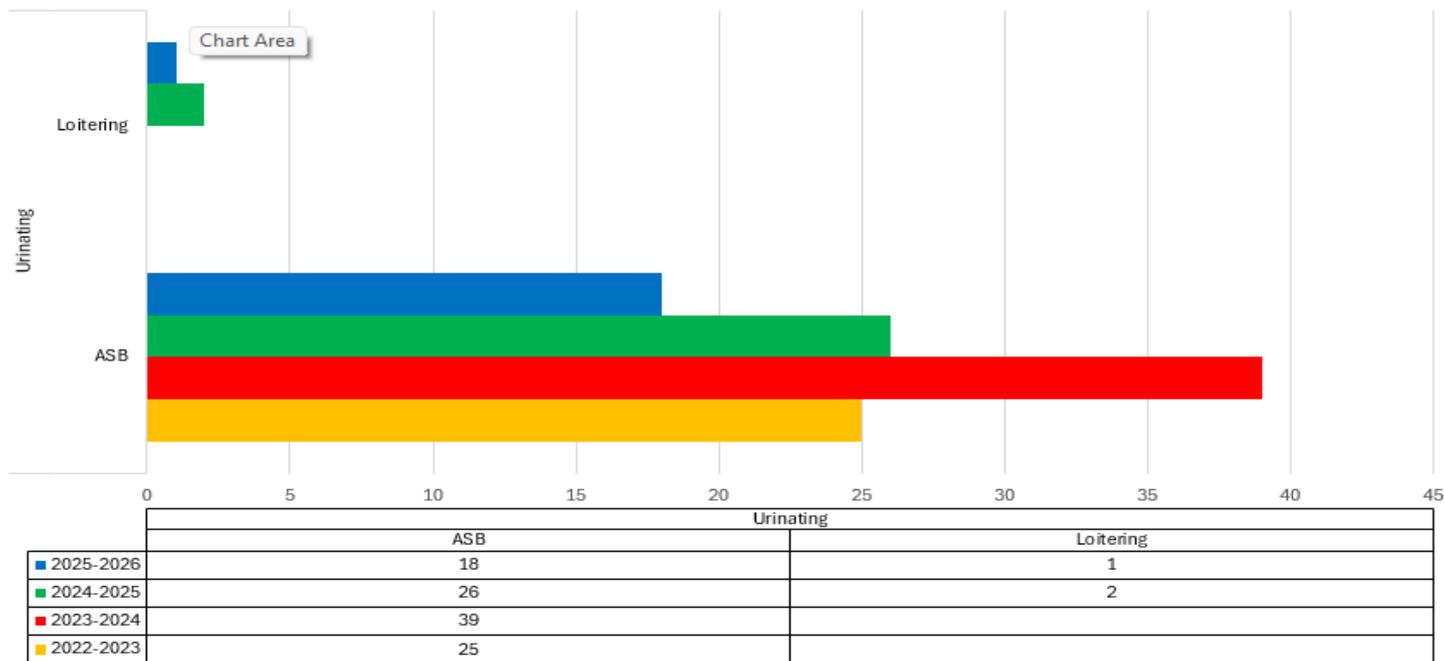
Evidence – the prohibition in relation to the anti-social use of vehicles

The graph below illustrates the impact of the anti-social use of vehicles within the Restricted Area. For reference, cycles/skateboards occurrences has also been included in the summary as the analysis indicated both youths and adults are choosing to use cycles inappropriately, to travel from locations within the main shopping area of the town centre. Of note is the ‘Vehicle Alcohol’ recorded code, which illustrates the total number of drink driving occurrences within the reporting period for reference.



Evidence – the prohibition in relation to urinating and defecating in the street

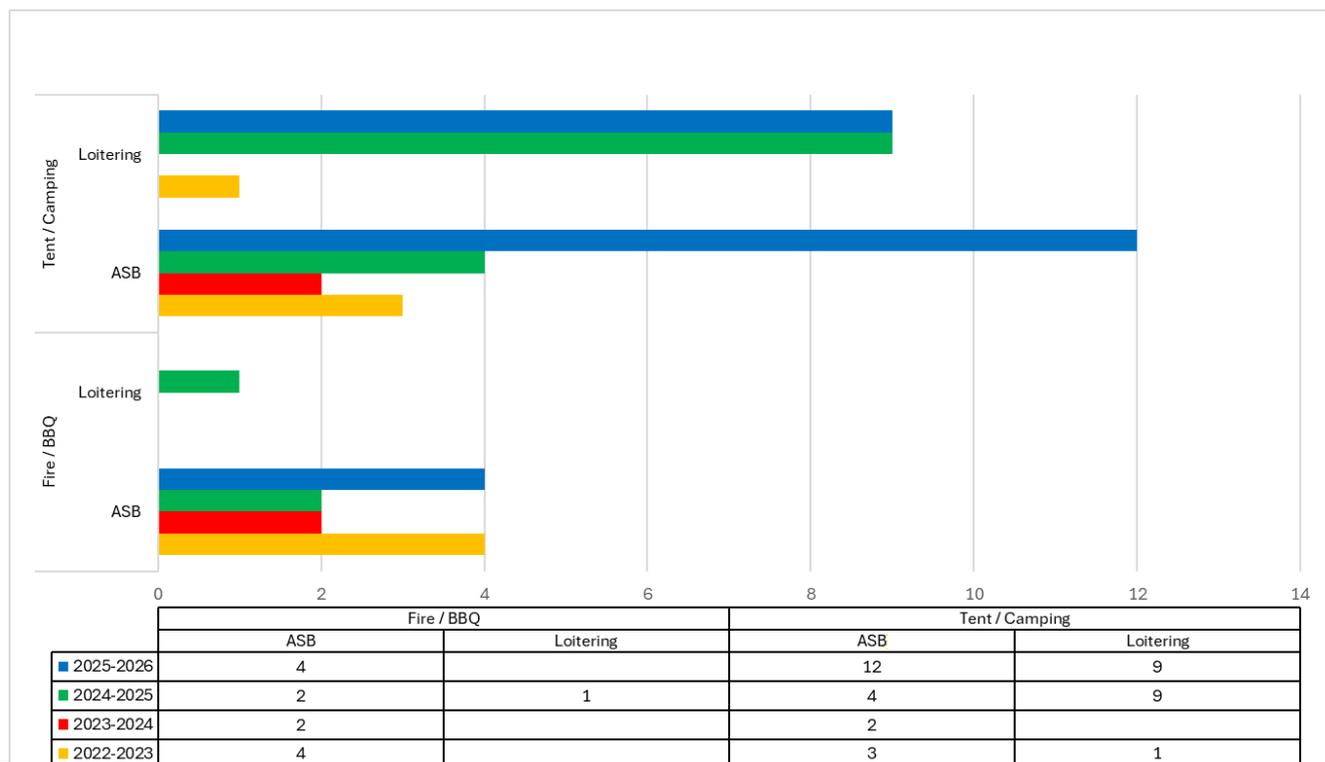
The graph overleaf illustrates the number of occurrences of urinating/defecating within the Restricted Area, during the reporting period. Due to the recording methods used, occurrences of defecating are not a recognised recordable field within the Community Safety system, and therefore it has been included within the urinating total.



Evidence - Requirement to remove temporary structures or vehicles when requested

Analysis illustrates an increase in 2025–2026 of temporary structures (specifically tents). Many occurrences have occurred on the green space area at *Trinity Gardens*, which has been identified as a new area of concern and located within the proposed revised Restricted Area. During the current period, groups of individuals have migrated away from the High Street and congregated within this setting, resulting in an increase in reporting due to them acting in an anti-social manner and conducting criminal activity, either in, or besides, the tents. This behaviour prevents other members of the public from accessing the same area and impacts on the surrounding residential area – a statement from the nearby care home corroborates this statistic for instance.

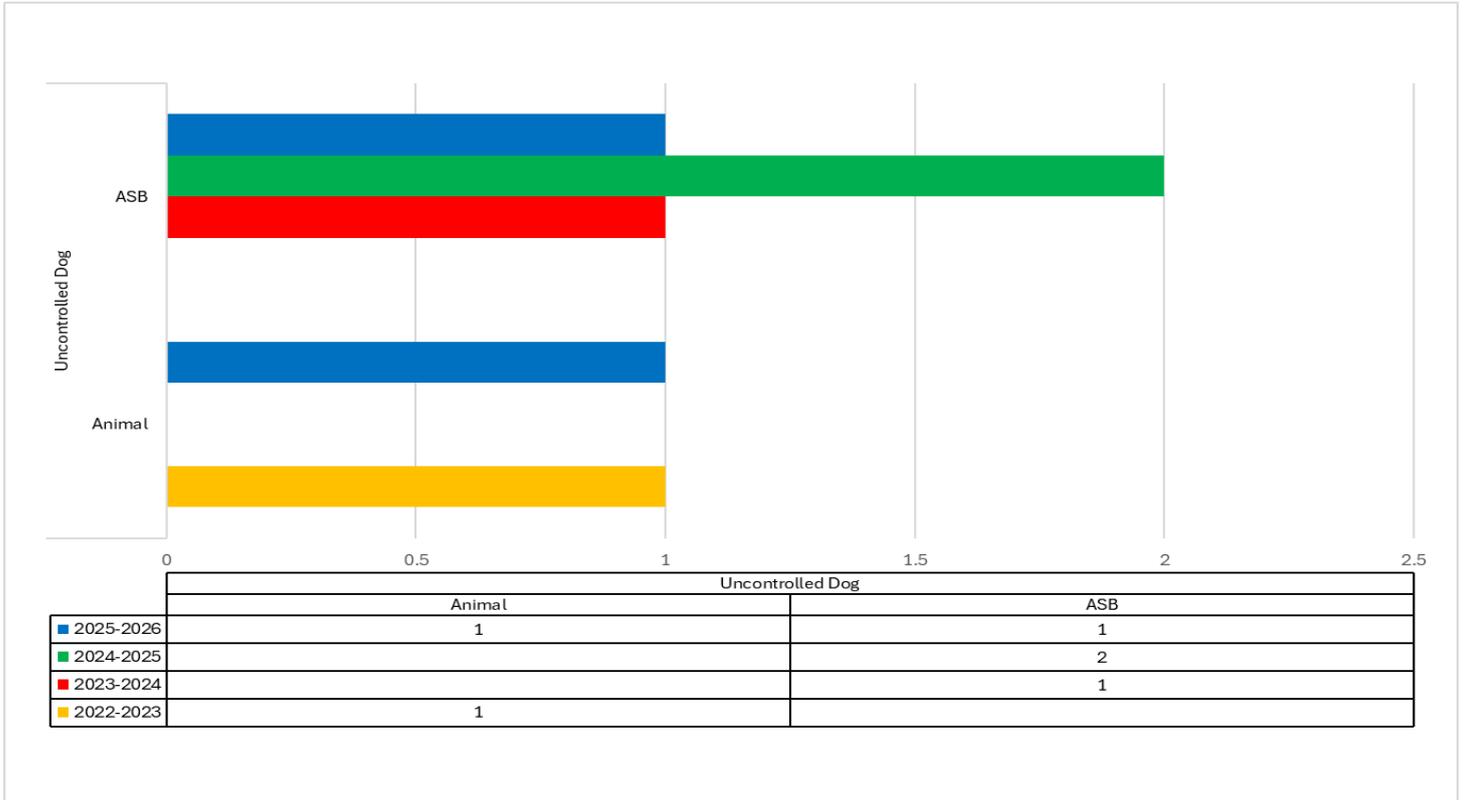
Evidence – the requirement to have dogs on leads



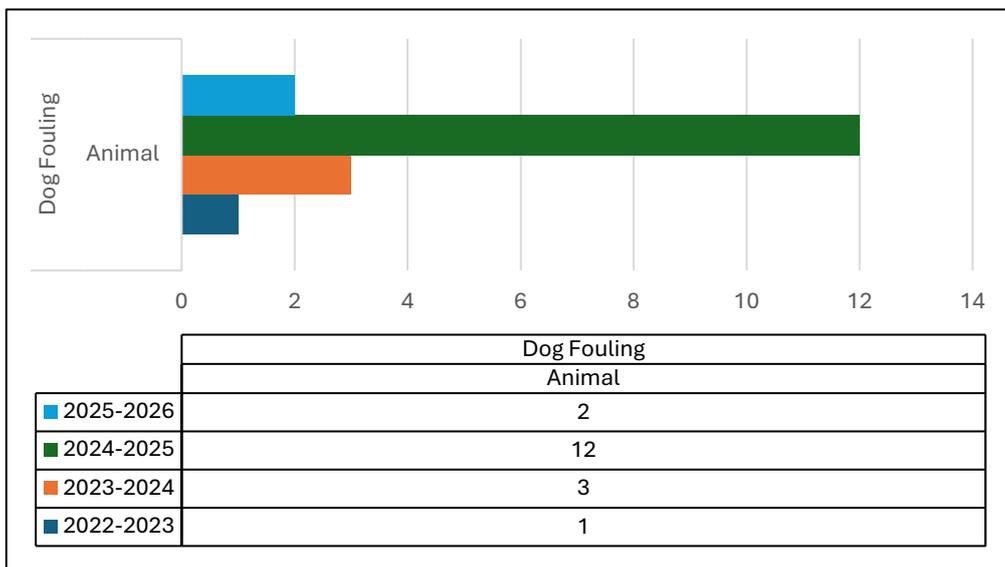
Due to the recording methods used, occurrences of dog issues is not a recognised recordable field within the Community Safety system, and therefore has been included within the 'uncontrolled dog' report code.

Analysis illustrates occurrences where a dog has been present with an individual, congregating within a larger group at the time of the report. Some occurrences report dogs are roaming free/jumping up at passing members of the public causing them harassment, alarm and distress, due to the breed of the dog involved. This condition is evidenced more concretely in the evidential supporting statements provided by SBC Environmental Health and Cleveland Police's Matrix Team.

Evidence - Requirement to pick up dog foul



The table below indicates the number of occurrences of dog fouling within the restricted area. The necessity for this condition is supported further in the statement provided by SBC Environmental Health.



In relation to the requirement to provide identity in cases of ASB

6.0. Any person is to provide their name, address, and date of birth, to an Authorised Person if directed to do so, where the Authorised Person is of the opinion that the individual is:

(a) in breach of any of the prohibitions or requirements contained within this Order, or

(b) is behaving in a manner causing or likely to cause harassment, alarm, or distress, to any person within the Restricted Area.

6.1. A person commits an offence if, when subject to a requirement under paragraph 6.0., they fail to provide their details immediately. It is also an offence under this paragraph if the details supplied are proved to be false.

6.2. All requirements under Part 6 of this Order are not valid, if an Authorised Person is asked by the person subject to the requirement, to show evidence of their authorisation and they fail to do so.

The requirement above is required for the effective and proper implementation of this PSPO, as to combat and process ASB incidents & breaches in a timely and efficient manner. The details which an officer will demand using this requirement will ensure the Council and Cleveland Police can streamline enforcement, given that such personal details are needed for any prosecution. The need to know an offender's details is a fundamental requirement for effective enforcement. As Superintendent O'Donoghue writes in his supporting statement/evidence for the draft proposal: "[The] provision supports investigations, ensures accountability, and enables repeat offenders to be identified and dealt with appropriately."

In relation to the requirement to leave the Restricted Area when asked

7.0. Any person is to leave the Restricted Area immediately, if directed to do so by an Authorised Person, and not return for a period not exceeding 24 hours, unless for a lawful reason or with reasonable excuse, where the Authorised Person is of the opinion that the individual is:

(a) in breach of any of the prohibitions or requirements contained within this Order, or

(b) is behaving in a manner causing or likely to cause harassment, alarm, or distress, to any person within the Restricted Area.

This important and crucial power/requirement, hailed by local authorities nationally as a 'game changer,' is a must for the Council & Cleveland Police, as to bring about immediate order and relief to High Street businesses suffering from ASB. This dispersal or 'direction to leave' requirement is a flexible power which we'll be able to apply in a range of situations to disperse anti-social individuals and provide immediate short-term respite to the local community and High Street businesses. The power is preventative, allowing an officer to deal quickly with someone's behaviour and deal with the problem before it escalates – for example; we could be dispersing persons who may have gone on to commit shoplifting offences or other such serious offences, had we not intervened early on. This power empowers officers to proactively 'nip issues in the bud.'

Written & prepared by

Dawn Tyerman, Public Protection Development Officer

Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council

Edited by

Adam Bateman, Problem Solving & Partnerships Officer

Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council

Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council

Public Spaces Protection Order (No.3) 2026 – Norton Town Centre

Evidence Report – **Restricted**

This document has been prepared to evidence incidents recorded within land identified in the proposed revised extended “Restricted Area” of the Public Spaces Protection Order (No.3) 2026 – Norton Town Centre. Consequently, the document also evaluates the PSPO 2023 in Norton Town Centre.

Evaluation period: April 2022 – November 2025

Please note types of incidents within the document are recorded as perceived by the member of the public, council officer, authorised officer or via CCTV at the time of the event. Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council’s (SBC) Community Safety team believe that the activities listed in this document have had a detrimental effect on the quality of life of those in the locality and that the effect, or likely effect, of the activities is, or is likely to be, of a persistent or continuing nature; and is, or is likely to be, such as to make the activities unreasonable and justifies the restrictions imposed.

General Summary

The current Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) was sealed on 23rd February 2023, following a Cabinet decision and introduced into Norton Town Centre, to tackle problem street drinking and aggressive begging, which were two aspects of anti-social behaviour that were contributing to high levels of reports across the town centre.

(i) Definition of the PSPO – Aggressive Begging

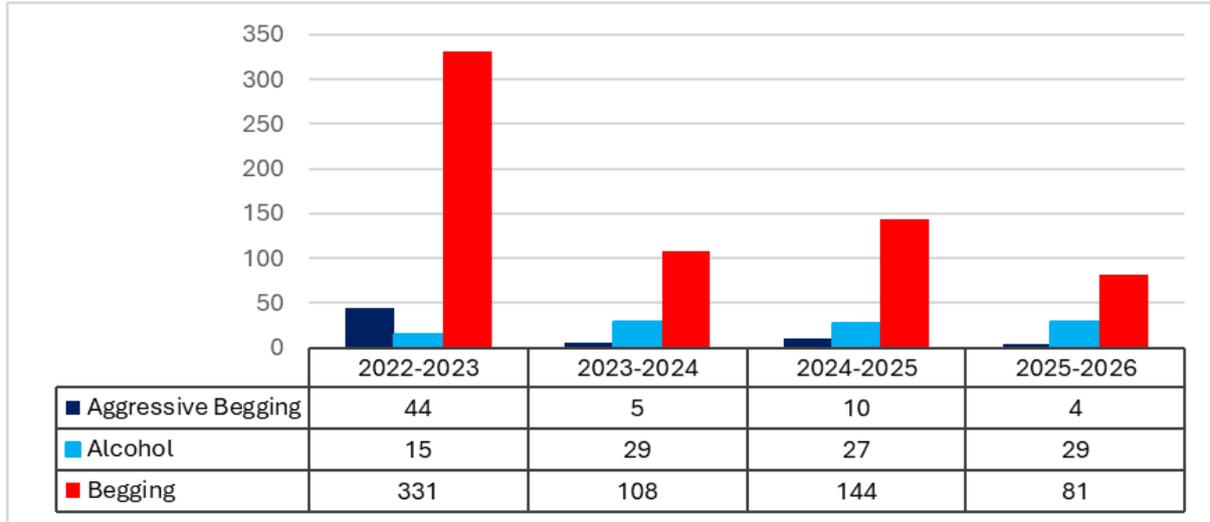
No person shall aggressively beg within the designated areas. Aggressive begging includes, but is not limited to, begging in a manner which a reasonable person would perceive to be threatening, intimidating or aggressive, or following a member of the public.

(ii) Definition of the PSPO – Street Drinking

No person shall consume alcohol within the Designated Areas in circumstances where an Authorised Person has directed them not to do so in the reasonable belief that such a direction is necessary

*If an Authorised Person reasonably believes that a person:- is, or has been, consuming alcohol in breach of the prohibition, or intends to consume alcohol in circumstances in which doing so would be a **breach of such prohibition, he or she may impose a requirement upon that person.** In practice, the street drinking prohibition was only enforced when there was an added element of associated anti-social behaviour (e.g. spitting, swearing, littering, etc.).*

Table 1 overleaf identifies the total number of incidents occurring during the reporting period relevant to the current order occurring within the Restricted Area.



Totals following the introduction of the PSPO:

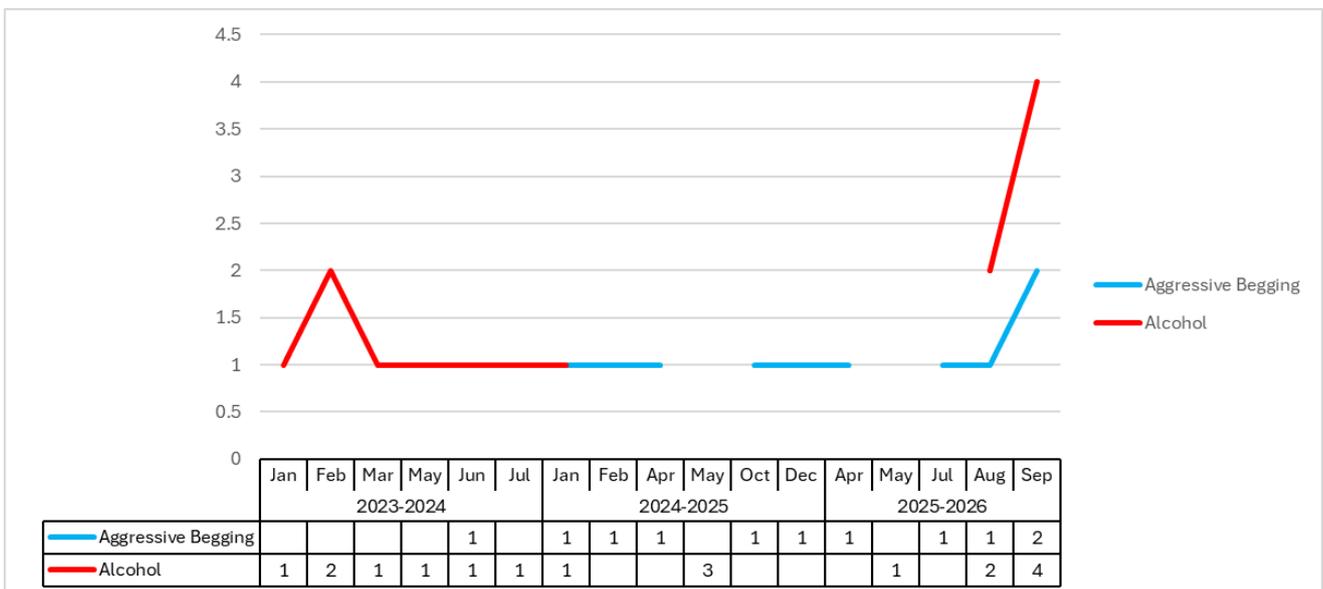
- **Begging** decreased by **67%** in 2023-2024, however increased by **33%** in 2024-2025. To date, begging within the Restricted Area is showing a **44%** decrease on the rolling year.
- **Aggressive Begging** decreased by **88%** in 2023-2024, however increased by **100%** in 2024-2025. To date, aggressive begging within the Restricted Area is showing a **60%** decrease on the rolling year.
- **Alcohol** increased by **93%** 2023-2024 however decreased by **7%** 2024-2025. To date, alcohol within the Restricted Area is showing a **7%** increase on the rolling year.

Continuous reporting of these events deemed a positive due to proactive monitoring by officers and confidence of members of the public/ local business in reporting issues.

PSPO Actions 2023 - 2025

The graph below illustrates the pattern of PSPO incidents recorded by month within Norton Town Centre.

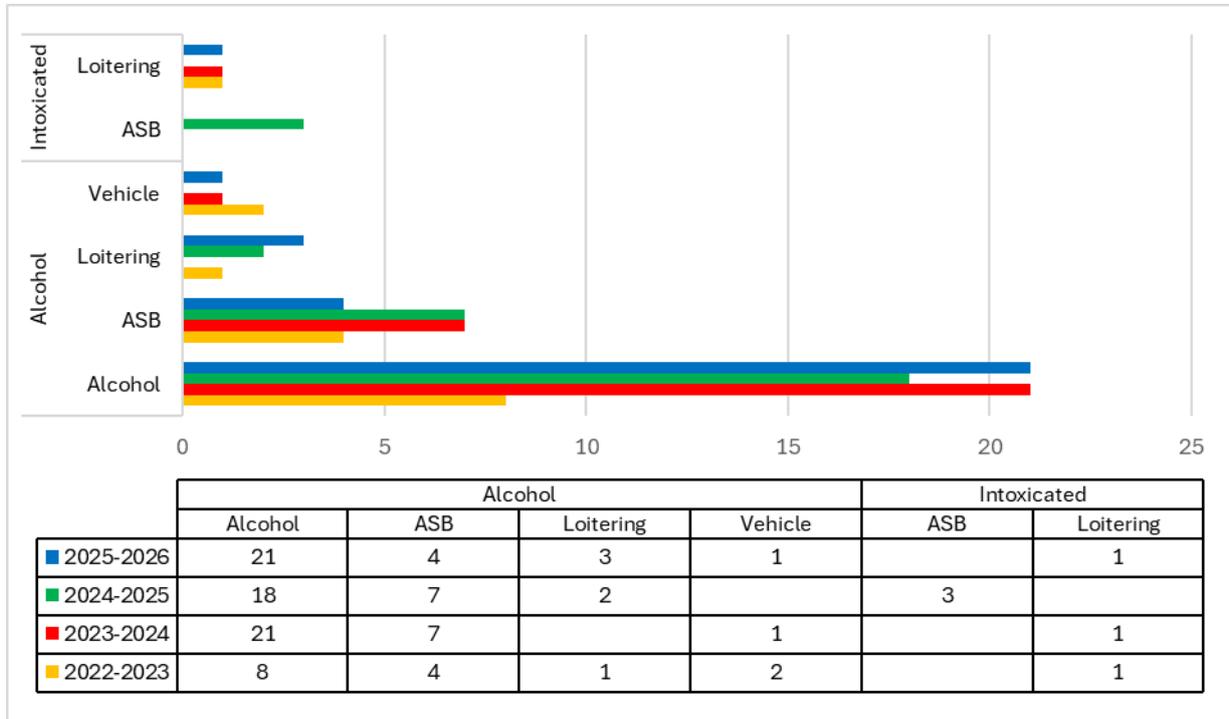
Due to the nature of the incident, officers have deemed a breach of the PSPO has occurred and PSPO action being taken against the individual / individuals;



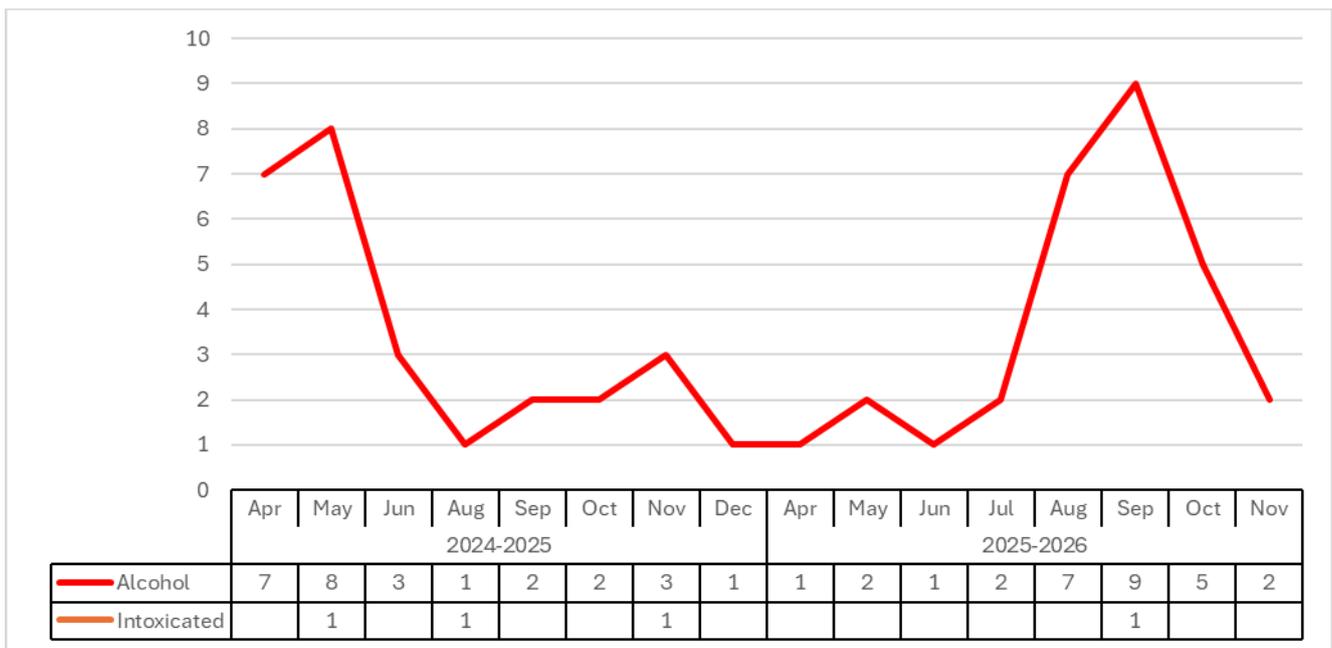
Evidence – the prohibition in relation to alcohol consumption

Alcohol consumption within the Restricted Area continues to impact businesses within Norton Town Centre, as well as those working, visiting or residing in the area, across the reporting period.

The table below documents the levels of incidents identified where ‘alcohol’ has been perceived as being the major category type or the consumption of alcohol is a factor in the behaviour of those involved, i.e. *ASB incident occurring however the person committing the incident is perceived by the reporting person to be conducting themselves in a manner linked to alcohol consumption.*



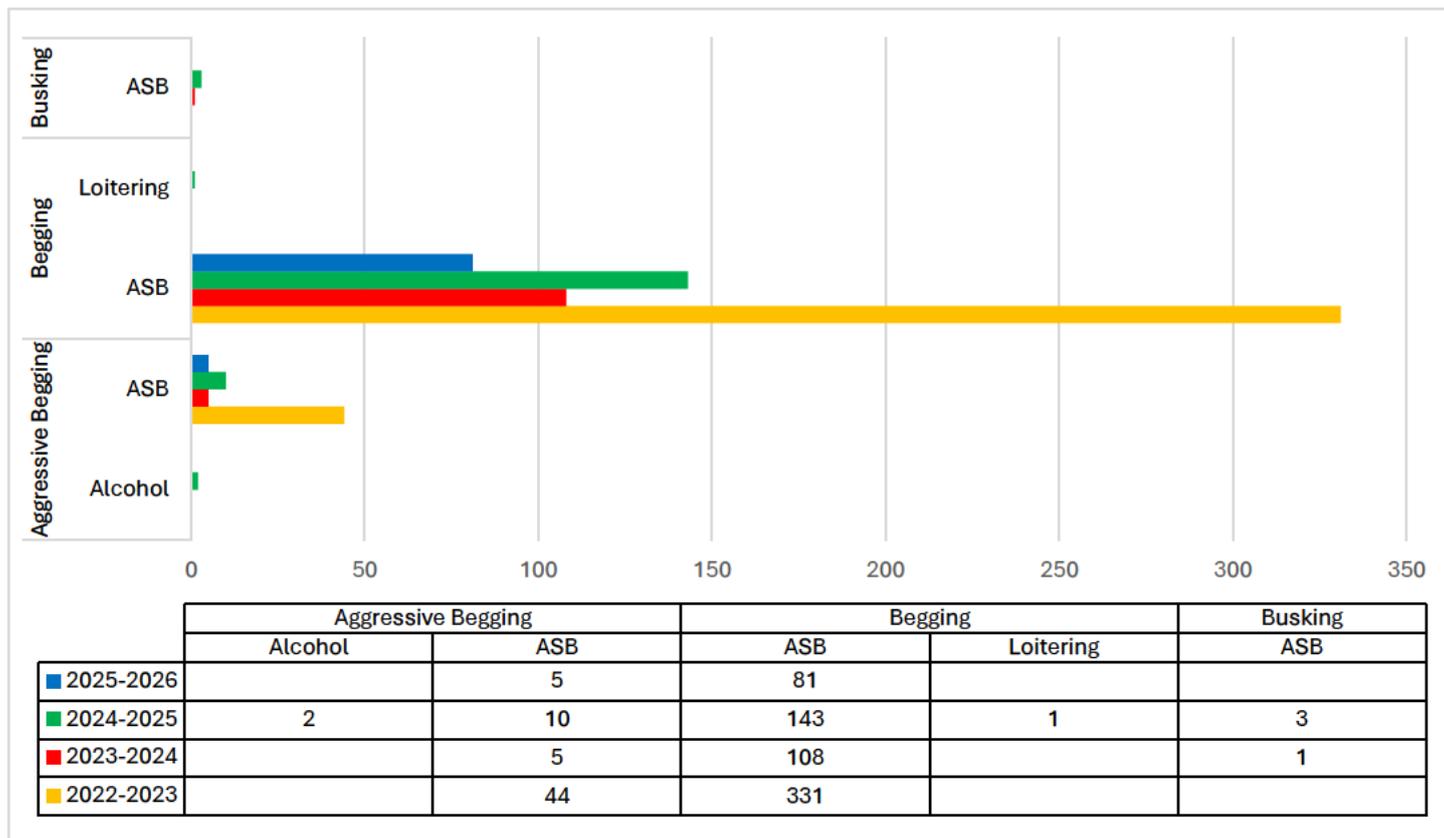
The graph below shows the monthly timeline of alcohol incidents recorded over the financial periods 2024-2025 and 2025-2026.



Evidence – the prohibition in relation to begging

Begging within the restricted area continues to directly impact on businesses within the Norton Town Centre are, and those working, visiting or residing in the area, across the reporting period. The text recorded within the analysis highlights consistent feelings of harassment, alarm and distress, felt by the reporting person.

The table below documents the levels of incidents identified where ‘begging’ has been perceived as being the major event or is a factor in the behaviour of those involved.



Evidence – the prohibition in relation to ASB related loitering

A person commits an offence if at any time they loiter, sit or lay, without reasonable excuse in a manner causing or likely to cause harassment, alarm, or distress, to any person within the Restricted Area.

Analysis indicates a consistent pattern of behaviour from individuals who choose to hang around/congregate in groups around locations within the Norton Town Centre area, which is perceived as being intimidating to businesses and causing harassment, alarm and distress to the public visiting the town centre. The data highlights that those involved choose to migrate to the same repeat locations within the Restricted Area, on a daily/weekly basis, congregating at times in large groups and acting in an anti-social manner, thus preventing other members of the public from accessing the same area.

To understand the nature of the occurrence reported, a deep-down analysis has been completed to obtain the behaviour trends of those involved in the reports. The findings resulted in additional sub-incident types being included in the tables below, as to demonstrate the nature of behaviour occurring.

Table 1 below illustrates examples of occurrences of ‘loitering’ only (no other behaviour pattern involved), and those who choose to sleep, or lay, or sit, within a location. The majority of incidents of ‘sleep/ lay’ over the reporting period have occurred within doorways of businesses preventing access/obstruction of a doorway/business premises.

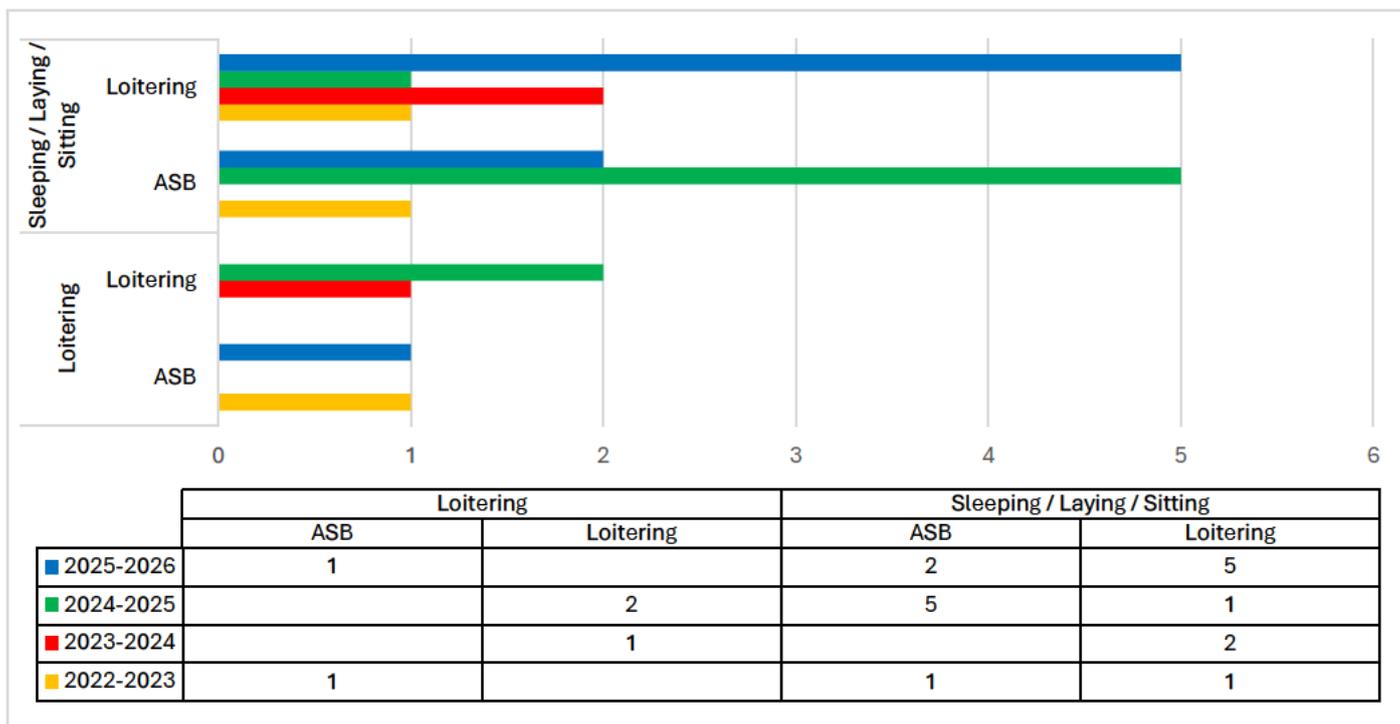


Table 2 below illustrates examples of occurrences of additional behaviour patterns of aggressive behaviour (examples include verbal abuse to each other, fighting, shouting and screaming), nuisance, protesting and ‘suspicious behaviour.’

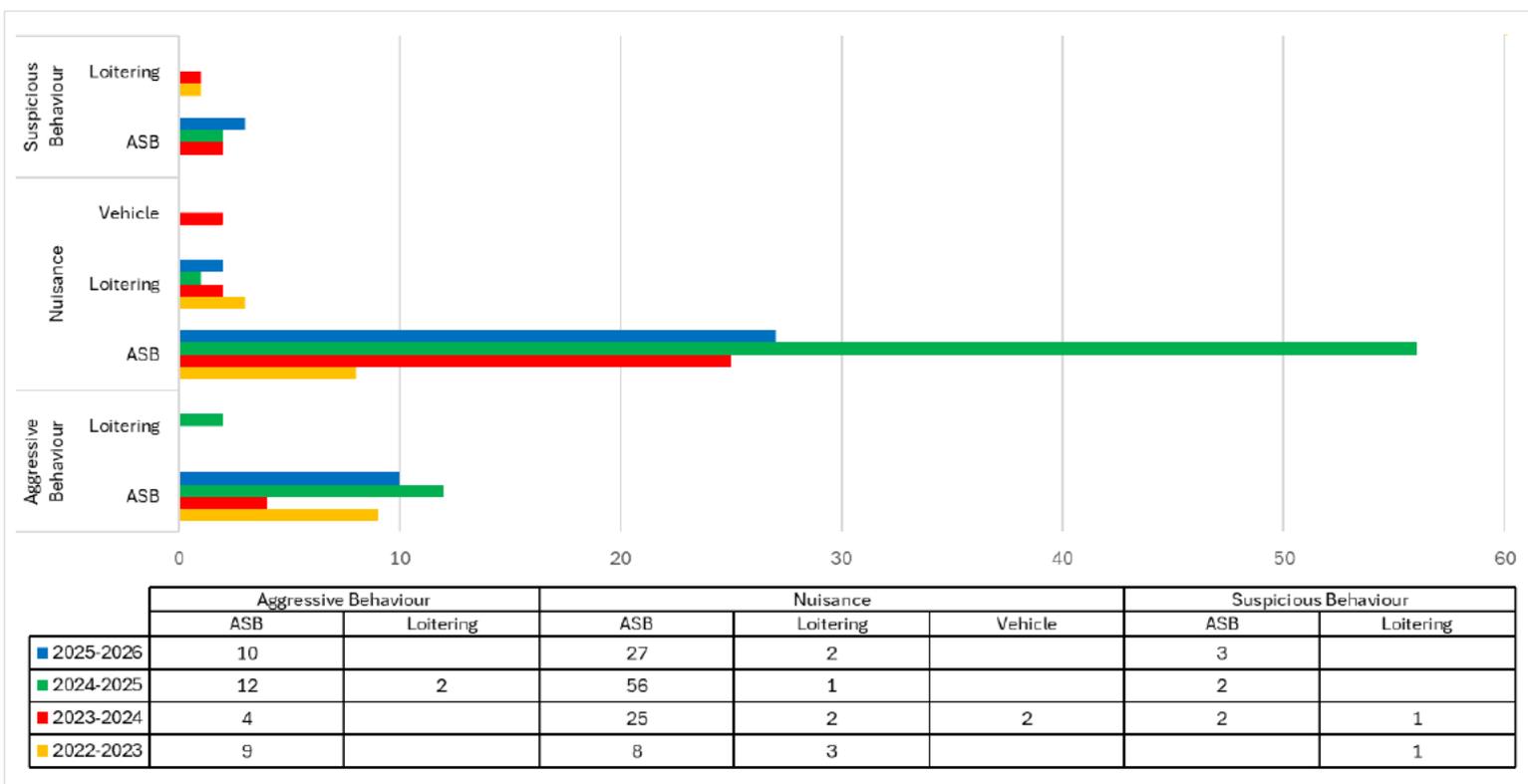
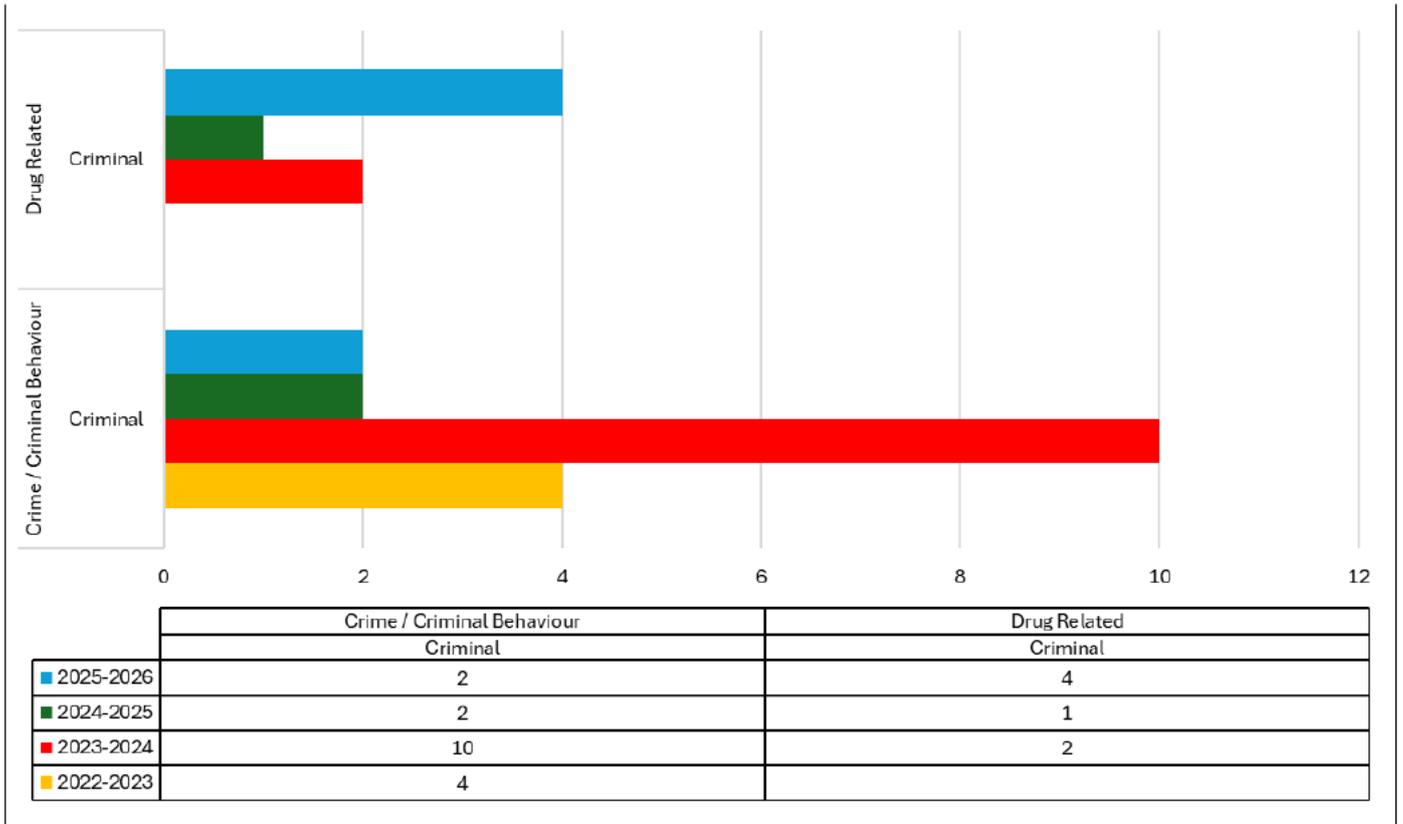


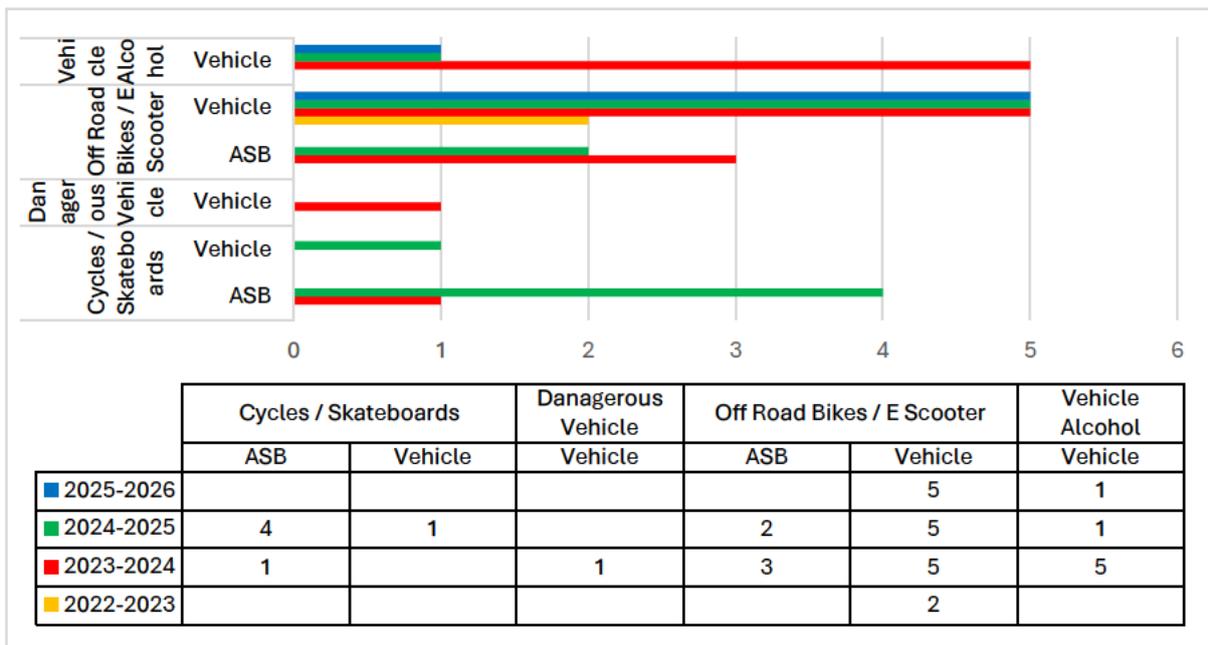
Table 3 overleaf illustrates examples of occurrences of groups loitering within the Restricted Area, however it also indicates an additional recorded code/behaviour pattern of ‘criminal issues,’ i.e. potential shoplifting or

drug activity, such as dealing. Analysis shows examples of High Street shops reporting known individuals persistently loitering at the front of the store with the intent to shoplift/refuse to move on when asked.



Evidence – the prohibition in relation to the anti-social use of vehicles (and bicycles)

The graph below illustrates the impact of the anti-social use of vehicles within the Restricted Area. For reference, cycles/skateboards occurrences have also been included in the summary, as the analysis indicated both youths and adults are choosing to use cycles inappropriately, as to travel from locations within the main shopping area of the High Street. Of note is the ‘Vehicle Alcohol’ recorded code, which illustrates the total number of drink driving occurrences within the reporting period for reference.



In relation to the requirement to provide identity in cases of ASB

6.0. Any person is to provide their name, address, and date of birth, to an Authorised Person if directed to do so, where the Authorised Person is of the opinion that the individual is:

(a) in breach of any of the prohibitions or requirements contained within this Order, or

(b) is behaving in a manner causing or likely to cause harassment, alarm, or distress, to any person within the Restricted Area.

6.1. A person commits an offence if, when subject to a requirement under paragraph 6.0., they fail to provide their details immediately. It is also an offence under this paragraph if the details supplied are proved to be false.

6.2. All requirements under Part 6 of this Order are not valid, if an Authorised Person is asked by the person subject to the requirement, to show evidence of their authorisation and they fail to do so.

The requirement above is required for the effective and proper implementation of this PSPO, as to combat and process ASB incidents & breaches in a timely and efficient manner. The details which an officer will demand using this requirement will ensure the Council and Cleveland Police can streamline enforcement, given that such personal details are needed for any prosecution. The need to know an offender's details is a fundamental requirement for effective enforcement. As Superintendent O'Donoghue writes in his supporting statement/evidence for the draft proposal: "[The] provision supports investigations, ensures accountability, and enables repeat offenders to be identified and dealt with appropriately."

In relation to the requirement to leave the Restricted Area when asked

7.0. Any person is to leave the Restricted Area immediately, if directed to do so by an Authorised Person, and not return for a period not exceeding 24 hours, unless for a lawful reason or with reasonable excuse, where the Authorised Person is of the opinion that the individual is:

(a) in breach of any of the prohibitions or requirements contained within this Order, or

(b) is behaving in a manner causing or likely to cause harassment, alarm, or distress, to any person within the Restricted Area.

This important and crucial power/requirement, hailed by local authorities nationally as a 'game changer,' is a must for the Council & Cleveland Police, as to bring about immediate order and relief to High Street businesses suffering from ASB. This dispersal or 'direction to leave' requirement is a flexible power which we'll be able to apply in a range of situations to disperse anti-social individuals and provide immediate short-term respite to the local community and High Street businesses. The power is preventative, allowing an officer to deal quickly with someone's behaviour and deal with the problem before it escalates – for example; we could be dispersing persons who may have gone on to commit shoplifting offences or other such serious offences, had we not intervened early on. This power empowers officers to proactively 'nip issues in the bud.'

Written & prepared by

Dawn Tyerman, Public Protection Development Officer

Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council

Edited by

Adam Bateman, Problem Solving & Partnerships Officer

Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council

Dunedin House
Columbia Drive
Thornaby
Stockton-on-Tees
TS17 6BJ

01642 524457
Email: tracy.hyman@stockton.gov.uk

Date: 01/12/2025

Adam Bateman,
16, Church Road,
Stockton-on-Tees,
TS18 1TU

Dear Adam Bateman,

We, the Public Health Team, confirm that we have been consulted on the revised Public Space Protection Order (PSPO).

The revision of the PSPO aligns with our current work in the Complex Lives workstream and the Street Drinking Project. Stockton Town Centre is undergoing significant regeneration to become a safer, more inclusive space for all. There are complex challenges, including persistent street drinking and associated anti-social behaviour with a small visible cohort of fewer than 30 individuals. These individuals are not only service users but also residents of the town centre, many facing severe disadvantage including homelessness, addiction, and social exclusion.

A compassionate, multi-disciplinary approach is needed to address this complex issue, of which the PSPO is one part.

We are pleased to see that:

- Service providers have been consulted on the boundaries of the PSPO area, and have had the chance to influence this, whilst ensuring that current and potential service users can access the service.
- Partner organisations are willing to provide and support safe spaces, which will be promoted as part of the implementation of the PSPO

We are confident that the combined implementation of the PSPO, alongside the implementation of the Statement of Licensing Policy (SOLP) and the provision and development of safe spaces, will contribute to a welcoming town centre for all, whilst supporting recovery for those who need it.

Yours faithfully,

Tracy Hyman
Public Health Practitioner



Stockton-on-Tees
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Adults and Health

Environmental Health

www.stockton.gov.uk

PO Box 232, 16 Church Road, Stockton-on-Tees TS18 1XD

Tel: (01642) 393939 · Fax (01642) 524743

My Ref:
Your Ref:
Please ask for: Mr M Berry
Tel: 01642 526552
Email: Mark.Berry@stockton.gov.uk

21st October 2025

Introduction

I am a qualified Environmental Health Officer and one of the Team Manager's within the Environmental Health Department. I have been qualified for 36 years and have managed the Public Nuisance, Animal Welfare, Pest Control and Animal Health teams for over 20 years. The animal welfare team deals specifically with companion animal welfare including the council's statutory responsibility for stray dogs. The team deal with a whole host of complaints with regards to irresponsible ownership of dogs, from straying, welfare, dog attacks, noise and fouling issues

During my management of the animal welfare service I have been involved in national policy formulation working on national panels with DEFRA colleagues to help write and produce specific guidance documents for local authority enforcement officers in relation to various dog related subjects, including microchipping, dangerous dog enforcers roles and the recently introduced licensing of activities involving animals. I have also given evidence at a parliamentary select committee on the review of dangerous dog legislation on behalf of the LGA

Rationale for Support

The development of the urban park, as part of the on-gong transformation of Stockton High Street, will inevitably change the use of the high street and surrounding area from a traditional retail area to one which is intended to attract adults and children for leisure and social activities. With the outdoor space being designated as an urban park, and its direct links to the river and other open areas it will inevitably see an increase in dog owners bringing their dogs with them into this multi-use space.

As seen by the service and supported by the number of service requests for other areas of the borough that are popular sites used by dog owners, this is likely to bring about an increase in dog related incidents by irresponsible dog owners within the urban park. This will potentially spoil the enjoyment of the space from uncontrolled off-lead dogs causing issues to other users, to more serious dog-related attacks on people or other animals.

Implementing the PSPO and balancing the wider community's needs against those using the space and causing anti-social behaviour is likely to have a positive impact across all equality groups. The legitimate

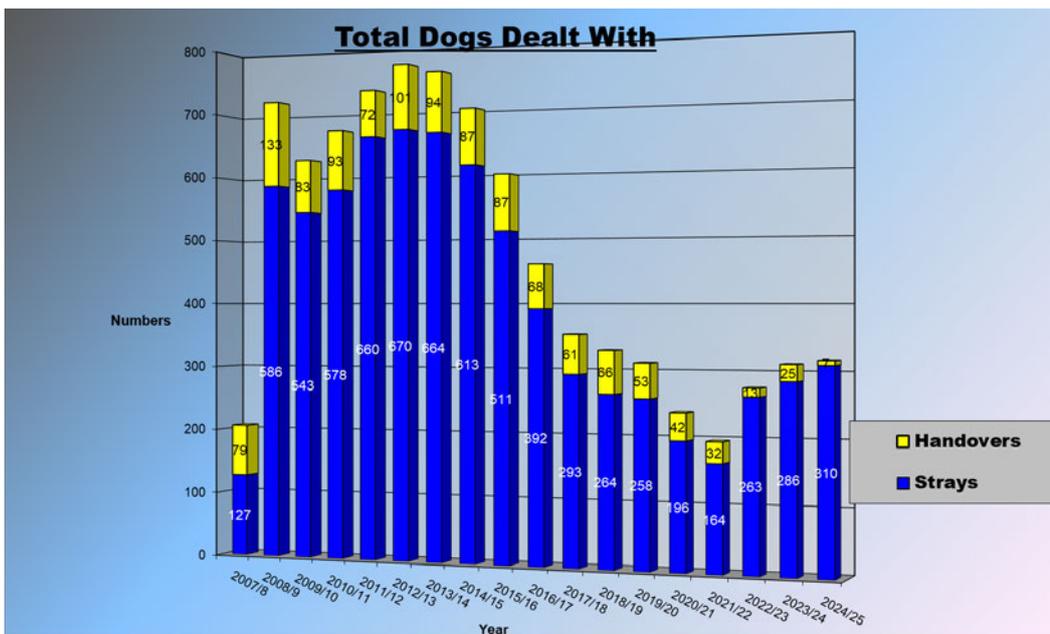
aims of the PSPO are to ensure that people are free to use this public space free from anti-social behaviour. This will contribute to the health and well-being of citizens in an urban environment.

The dogs on lead and dog fouling requirement for owners to clean up forthwith after their dog within the designated area will help eliminate dog related anti-social behaviour and allow authorised officers to deal directly with those dog owners that do not comply with the requirements. As seen by the service and supported by the number of service requests for other areas of the borough that are popular sites used by dog owners, this is likely to bring about an increase in dog related incidents by irresponsible dog owners within the urban park. This will potentially spoil the enjoyment of the space from uncontrolled off-lead dogs causing issues to other users, to more serious dog-related attacks on people or other animals.

Evidence of Need

Below are statistics in relation to complaints that the animal welfare service has received concerning fouling and dog related attacks on people and or animals

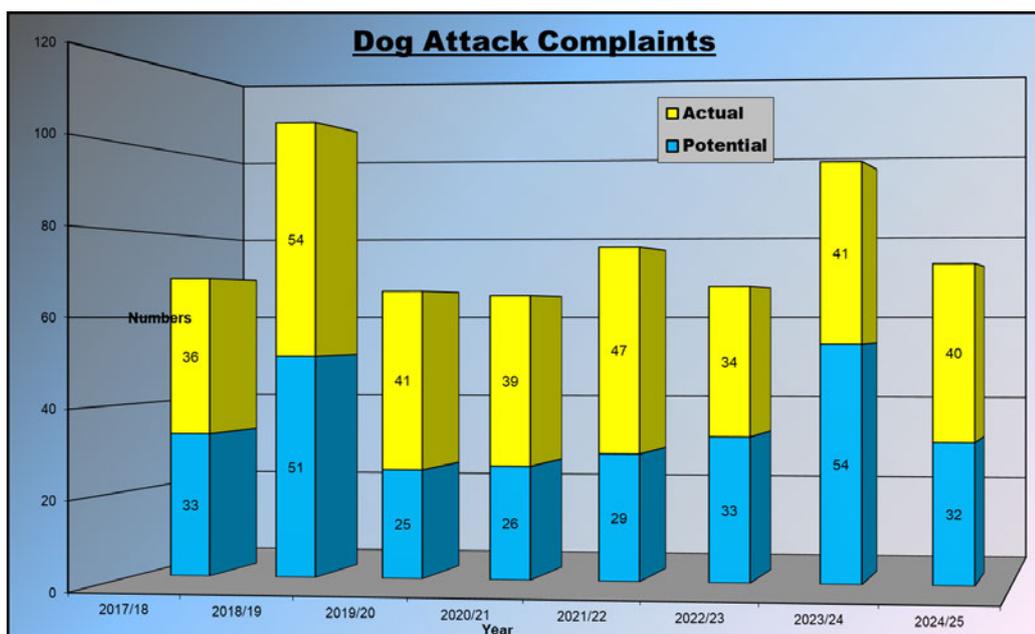
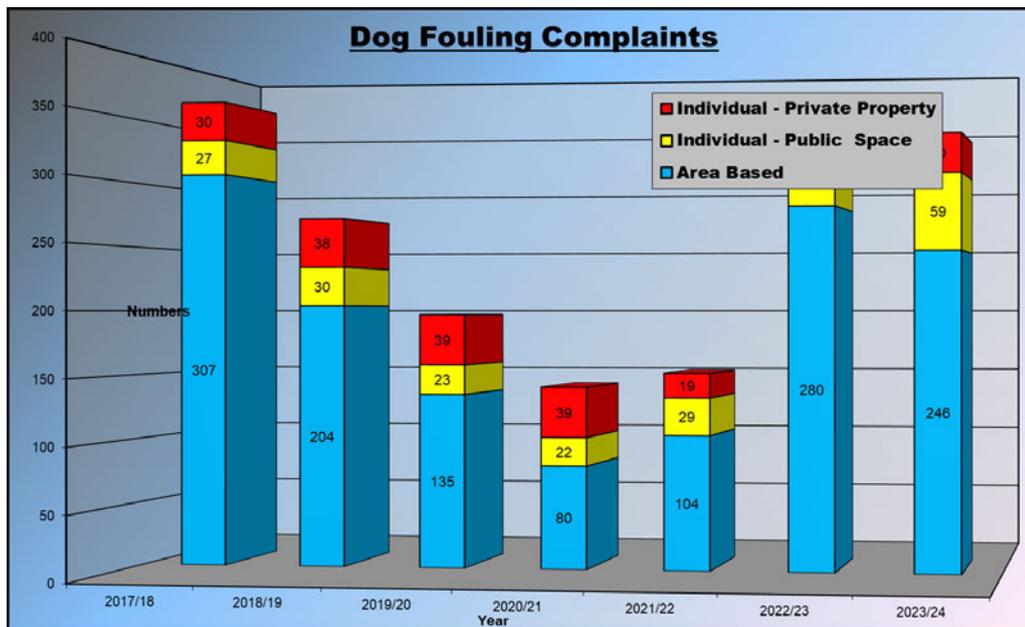
Dog related complaints and statistics surrounding issues such as stray dog numbers, dog fouling and dog aggression have been influenced following Covid and the associated lockdowns that accompanied it. The overriding consequence of the lockdown periods saw a significant increase in people deciding to acquire a dog during this period, quite often people that hadn't been dog owners previously. Due to the circumstances of the lockdown period these new dogs were not appropriately socialised or trained and consequently the animal welfare service has seen an increase in dogs with various behavioural issues in the proceeding years. As such, since 2021, coming out of lockdown and compounded by the cost-of-living crisis, we have seen a sharp reverse in the the number of stray dogs (unwanted dogs) dealt with. This is in stark comparison to the continued reduction in dog numbers over the previous ten years due to all the proactive work undertaken by ourselves and other stakeholders .



Consequently, the whole stray dog and rehoming sector throughout the country has been at bursting point for the last two years, compounded by the fact that several of the major animal charities that support local authorities have had to drastically reduce their input due to lack of resources.

In line with the above, the service has seen an increase in dog-fouling complaints over the last few years as well as a consistent level, and at times more serious incidents with regards to dog aggression-based complaints.

Anecdotally this is in part due to a culmination of several factors i.e., new first time dog owners, lack of appropriate socialisation of dogs and the behavioral issues this has led to, lack of recall training and basic control commands, a lack of knowledge and ignorance around the legal responsibilities a dog owner must comply with



Legal Justification

The proposed condition satisfies the legal tests outlined in the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 in that:

- **Detrimental Effect:** Activities involving off-lead dogs and dog fouling have had, and are likely to continue having, a detrimental effect on the quality of life of those in the borough and specifically the new urban park.
- **Persistent and Unreasonable:** These effects are persistent, unreasonable, and justify the restrictions imposed.
- **Proportionality:** The requirement is reasonable and proportionate to prevent recurrence, reduce risk and allow all users of the open space to enjoy it safely

Operational Benefits

From a day-to-day service perspective, it will allow all duly authorised officers to speak with dog owners to address dog off lead and dog fouling related incidents as they happen, and have the appropriate powers to address this behaviour in line with the councils agreed enforcement concordat

Conclusion

The introduction of “dogs on leads” and “dog fouling” conditions is a necessary and justifiable addition to the PSPO and will enable enforcement of responsible dog ownership within the urban park. and prevent dogs being a potential risk to other site users.

The addition of both requirements is recommended to enable we can provide safe parks and open spaces and prevent dogs being a potential risk to other site users


Mr M Berry
Env Health Team Manager (Public Nuisance, Animal Welfare, Pest Control & Animal Health)

My ref: PSPO 2026 Consultation – STC
Your ref: Homelessness & Housing Consultation –
PSPO 2026 STC

Dunedin House
Columbia Drive
Thornaby
Stockton-on-Tees
TS17 6BJ
01642 528670
Julie.Lathan@stockton.gov.uk
26th November 2025

FAO Adam Bateman
Problem Solving & Partnerships Officer
Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council

By Email:
Adam.bateman@stockton.gov.uk

Dear Adam,

Consultation Response – PSPO 2026 Stockton Town Centre

Thankyou for taking the time to consult the homeless service on this draft PSPO. We fully support all the proposals in the draft Stockton PSPO, especially in relation to “Part 3: Begging,” as our frontline staff often observe beggars presenting to the residents of Stockton, that they are “homeless” when they actually aren’t, and my service has housed them. Our staff note that begging continues to be a persistent issue in and around Stockton Town Centre, especially along the High Street and outside major retailers like Lidl and Cooplans. I also note that issues relating to street drinking, loitering whilst being drunk & disorderly or whilst taking drugs, is a persistent and serious issue, which I’m aware the public call the enforcement service about frequently. I’m especially aware of issues surrounding clusters of tents being linked to drug use & supply in *Trinity Gardens*, causing anti-social behaviour (ASB) for the nearby residents.

Another key comment I want to make about the proposed Stockton Town Centre PSPO relates to “Part 7,” specifically the bit about tents and temporary structures. I totally appreciate that the clusters of tents observed this year in places like *Trinity Gardens*, attracted significant ASB and criminality, so I understand why this has been included, however, I think it should be made really clear that this condition isn’t just a punitive enforcement tool. Moreover, enforcement staff tasked with enforcing the Order should employ ‘joint-visits’ with my frontline homeless outreach officers in relation to “Part 7” of the draft. In doing this, we can utilise the condition in a supportive manner, whilst preventing ASB and crime. During these visits, we could encourage people to engage with support & recovery services, and ourselves, to get them housed, if the driver for the breach of PSPO, is because that person is street homeless for instance. I think it’s important that before we look at enforcement and court proceedings, we clearly document what support has been offered beforehand and any actions taken. Having raised this argument in person during the consultation over the draft on 20/11/2025, I am confident any fears of mine can be allayed, and consequently, I give my full support to the draft Order, and look forward to playing a part in the accompanying implementation phase, to actualise my above points.

In conclusion, the activities of street drinking, begging, loitering and causing ASB, ASB driving of vehicles like e-bikes and off-road bikes – which I'm aware were linked to drug use & supply occurring within encampments (clusters of tents) in *Trinity Gardens* in the Summer – all take place in Stockton Town Centre. I'm also aware that such activities cause great concern for residents of the Borough, and have been long standing matters.

Yours faithfully,

Julie Lathan; Service Lead Homelessness, Lettings & Nom, Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council

My ref: PSPO 2026 Consultation – STC
Your ref: Licensing Consultation – PSPO 2026 STC

Dunedin House
Columbia Drive
Thornaby
Stockton-on-Tees
TS17 6BJ
01642 526566
Leanne.Maloney-Kelly@stockton.gov.uk
18th November 2025

FAO Adam Bateman
Problem Solving & Partnerships Officer
Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council

By Email:
Adam.bateman@stockton.gov.uk

Dear Adam,

Consultation Response – PSPO 2026 Stockton Town Centre

The licensing team at Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council (SBC) support the proposal to prohibit the consumption of alcohol within the PSPO area, as the proposal replicates the licensing objectives of:

- the prevention of crime and disorder,
- public safety,
- prevention of public nuisance, and;
- protection of children from harm.

The proposal also supports the ongoing collaboration between SBC Licensing, SBC Community Safety, and Cleveland Police, and ensures a joined-up approach to reducing alcohol-related harm to individuals and the wider community.

For clarity, alcohol prohibitions under a PSPO do not apply to alcohol authorised by a premises licence or temporary event notification and orders are not designed to interfere with the licence conditions. However, consuming alcohol beyond the legal boundary or outside the days/times of the authorisation would mean that the order and associated powers apply.

This allows local authorities to support business and promote community events while still using a PSPO to tackle the problems of anti-social drinking.

The licensing authority also expects licensed premises which operate in areas where a PSPO has been implemented to have measures in place to ensure their customers do not contribute to activities which have or may have a detrimental effect on the quality of life of those in the locality.

Yours faithfully,
Leanne Maloney-Kelly; Team Leader – Licensing, Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council

My ref: PSPO 2026 Consultation – STC
Your ref: Selective Licensing Consultation – PSPO
2026 STC

Dunedin House
Columbia Drive
Thornaby
Stockton-on-Tees
TS17 6BJ
01642 528503
Chris.Dunwell@stockton.gov.uk
27th November 2025

FAO Adam Bateman
Problem Solving & Partnerships Officer
Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council

By Email:
Adam.bateman@stockton.gov.uk

Dear Adam,

Consultation Response – PSPO 2026 Stockton Town Centre

First of all, thanks for consulting with myself and my staff on the above matter. I can confirm that I was consulted on the proposals on 25/11/25, and that, on behalf of the Selective Licensing team at Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council (SBC), I support all the proposals in the draft PSPO.

The proposals to combat anti-social behaviour (ASB) caused by street drinking, begging, loitering & intimidating/threatening behaviour, ASB vehicular use, unauthorised encampments, and urinating/defecating, are especially relevant right now, as it's clear that all these activities occur in the town, and are having a detrimental impact on the locality. To my mind, these prohibitions and the well-intentioned draft, replicate the core principles of the Selective Licensing (SL) Scheme.

The SL scheme operates in 'Central Stockton,' with many of our landlords and tenants visiting/being active in the proposed PSPO zone. Note though, that the SL scheme does not overlap into that area, we just border it.

The reason why SL was introduced in Central Stockton was because SBC was satisfied that the area had at least one of the following issues:

- low [housing] demand,
- significant or persistent problems caused by anti-social behaviour,
- poor housing condition,
- significant occupation of properties by migrants,
- high levels of deprivation, and;
- high levels of crime.

The guiding principle of SL is therefore to help the multi-agency response to addressing such issues. We do this alongside partners such as SBC Community Safety – who drafted the proposals, and who we work closely with across the Borough – and Cleveland Police. I believe the

proposals replicate our work to address the core matters of: (i) 'significant or persistent problems caused by anti-social behaviour' and (ii) 'high levels of crime.'

With regards to Operation Shield (a multi-agency safety initiative in Stockton Town Centre), our officers work closely with SBC Community Safety and Cleveland Police on this, conducting property inspections and visual audits in the SL area, which literally borders the PSPO zone, most notably along the boundary of *Trinity Gardens*. The SL area does overlap the Op. Shield operational area of targeted activity though. And for this reason, my staff operate in Stockton Town Centre frequently; every week, etc..

The team have reported back to me, and also expressed verbally during the consultation, that they continue to observe street drinking, begging, persons under the influence of drugs or alcohol congregating in large groups shouting, swearing, and being intimidating, etc., on most occasions in the town centre. They state that the activity does cause them concern for their own safety, but also report back that the people we work with under the scheme, report it also. Moreover, I believe the well-intentioned draft proposals which I have seen, seek to combat these long-standing issues, which our residents – the people my staff talk to every day as part of SL – want the Council to address decisively.

I also fully support conditions to restrict the driving of vehicles in a manner which causes ASB, but during the consultation, I did raise, from the perspective of a concerned Stockton resident, the argument to include bicycles in there too. Bicycles riding furiously, narrowly missing people at speed, in a busy town centre, is a genuine problem I see frequently when I'm in town, and I'd like there to be consideration over that also. I also suggested during the in-person consultation, a great opportunity for SL and SBC Community Safety to further collaborate on Op. Shield. I suggest that those who are identified via 'Part 10' of the draft PSPO, as being in breach of the PSPO, are referred to SL, where appropriate. The SL team can look at ASB interventions unto perpetrators, even if they don't perpetrate in the SL area (as long as they live in an SL covered property). There may be potential successes here, by utilising our housing/accommodation angle, to apply pressure, diversionary schemes or interventions, on PSPO offenders which SBC Community Safety identify. I trust that this suggestion will be included in any accompanying implementation/strategy document. And finally, I want to note my only concern, relating to the direction to leave (DtL)/dispersal parts of the draft Order. While I acknowledge (and support) the emphasis on protecting the town centre through the imposition of immediate remedies unto ASB offenders, such as the issuing of DtLs, I just want to note my concern that this may inadvertently move offenders into residential areas just outside the PSPO zone, and consequently, into the SL scheme area. To mitigate against this, and any adverse impacts associated, the team and I will, in the run up & just after implementation, do some intense work with those clients in the scheme, on the periphery of the PSPO zone. This work will focus on target hardening our service users.

In conclusion, the proposed draft Order supports the ongoing collaboration between SBC Selective Licensing, SBC Community Safety, and Cleveland Police, among other Op. Shield partners, and ensures a joined-up approach to reducing ASB and criminality in the town centre environment.

Yours faithfully,

Chris Dunwell; Team Leader – Selective Licensing, Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council

My ref: JJO/PSPO26/STC
Your ref: PSPO 2026 STC

Dunedin House
Columbia Drive
Thornaby
Stockton-on-Tees
TS17 6BJ

01642 526528
Jimmy.jones@stockton.gov.uk

11 November 2025

FAO Adam Bateman
Problem Solving & Partnerships Officer
Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council

By Email:
Adam.bateman@stockton.gov.uk

Dear Adam,

Consultation Response – PSPO 2026 Stockton Town Centre

I am employed by Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council as the Trading Standards Manager, a position I have held since April 2017. Given my position, I can confirm that the Trading Standards Section is supportive of the updated PSPO proposed for the Stockton Town Centre area.

The new proposed PSPO supports the broad principles and objectives of the Trading Standards Service in its desire to protect residents and businesses, to create a safe and welcoming environment and to improve public safety. The PSPO will also have a positive impact on the experience of my officers, in terms of making them feel safer and more secure when working within Stockton Town Centre.

It is clear to me that the activities prohibited by the PSPO have taken place in the past and, without intervention, are likely to continue and persist, and have a detrimental effect on the quality of life of those in the locality. In my opinion, this justifies the restrictions being imposed.

Yours faithfully,



Jimmy Jones
Trading Standards Manager

My ref: PSPO STC 2026 Consultation
Your ref: Regen PSPO STC 2026 Consultation

Dunedin House
Columbia Drive
Thornaby
Stockton-on-Tees
TS17 6BJ

Date: 05/12/2025

Dear Adam

I provide this representation as the Town Centre Manager for Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council, with responsibility for the operation of the outdoor general market on a Wednesday, Friday and Saturday. I also have responsibility to ensure our town centre is clean, tidy and welcoming to all who visit.

The town centre has benefited from high-quality public realm improvements including pedestrianised areas, modern street furniture, and a central water fountain that serves as a focal point for visitors. Enhanced lighting has improved alleyways, and dedicated spaces now accommodate events, markets, and cultural activities.

In addition, the Stockton Waterfront scheme is transforming the area into an urban park that reconnects the High Street with the River Tees. This flagship project, part of the Council's 25-year regeneration plan, aims to deliver vibrant mixed-use spaces, boost footfall, and support local businesses through play areas, gardens, flexible event spaces, and food trading opportunities.

To protect these investments, a stronger PSPO is essential. It will help maintain safe, welcoming spaces that encourage public confidence and attract visitors. The PSPO also underpins efforts to secure private-sector investment in retail, hospitality, residential, and leisure developments, ensuring the Town Centre remains an attractive destination for businesses and the community.

Securing private-sector investment and additional funding remains a challenge. Implementing a robust and enhanced Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) will be instrumental in strengthening investor confidence and supporting productive discussions with key stakeholders.

With this in mind, I have firsthand experience of dealing with and understanding the impact that anti-social behaviour (ASB) has on our town and markets, and the detrimental impact that it has on the wider perception of our town centre. Because of the negativity and poor perception of Stockton town centre, I dedicated my degree into how we can change people's perception through strong collaboration and communication.

As part of my role, I chair several group meetings which include:

- Town Centre Stakeholder Group
- Town Centre Operational Coordination Group
- Town Centre Regulatory Group
- Young Persons Focus Group
- Town Centre Animation and Activities Group

I also attend other group meetings specific to the town centre which include:

- Operation Shield Strategic Group
- Event Programme Group
- Wellington Square Retailers Meeting

At these meetings, ASB is a standing agenda item, and discussions are focused on how stakeholders can work together collaboratively to look at intervention and prevention measures to help address this issue. This includes accessing support for people with substance issues who cause problems in our town, as well as looking at how reporting can be improved to deter those causing issues in our town centre.

There is an impact on staff who regularly experience ASB. Many of our staff, including me personally, have either been threatened by local people under the influence of alcohol/substances or have been approached by beggars asking for money. Several members of the town centre cleansing team have had issues with intimidating behaviour, especially on early morning, which creates issues with lone working as staff don't always feel safe in the town.

The current PSPO hasn't had the desired impact and through my experience and what I have witnessed personally, I strongly believe we need a stronger version to really be able to manage the issues I have listed below. The biggest issue and challenge I witness is having the appropriate powers as an organisation to deal with the issues and challenges we face daily, which is creating negativity and giving Stockton a poor reputation locally.

The below examples set out my experience of working in Stockton and why we need a stronger PSPO that gives our Enforcement officers and the Police, the powers to deter and remove those who cause problems in Stockton Town Centre.

1. I have regularly observed issues that stem from alcohol consumption, and this occurs from as early as 6am in the town centre, particularly around the markets and the fountain. There have been many occasions where large groups of people have been drinking around the fountain area, with high strength alcoholic drink containers and these people can be loud, rude and often swear a lot, fight with each other and through engagement and discussion with traders, businesses and the public, I have been made aware that they feel intimidated. I have witnessed people openly urinating around the fountain area and in business doorways, such as Furniture Express, Costa Coffee and surrounding alleyways, which means that I have to get our town centre cleansing operatives to clean these areas regularly.

There are also issues caused with littering and the town centre cleansing team are regularly having to remove rubbish from the flower beds at the fountain, which are full of discarded alcohol tins and bottles. There is the perception that this drinking, shouting, swearing and other alcohol related ASB is poor, and this undoubtedly stops people from visiting town. I regularly report these issues through the Security and Surveillance Centre with my calls being logged.

2. I witness occurrences of begging regularly in Stockton Town Centre with varying levels of aggressiveness. This begging often takes place in high profile central areas such as outside Cooplands, F. Hinds Jewellers and Halifax. I have had complaints directed to me personally from staff from these businesses, and I signpost them to our security and surveillance team as well as reporting myself. Some of the beggars are aggressive and are intimidating to customers of these businesses and to general passersby. I have personally witnessed an elderly lady crying after being targeted by a beggar walking past Cooplands who had went onto a market stall for help by one of the traders as she was traumatised.

I often see and report begging on the market early in the morning which I report. Again, these can vary in how aggressive a person can be. I have personally witnessed two males who are aggressive and walk into market catering gazebos and target elderly people. This is very

off-putting from customers and market traders and does lead to people stopping from visiting the markets.

3. Loitering is an issue in Stockton Town Centre and something that I feel really needs tackling. There are many areas where I see loitering which can range from 2 or 3 people to groups of 15. I have witnessed this and report this regularly. The fountain area is probably the most high-profile area where groups of people loiter. They may not be drinking on view, with drinks often concealed. However, they can be loud, rude, aggressive, swear a lot. I have witnessed and reported people consume drugs in broad daylight. They have done this in front of watching public including children and elderly people. Again, this is something I have witnessed and reported. This regularly gets promoted negatively on local social media channels and may stop people from visiting our Town Centre. Other locations are the doorways of Halifax, former Shoe Zone, The George Pub and the southern Shambles entrance. This can be extremely intimidating to people who work or run businesses in Stockton. I have witnessed and reported this on many occasions and observed shouting, swearing, fighting, spitting, urinating, people having sex in public, openly taking drugs and threatening passersby. Other issues with groups loitering comes on public realm seating and benches. I have witnessed and reported issues on benches outside The George Pub, Betfred and William Hill. This would involve large groups, loitering around the benches and causing ASB, as reported above. I have been involved in the removal of all three benches because the issues had become so bad and constant. Having a lasting and negative impact on those who have businesses or work in these locations.
4. The use of anti-social vehicles is most certainly on the rise, and I witness and report this when I see it. There have been incidents around the fountain where vehicles have churned up the grass areas. Motorbikes regularly go through the High Street and market on a Saturday, speeding and causing big safety concerns. Other more minor issues would see people riding bikes through the town centre and packed market aisles. This can lead to safety concerns from the public and market traders and actually lead to a large brawl one Wednesday on the market which was shared widely on social media and had a big detrimental impact on our town centre.
5. Urinating in the street is a big issue in Stockton and one which costs the authority money in terms of the cleaning resource it takes to keep on top of the issues. The alley from High Street to Green Dragon Yard, Finkle Street near Remember Me Tea Rooms, Ship in Yard and the area between the Arc and former Storytellers bar are affected by urinating extremely bad. We must jet wash and sanitise these areas at least once a week, sometimes two or three times.

The SBC cleansing staff are tasked with cleaning and sanitising these areas with specialised anti-urine detergent. I have also had to paint the walls with anti-urine splash paint to try and curb the issues, to no avail. I have regular complaints sent by the Arc manager, with people openly urinating in front of Arc customers and it really has a negative impact from them. I have personally witnessed and reported people urinating/defecating around the fountain, fountain flower beds, Costa coffee doorway, Furniture Express doorway, in several bus stops and to the rear of Wellington Square. This is done in public and reported. This also has a huge negative impact, especially if you witness it or have to put up with the repugnant smell when visiting locations or going to work.

Our town centre cleansing staff have had to clean up human excrement from fountain flower beds, shop frontages, bus stops on many occasions the alleyways off the High Street and from areas where people have erected tents and structures.

6. There are issues that we have faced and had to deal with on many occasions with people sleeping rough in doorways, putting tents out or similar type structures. This is something all

our Town centre team would report regularly, and we would do this to security and surveillance and homeless teams, to get the support out there in the first instance to those who need it. The big issues that we face is the discarded needles and drug paraphernalia that usually comes when tents or structures are put up. There are also other litter and detritus left around the areas and the people use the area as a toilet and we have had lots of reported instances of urinating and defecating in public areas. Locations that I have reported would be, Veterans at Ease shop, The Goerge pub, Gilly's Amusements, Winpenny House, North end Costa Coffee, Furniture Express, Parish Gardens, under the bridge on Calverts Lane, steps leading to Flats at end of Finkle Street and the bushes on Riverside, opposite Riverside lounge. This is a burden on resources because we must continuously clean the areas up, bring in bin wagons or other cleansing vehicles to remove and dispose of tents and structures as well as all the other waste that's left behind.

7. Dogs fouling is also an issue in Town. I regularly note dog fouling and report to the town centre cleansing operatives who must go and clean this up. This is an issue with traders having to set up around areas where dogs have fouled but it also creates that negative perception when people see it before we get to clean it up.
8. An issue I see and report a lot, is continuous problems caused by the same people, on a particular day who are causing ASB through consumption of alcohol and/or under the influence of drugs. I report a person or group causing problems, Enforcement would be tasked with a job, they move them on, but they would go to another place, near to where they were moved. I would then report again, or another person or business, the Arc for example, would have to report the issue, the Enforcement would then have to go and moved the person or group on again and it just causes problems. Locations would be the fountain area, the Arc, the wall of car park opposite the Arc, the flower beds opposite the arc, the benches on Calverts Lane, the front of Shambles and the Parish Gardens. This is not only a good look for the Town, does not help with the perception of the town, but is a drain on resources and deflating for those that must deal with the issues and impacts on motivation. Criticism on local social media outlets only fan the flames from something that is not currently within our control, and I believe that having an instruction to leave the PSPO area would help massively with this.

Yours faithfully,

the team at Regeneration & Inclusive Growth; Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council



Stockton Town Centre PSPO 2026-2029 Consultation: Letter of Support

Introduction

As Centre Manager of Wellington Square Shopping Centre, Stockton Town Centre, I write here to express my full support for the proposed Stockton Town Centre Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) 2026, which seeks to address the types of persistent anti-social behaviour (ASB) affecting the safety, cleanliness, and overall experience of our town centre, including at my shopping mall. I can confirm that, through our partnership work with Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council's (SBC) *Operation Shield* community safety initiative, I was approached in November 2025 by SBC Community Safety, to consult on the draft proposals of a new order, as a representative of the land to which the order would apply too (e.g. Wellington Sq.), the management company of such land, namely Knight Frank Promise, and of the staff of Wellington Square, including those who maintain the operational integrity of the site, and of the businesses who I call tenants.

For many years now, our shopping centre has been significantly and negatively impacted by many of the behaviours prohibited in the proposed draft order. These issues not only affect our staff and tenants, but also deter customers and damage the reputation of Stockton Town Centre, as a safe and welcoming place to visit. I therefore welcome the introduction of this PSPO, and offer the below comments in support of each part. I am conscious of the legality and restrictiveness of PSPOs, having been involved – albeit in a lesser capacity – in the previous order, covering the area. I'm aware that the 2023 order looks to curtail (i) street drinking when the act is associated with (other elements of) ASB, and (ii) aggressive begging. I am aware that the thresholds of these acts are fairly high in comparison with other PSPOs found in the shopping/commercial areas of other town and city centres across the country. I absolutely understand and support the need to lower such thresholds this time around, and to utilise a PSPO as effectively as legislation allows for. Moreover, I'm fully aware, again from past knowledge, that to justify the restrictions of this strengthened proposed order, the Council – and to an extent, those like myself who support such strengthening – must be able to evidence that such behaviours have had, or are likely to have, a detrimental effect on the quality of life for those in the locality, and that such activities have been persistent and are unreasonable. Consequently, in supporting the draft order, I am definitively stating that such activities endorsed in this letter pass such legal tests from my perspective.

On Part 2: Alcohol Consumption

Street drinking is a regular issue in Wellington Sq., outside our entrances – such as at the fountain area, Dovecot Street, on the Café Nero chairs etc. – and in surrounding public spaces in Stockton Town Centre. I note though, that we have seen an improvement in street drinking

since the Council introduced the *Reducing the Strength* (RTS) Scheme in Autumn '25, but we still experience this very longstanding issue, albeit at a reduced rate, most days, every week. Indeed, that's as much a reason to support the order in itself, so that the Council may employ any and all methods (e.g. RTS and PSPO) to curb this intimidating activity. In my experience, street drinking often leads to threatening or aggressive behaviour, littering, and a disruption to trade; it puts our customers off from shopping here if they know it's plagued with street drinkers shouting and swearing, being intimidating. Families with children and the elderly especially don't need to see that, and I am sure it puts them off shopping here. I know from my visits with SCB Licensing and SBC Community Safety whilst promoting the RTS Scheme, that traders and shop staff feel the same way – there is definitely a serious concern that congregations of street drinkers, something Wellington Sq. sees aplenty, puts off well mannered & law-abiding customers, causing there to be detrimental impact on business.

Moreover, a clear prohibition, with powers to confiscate alcohol, will help reduce these incidents and support a safer environment for shoppers and staff. One of my previous concerns was that the message on street drinking wasn't clear enough – I think the wording of the proposed draft resolves that completely.

To evidence our support of this condition I have looked back through our daily occurrence book for the month of October 2025. In terms of logs where we have observed a person entering the site street drinking or in an obvious state of drunkenness, we calculate that this occurred 8 times a day on average, with a monthly total of 229 occurrences (for October alone). Of those occurrences, 29% also involved that person shoplifting on the mall.

On Part 3: Begging

Begging, despite the best efforts of our Wellington Sq. operational staff and guards, is still, sadly in 2025, a persistent problem frustrating our tenants. It is known to occur in the town centre outside *Cooplands*, which is near to our site entrance on Dovecot St., but also near and around cash machines. It can cause distress to customers and staff, particularly when it is persistent or aggressive, although, having said that – and notwithstanding the begging we see with people loitering on the mall walkway itself – I have recently been dealing with a repeat issue of a street drinker, who happens to busk and beg, sitting outside one of our tenants' establishments. This beggar, sitting on the floor, near enough every day or most days every week, blocks a key window of establishment, with a window advertisement, causing the shop staff harassment, alarm, and distress, not to mention the business case of the person blocking that prime advertisement spot. At a time when High Streets are struggling with all sorts of factors, we collectively need to be doing everything we can to support and shield them from the adverse impacts of ASB and criminality. Furthermore, the strengthened and simplified wording in this order, compared to the higher threshold (of begging) in the previous version, makes it easier for enforcement officers to intervene, and ensures that all forms of begging that cause alarm are addressed.

To evidence our support of this condition I have looked back through our daily occurrence book for the month of October 2025. In terms of logs where we have observed a person entering the site – where it's my staff's belief – that they are sitting on the mall, or at a car park pay station, with the sole intention of asking people for money or people roaming the centre approaching people with the sole intention of asking customers for money, we calculate a daily average of 3 occurrences of this, with 19 instances of people sitting on the mall & begging, and 79 instances of them roaming & begging (total begging incidents for October 2025 are therefore: 98) – 8 of

those were deemed by my staff to be instances of ‘aggressive begging.’ This doesn’t include the beggar on Dovecot St., as that isn’t on-site.

On Part 4: ASB-Related Loitering

Loitering in doorways has been a particularly difficult issue in Stockton Town Centre this year – one nearby example on the High Street was frequently raised in online negative commentary on the ‘decline of the High Street,’ with people refusing to move from obstructing a commercial premises’ doorway, refusing support, help, housing, etc., but lying down drinking, smoking, with bottles of suspected urine alongside them – indeed, what powers do our enforcement colleagues have to deal with that right now? It’s tough – so I can see why this condition has been included in the draft proposal. Elsewhere, on the mall itself, of course we have people loitering, being intoxicated, swearing, being suspicious, planning shop thefts, following people, making staff feel uncomfortable, etc.. These acts create an unwelcoming and unsafe atmosphere. This condition will be vital in helping us maintain safe and accessible entry points to our premises too, an issue which I have personally seen crop up regularly, if not front of house, then at the back, more sensitive areas of the site (hidden from natural surveillance and public view, etc.).

To evidence our support of this condition I have looked back through our daily occurrence book for the month of October 2025. This is a very difficult condition to statistically quantify, given the way our staff record incidents – I know this activity happens multiple times daily, as I detail above, but in terms of statistical support of that claim, having looked through the book, and highlighted instances of people loitering in the car park, service areas – where it’s clear they are trying to avoid CCTV – I can only say that the daily average for this is 0.7 occurrences, with monthly instances being at 23. Again though, the way we record incidents plays a part in this data.

On Part 5: Anti-Social Use of Vehicles

Undoubtedly, over the past couple of years, we have seen a rise in the anti-social use of e-scooters and bikes in pedestrian areas, including inside the shopping centre itself. This behaviour poses a serious safety risk and undermines the family-friendly environment we strive to maintain. Enforcement powers under this condition are essential, especially if you look at e-bikes and e-scooters. At the moment, we speak over the tannoy and politely ask people to dismount, but it’s hard to enforce that ask, so it would be very welcome if our enforcement and police colleagues could be held accountable in the enforcement of such a health & safety issue. It would help us maintain safety and standards on the mall, and elevate a stronger message on the matter, especially when this is quite topical, as we have had some political and council interest on it, with public complaints, both recorded and unrecorded (online) about it too.

To evidence our support of this condition I have looked back through our daily occurrence book for the month of October 2025. In terms of logs where we have observed anybody entering site on an e-scooter, e-bike, scooter or motorbike, etc., that we have dealt with or have asked to dismount & push their vehicle, we have the below figures (accounting for October 2025 only):

- Scooter: 34 Occasions
- E-scooter: 155 occasions
- E-bikes: 124 occasions
- Motorbike: 2 Occasions

- Monthly total: 315 Occasions

On Part 6: Urinating and Defecating in the Street

Unfortunately, defecating & urinating has occurred in service areas and alleyways adjacent to the centre. It is unhygienic, distressing for staff, and costly to clean. Urinating in the nighttime economy context is also a big problem right now – our CCTV staff are regularly having to monitor evening trespassers – often drunk people on a night out – using our doorways on the main mall walkaway itself, to urinate, when they think no one’s looking. Including this behaviour in the PSPO gives us a stronger basis to report and address it, and hold the Council accountable to combat this issue.

To evidence our support of this condition I have looked back through our daily occurrence book for the month of October 2025. In terms of logs where we have observed anybody urinating or defecating on our relatively small site, we recorded the below level of occurrences for the month of October 2025 alone:

- Daily average: 0.4 occasions
- Urinating: 12 occasions
- Defecating: 1 occasion
- Monthly total: 13 occasions
- Where staff believed & noted that the offender was under the influence of drink or drugs at the time: 31% of occurrences

On Part 7: Tents etc.

We have experienced unauthorised encampments (by use of tents) in the past, and I do accept that this sometimes links to ASB and substance misuse, especially where the Council have tried and failed to get the people themselves to cooperate with housing or recovery support, etc.. More broadly though, I’m aware that this condition will help prevent the build-up of such structures and support a proactive approach to managing public spaces, especially in parks like the planned waterfront development, or the historic *Trinity Gardens*, which I know has suffered from this activity greatly this year. Note that I have checked the daily occurrence book for the month of October 2025 in relation to this activity, and found no such incidents for that month impacting upon us.

On Parts 8 & 9: Dog Control

Loose dogs/dogs off leads and dog fouling have been reported in and around the mall on occasion over the years. Concerning to me though recently, is that I’m aware of drunk street drinkers being in charge of dogs off leads too – should things go wrong between a member of the public and an out of control dog on the mall, we’d be looking at ways we could have proactively prevented that; PSPOs are such ways I believe. Although these aren’t issues we see all the time at Wellington Sq., but including such provisions will help ensure responsible pet ownership and improve cleanliness and safety for visitors, which we know is a genuine concern for other parties who have, or I’m sure will be, consulted with, on this draft order.

To evidence our support of this condition I have looked back through our daily occurrence book for the month of October 2025. In terms of logs where we have observed anybody entering site with a dog off lead/out of control, we have compiled the below statistics:

- Monthly total (October 2025 only): 6 occasions

On Part 10: Requirement to Provide Identity in cases of a breach to PSPO

Whilst not a condition I can pass much professional comment about, I do accept this condition appears to be a more modern and strong mechanism for ensuring effective enforcement, and I accept that conditions like this are used in other commercial areas where PSPOs are active nationally. I support this requirement being included as it will allow officers to identify repeat offenders and supports the escalation of enforcement where necessary. Indeed, a common criticism of the older order is that people didn't feel enough enforcement action was taken – so if this helps with that, then of course I support it.

On Part 11: Direction to Leave

This power is particularly important for managing individuals who are intoxicated or causing a disruption in town. I have shoplifters in mind. If we have SBC Enforcement on the mall but not police, and police are too busy elsewhere, we still need enforcement to feel empowered to deter shoplifting, and use the powers granted to them by legislation, such as PSPOs. Indeed, I can see how this particular power could be used by officers on the mall to reactively deal with an issue, or proactively deal with a street drinker. In proactive cases you could envisage an officer dispersing a person from the mall, and then monitoring compliance via patrols and CCTV, thus helping to deter and prevent any further shoplifting offences that day for instance – I can really see utility in that. Finally, I think it will allow for swift action to be taken, to de-escalate situations and protect the public, especially during busy trading hours.

Conclusion

In summary, the proposed 2026 PSPO for Stockton Town Centre appears to me, to be a modern, innovative, and effective tool for improving safety, cleanliness, and public confidence in Stockton Town Centre. I can see ways in which the order, its prohibitions, and importantly, its requirements, will support business, protect staff/customers, and help restore pride in our shared public spaces. I fully endorse its implementation and look forward to working with the Council, Cleveland Police, and other agencies, as a shared and valued member of the Operation Shield partnership, to ensure its success.

Yours sincerely,

Matt Boxall

Centre Manager; Knight Frank Promise

Wellington Square Shopping Centre, 21 Wellington St., Stockton Town Centre

My ref:
Your ref:

Dunedin House
Columbia Drive
Thornaby
Stockton-on-Tees
TS17 6BJ

01642 526289

Email: Chris.strong@Stockton.gov.uk

Date: 08/12/25

Dear Adam

RE: Public Spaces Protection Order (No.2) 2026 – Stockton Town Centre

Thank you for taking the time to consult with me regarding the proposed Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) for Stockton Town Centre.

Events play a major part in the role of activating Stockton Town Centre, providing high quality cultural engagement and experiences whilst enhancing and supporting the Town Centre offer.

The Council's Events Team works very closely with relevant stakeholders including, licensing, community safety and Cleveland Police, in the planning of events and through initiatives such as Operation Shield, to ensure that our event spaces are a safe environment for visitors.

There are, however, several recurring anti-social behaviour (ASB) issues which effect the safe delivery of events. These tend not to be directly related to the event itself but can consume the event specific resources, primarily medical and security staff, which reduces the planned welfare and safety resources for the event.

Examples of such issues include.

- The regular use of electric scooters which travel at great pace through the event space. These vehicles have no or very little sound, and therefore significantly increase the risk of collision with members of the public in densely populated areas.
- Attending to medical issues which are alcohol/substance misuse. At a recent event, a medical response vehicle was lost from the event resource for over 1 hour due to a recorded 'intoxicated male' who required hospital treatment and was taken to the nearest Hospital A&E.
- Significant resource having to be deployed each event day to areas such as Parish Gardens and Trinity Gardens/Church to sweep the area of drug paraphernalia, tents, and potential weapons.
- There have been instances, whereby small temporary structures such as tents have been either attached to event infrastructure, such as fencing, which cause a risk to the stability of the fencing, or pegs have penetrated the ground in areas which the Council have ground scanning protocols in place to avoid underground utility services.

The proposed PSPO (all parts) will support improve the safety of the delivery and experience of events in the Town Centre and therefore will be a positive approach.

With regards to 'Part 2: Prohibition in relation to alcohol consumption' of the order, there are circumstances where an event includes the sale and consumption of alcohol. When this occurs, it is delivered in accordance with the Council's Premises License (Number: 113946) and provided within a controlled area within the footprint of the event space. The delivery and management of controlled area is agreed as part of the planning process with local authority Licensing and Community Safety colleagues. Therefore, it is my view that the arrangements in place would class an 'exemption' in line with the proposed PSPO.

If you have any further questions or queries, then please do not hesitate to contact me on 01642 526 819.

Yours faithfully,



Chris Strong
Event Development and Production Manager

Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council

Public Spaces Protection Order (No.3) 2026 – Norton Town Centre

Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council ("the Council") in exercise of the power under Sections 59 and 72 of the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 ("the Act"), and all other enabling powers, hereby makes the following Order:-

Part 1: General

- 1.0 The land identified by the map at Appendix 1 ("the Restricted Area"), being land in the area of the Council, is land to which the Act applies and will be protected by this Public Spaces Protection Order ("the Order").
- 1.1 The Council is satisfied that the conditions set out in Section 59(2) of the Act have been met, and the activities covered by this Order have been carried out in a public place within the Council's area and have had a detrimental effect on the quality of life of those in the locality and that the effect, or likely effect, of the activities is, or is likely to be, of a persistent or continuing nature; is, or is likely to be, such as to make the activities unreasonable and justifies the restrictions imposed.
- 1.2 The Council is also satisfied that the conditions set out in Section 59(3) of the Act have been met. Namely, that the effect or likely effect of the activities is, or is likely to be, of a persistent or continuing nature and that these activities are unreasonable and justify the restrictions imposed by this Order, and that it is, in all the circumstances, expedient to make this Order for the purpose of reducing anti-social behaviour in a public place.
- 1.3 In making this Order we have had particular regard to the rights and freedoms of expression and freedom of assembly set out in Articles 10 and 11 of the European Convention on Human Rights.
- 1.4 The Order may be cited as the Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council Public Spaces Protection Order (No.3) 2026 – Norton Town Centre.
- 1.5 The Order shall come into force on 3rd April 2026 for the duration of three years, expiring at midnight on 2nd April 2029, unless varied, revoked, or extended pursuant to Section 60 of the Act.
- 1.6 Police Constables and Police Community Support Officers may also enforce the Order.
- 1.7 In this Order hereinafter, an "Authorised Person" means an 'authorised person' as defined under section 68(11) of the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 namely 'a *person authorised for the purposes of this section by the local authority that made the order*'.
- 1.8 In this Order hereinafter, a "Constable" means constable as referred to under the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 and includes a Police Community Support Officer.

Part 2: Prohibition in relation to alcohol consumption

- 2.0 Any exercise of the powers in this Part must be necessary and proportionate to address anti-social behaviour within the Restricted Area. Where a Constable or an Authorised

Person reasonably believes that a person is consuming alcohol, has consumed alcohol, or intends to consume alcohol in circumstances that are giving rise to, or are likely to give rise to, anti-social behaviour within the Restricted Area, the Constable or an Authorised Person may exercise the powers in paragraphs 2.1 to 2.3.

- 2.1 A Constable or an Authorised Person may require any such person:-
- (a) not to consume alcohol (or anything the Constable or an Authorised Person reasonably believes to be alcohol); and
 - (b) to surrender anything in that person's possession which is, or which the Constable or an Authorised Person reasonably believes to be, alcohol or a container for alcohol.
- 2.2 A requirement imposed by a Constable or an Authorised Person under paragraph 2.1. is not valid if the Constable or an Authorised Person is asked by the person to show evidence of their authorisation and fails to do so.
- 2.3 A Constable or an Authorised Person may dispose of anything surrendered under paragraph 2.1(b).

Exemptions

- 2.4 Nothing in Part 2 of this Order, shall apply to licensed premises as defined in Section 62 of the Licensing Act 2003. Exemptions include, but are not limited to:-
- (a) premises (other than council operated licensed premises) authorised by any type of premises licence, to be used for the supply of alcohol.
 - (b) premises authorised by a club premises certificate to be used by the club for the supply of alcohol.
 - (d) premises which by virtue of Part 5 of the Licensing Act 2003 may at the relevant time be used for the supply of alcohol or which, by virtue of that Part, could have been so used within 30 minutes before that time.
 - (e) a place where facilities or activities relating to the sale or consumption of alcohol are at the relevant time permitted by virtue of a permission granted under Section 115E of the Highways Act 1980 (highway-related uses).
 - (f) council operated licensed premises, when (i) the premises are being used for the supply of alcohol, or (ii) within 30 minutes after the end of a period during which the premises have been used for the supply of alcohol.

Offence and penalty

- 2.5 A person who, without reasonable excuse, fails to comply with a requirement properly imposed under paragraph 2.1 commits an offence.
- 2.6 A person guilty of an offence under paragraph 2.5 is liable under section 63(6) of the Act to a fine not exceeding level 2 on the standard scale. A Constable or an Authorised Person may, where appropriate, issue a fixed penalty notice in accordance with section 68 of the Act

Part 3: Prohibition in relation to begging

- 3.0 A person commits an offence if at any time in the restricted area, they make any verbal, non-verbal or written request for money, donations or goods, including the placing of hats, clothing or containers, so as to cause or is likely to cause harassment, alarm, or distress to any person.
- 3.1 In relation to paragraph 3.0. nothing in this Order shall apply to anyone who is in possession of a permit and/or written authorisation/licence for face-to-face fundraising issued by the Council and who is abiding by the Council's rules and regulations issued at the time of issuing the permit.
- 3.2 In exercising any enforcement powers under this Part, a Constable or an Authorised Person must act in a manner that is necessary and proportionate to prevent or reduce anti-social behaviour, having regard to any vulnerability apparent on the facts.

Part 4: Prohibition in relation to anti-social behaviour related loitering

- 4.0 A person commits an offence if, without reasonable excuse, they loiter within the Restricted Area in a manner which:-
- (a) causes, or
- (b) is likely to cause,
- harassment, alarm or distress to any other person.
- 4.1 For the purposes of this Part, “loiter” means remaining in one location, or moving between locations within a confined area, for a prolonged or repeated period.
- 4.2 For the avoidance of doubt, a person does not commit an offence under this Part solely by reason of being present in the Restricted Area, sitting, standing, sleeping, or resting, where their conduct does not fall within paragraph 4.0.
- 4.3 A Constable or an Authorised Person may only take enforcement action under this Part where they reasonably believe such action is necessary and proportionate to prevent or reduce the harassment, alarm or distress identified.

Part 5: Prohibition in relation to anti-social use of vehicles

- 5.0 A person commits an offence if, within the Restricted Area, they ride or drive any mechanically propelled vehicle, including but not limited to a moped, quad bike, off-road bike, e-scooter or e-bike, in a manner which:-
- (a) has caused, or
- (b) is likely to cause,
- harassment, alarm or distress to any other person.
- 5.1 For the avoidance of doubt, nothing in this Part shall apply to the legitimate use of a mobility aid by a person who reasonably requires such aid for mobility purposes.
- 5.2 Paragraph 5.1 does not apply where a mobility aid is being used in a manner which falls within paragraph 5.0.

Part 6: Requirement to provide identity in cases of anti-social behaviour

- 6.0 Where a Constable or an Authorised Person reasonably believes that a person has failed, without reasonable excuse, to comply with a prohibition or requirement imposed by this Order that Constable or Authorised Person may require the person to provide their name and address for the purpose of enabling enforcement of this Order, including the issue of a Fixed Penalty Notice or consideration of prosecution.
- 6.1 A person who, without reasonable excuse, fails to provide their name and address when required under paragraph 6.0 commits an offence under section 67 of the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 as a failure to comply with a requirement imposed by this Order.
- 6.2 A requirement under paragraph 6.0 shall not be valid unless the Constable or Authorised Person:
- (a) reasonably considers the requirement necessary for the purposes of enforcing this Order; and
 - (b) produces evidence of their authorisation if requested to do so.
- 6.3 An Authorised Person may request a person's date of birth for administrative purposes connected with enforcement. Failure to provide a date of birth shall not of itself constitute an offence.
- 6.4 Nothing in this Part authorises the retention, use or disclosure of personal data otherwise than in accordance with applicable data-protection legislation.

Part 7: Directions to leave the Restricted Area

- 7.0 Any person is to leave the Restricted Area immediately, if directed to do so by a Constable or an Authorised Person, and not return for a period not exceeding 24 hours, unless for a lawful reason or with reasonable excuse, where the Constable or an Authorised Person is of the opinion that the individual:-
- (a) is in breach of any of the prohibitions or requirements contained within this Order, or
 - (b) is behaving in a manner causing or likely to cause harassment, alarm, or distress to any person within the Restricted Area.
- 7.1 A Constable or an Authorised Person may give a direction under this Part only where they reasonably believe it is necessary and proportionate to prevent or reduce anti-social behaviour within the Restricted Area.
- 7.2 Where a person identifies to the Constable or an Authorised Person a specific, time-critical and lawful need to enter the Restricted Area during the direction period (for example, to attend a scheduled medical appointment, to obtain legal advice or representation, or pre-booked employment duty), the Constable or an Authorised Person must consider whether it is reasonably practicable to tailor the direction (including by limited exceptions) while still achieving the purpose of preventing or reducing anti-social behaviour.

Part 8: Failure to comply with this Order

- 8.0 In relation to Part 2 of this Order, any person who fails without reasonable excuse to comply with a requirement properly imposed under paragraph 2.1 commits an offence under section 63 of the Act. A person guilty of such an offence is liable to a fine not exceeding level 2 on the standard scale. A fixed penalty notice may be issued in accordance with section 68.
- 8.1 Section 67 of the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 says that it is an offence for a person without reasonable excuse – (a) to do anything that the person is prohibited from doing by a Public Spaces Protection Order, or (b) to fail to comply with a requirement to which the person is subject under a Public Spaces Protection Order. A person guilty of an offence under Section 67 is liable on conviction in magistrates court to a fine not exceeding level 3 on the standard scale (£1000). This therefore applies to Parts 3 to 11 of this Order. A person does not commit an offence by failing to comply with a prohibition or requirement that the Council did not have power to include in the Order.
- 8.2 It is at the Council’s discretion whether a person who commits an offence under this Order, is issued with a fixed penalty notice or not. The Council may decide to seek a prosecution in the first instance, for a breach of this Order, and not issue a fixed penalty notice, if it is deemed appropriate.
- 8.3 Where a fixed penalty notice is issued for an offence under this order: (i) no proceedings may be taken for the offence before the end of the 14-day period following the date of the fixed penalty notice, and (ii) the person may not be convicted of the offence if the person pays the fixed penalty notice amount before the end of that period.

Part 9: Byelaws

- 9.0 A byelaw that prohibits, by the creation of an offence, an activity regulated by a Public Spaces Protection Order, is of no effect in relation to the Restricted Area for the duration of this Order.

Part 10: Appeals

- 10.0 In accordance with Section 66 of the Act, any interested person who wishes to challenge the validity of this Order on the grounds that the Council did not have the power to make the Order or that a requirement under the Act has not been complied with may apply to the High Court within six weeks from the date upon which the Order is made.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF)
 THE COMMON SEAL OF)
 THE COUNCIL OF THE BOROUGH)
 OF STOCKTON-ON-TEES)
 Was hereunto affixed in the)
 presence of)

.....
 Authorised Officer

Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council

Public Spaces Protection Order (No.2) 2026 – Stockton Town Centre

Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council (“the Council”) in exercise of the power under Sections 59 and 72 of the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 (“the Act”), and all other enabling powers, hereby makes the following Order:-

Part 1: General

- 1.0 The land identified by the map at Appendix 1 (“the Restricted Area”), being land in the area of the Council, is land to which the Act applies and will be protected by this Public Spaces Protection Order (“the Order”).
- 1.1 The Council is satisfied that the conditions set out in Section 59(2) of the Act have been met, and the activities covered by this Order have been carried out in a public place within the Council's area and have had a detrimental effect on the quality of life of those in the locality and that the effect, or likely effect, of the activities is, or is likely to be, of a persistent or continuing nature; is, or is likely to be, such as to make the activities unreasonable and justifies the restrictions imposed.
- 1.2 The Council is also satisfied that the conditions set out in Section 59(3) of the Act have been met. Namely, that the effect or likely effect of the activities is, or is likely to be, of a persistent or continuing nature and that these activities are unreasonable and justify the restrictions imposed by this Order, and that it is, in all the circumstances, expedient to make this Order for the purpose of reducing anti-social behaviour in a public place.
- 1.3. In making this Order, the Council have had particular regard to the rights and freedoms of expression and freedom of assembly set out in Articles 10 and 11 of the European Convention on Human Rights.
- 1.4 The Order may be cited as the Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council Public Spaces Protection Order (No.2) 2026 – Stockton Town Centre.
- 1.5 The Order shall come into force on 3rd April 2026 for the duration of three years, expiring at midnight on 2nd April 2029, unless varied, revoked, or extended pursuant to Section 60 of the Act.
- 1.6 Police Constables and Police Community Support Officers can also enforce the Order.
- 1.7 In this Order hereinafter, an “Authorised Person” means an 'authorised person' as defined under section 68(11) of the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 namely ‘a *person authorised for the purposes of this section by the local authority that made the order*’.
- 1.8 In this Order hereinafter, a “Constable” means constable as referred to under the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 and includes a Police Community Support Officer.

Part 2: Prohibition in relation to alcohol consumption

- 2.0 Any exercise of the powers in this Part must be necessary and proportionate to address anti-social behaviour within the Restricted Area. Where a Constable or an Authorised

Person reasonably believes that a person is consuming alcohol, has consumed alcohol, or intends to consume alcohol in circumstances that are giving rise to, or are likely to give rise to, anti-social behaviour within the Restricted Area, the Constable or an Authorised Person may exercise the powers in paragraphs 2.1 to 2.3.

- 2.1 A Constable or an Authorised Person may require any such person:-
- (a) not to consume alcohol (or anything the Constable or an Authorised Person reasonably believes to be alcohol); and
 - (b) to surrender anything in that person's possession which is, or which the Constable or an Authorised Person reasonably believes to be, alcohol or a container for alcohol.
- 2.2 A requirement imposed by a Constable or an Authorised Person under paragraph 2.1. is not valid if the Constable or an Authorised Person is asked by the person to show evidence of their authorisation and fails to do so.
- 2.3 A Constable or an Authorised Person may dispose of anything surrendered under paragraph 2.1(b).

Exemptions

- 2.4 Nothing in Part 2 of this Order, shall apply to licensed premises as defined in Section 62 of the Licensing Act 2003. Exemptions include, but are not limited to:-
- (a) premises (other than council operated licensed premises) authorised by any type of premises licence, to be used for the supply of alcohol.
 - (b) premises authorised by a club premises certificate to be used by the club for the supply of alcohol.
 - (d) premises which by virtue of Part 5 of the Licensing Act 2003 may at the relevant time be used for the supply of alcohol or which, by virtue of that Part, could have been so used within 30 minutes before that time.
 - (e) a place where facilities or activities relating to the sale or consumption of alcohol are at the relevant time permitted by virtue of a permission granted under Section 115E of the Highways Act 1980 (highway-related uses).
 - (f) council operated licensed premises, when (i) the premises are being used for the supply of alcohol, or (ii) within 30 minutes after the end of a period during which the premises have been used for the supply of alcohol.

Offence and penalty

- 2.5 A person who, without reasonable excuse, fails to comply with a requirement properly imposed under paragraph 2.1 commits an offence.
- 2.6 A person guilty of an offence under paragraph 2.5 is liable under section 63(6) of the Act to a fine not exceeding level 2 on the standard scale. A Constable or an Authorised Person may, where appropriate, issue a fixed penalty notice in accordance with section 68 of the Act.

Part 3: Prohibition in relation to begging

- 3.0 A person commits an offence if at any time in the Restricted Area, they make any verbal, non-verbal or written request for money, donations or goods, including the placing of hats, clothing or containers, so as to cause or is likely to cause harassment, alarm, or distress to any person.
- 3.1 In relation to paragraph 3.0. nothing in this Order shall apply to anyone who is in possession of a permit and/or written authorisation/licence for face-to-face fundraising issued by the Council and who is abiding by the Council's rules and regulations issued at the time of issuing the permit.
- 3.2 In exercising any enforcement powers under this Part, a Constable or an Authorised Person must act in a manner that is necessary and proportionate to prevent or reduce anti-social behaviour, having regard to any vulnerability apparent on the facts.

Part 4: Prohibition in relation to anti-social behaviour related loitering

- 4.0 A person commits an offence if, without reasonable excuse, they loiter within the Restricted Area in a manner which:-
- (a) causes, or
- (b) is likely to cause,
- harassment, alarm or distress to any other person.
- 4.1 For the purposes of this Part, “loiter” means remaining in one location, or moving between locations within a confined area, for a prolonged or repeated period.
- 4.2 For the avoidance of doubt, a person does not commit an offence under this Part solely by reason of being present in the Restricted Area, sitting, standing, sleeping, or resting, where their conduct does not fall within paragraph 4.0.
- 4.3 A Constable or an Authorised Person may only take enforcement action under this Part where they reasonably believe such action is necessary and proportionate to prevent or reduce the harassment, alarm or distress identified.

Part 5: Prohibition in relation to anti-social use of vehicles

- 5.0 A person commits an offence if, within the Restricted Area, they ride or drive any mechanically propelled vehicle, including but not limited to a moped, quad bike, off-road bike, e-scooter or e-bike, in a manner which:-
- (a) has caused, or
- (b) is likely to cause,
- harassment, alarm or distress to any other person.
- 5.1 For the avoidance of doubt, nothing in this Part shall apply to the legitimate use of a mobility aid by a person who reasonably requires such aid for mobility purposes.
- 5.2 Paragraph 5.1 does not apply where a mobility aid is being used in a manner which falls within paragraph 5.0.

Part 6: Prohibition in relation to urinating and defecating in the street

6.0 A person commits an offence if at any time they, within the Restricted Area, urinate and/or defecate without reasonable excuse for doing so in a public place.

6.1 The prohibition in this part of the Order does not refer to public toilets or facilities.

Part 7: Requirement to remove temporary structures or vehicles when requested

7.0 Any person within the Restricted Area will not position any vehicle, campervan, motorhome, caravan, or erect a tent or any other temporary structure, intended by the person to provide shelter or accommodation for the purpose of an overnight stay(s), without the permission of the Council or otherwise authorised.

7.1 The person with responsibility for, or utilising, any vehicle or temporary structure, contrary to paragraph 7.0, is to immediately remove the same and any associated equipment or other material, upon request from a Constable or an Authorised Person. A person commits an offence if they fail to comply with the Constable or an Authorised Person's request under this paragraph.

7.2 Where an offence is committed as per paragraph 7.1, any removal by the Council shall be carried out only in accordance with the Council's statutory powers and any applicable legal requirements, and only where such removal is necessary and proportionate.

7.3 Where a responsible person cannot be identified, the Council may remove a temporary structure in a public place only in accordance with the Council's statutory powers and any applicable legal requirements, and only where such removal is necessary and proportionate.

Part 8: Requirement to have dogs on leads

8.0 Any person in charge of a dog, at any time, must put and keep the dog on a lead in the Restricted Area, unless that person has reasonable excuse for failing to do so.

8.1 Nothing in Part 8 of this Order shall apply when a person is within Trinity Gardens or the Parliament Street Car Park, as defined and outlined in the map, entitled Appendix 2.

Part 9: Requirement to pick up dog foul

9.0 If a dog defecates at any time on land in the Restricted Area, the person who is in charge of the dog at the time must remove the faeces from the land forthwith, unless that person has a reasonable excuse for failing to do so.

Part 10: Requirement to provide identity in cases of anti-social behaviour

10.0 Where a Constable or an Authorised Person reasonably believes that a person has failed, without reasonable excuse, to comply with a prohibition or requirement imposed by this Order that Constable or Authorised Person may require the person to provide their name and address for the purpose of enabling enforcement of this Order, including the issue of a Fixed Penalty Notice or consideration of prosecution.

10.1 A person who, without reasonable excuse, fails to provide their name and address when required under paragraph 10.0 commits an offence under section 67 of the Anti-social

Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 as a failure to comply with a requirement imposed by this Order.

- 10.2 A requirement under paragraph 10.0 shall not be valid unless the Constable or Authorised Person:
- (a) reasonably considers the requirement necessary for the purposes of enforcing this Order; and
 - (b) produces evidence of their authorisation if requested to do so.
- 10.3 An Authorised Person may request a person's date of birth for administrative purposes connected with enforcement. Failure to provide a date of birth shall not of itself constitute an offence.
- 10.4 Nothing in this Part authorises the retention, use or disclosure of personal data otherwise than in accordance with applicable data-protection legislation.

Part 11: Directions to leave the restricted area

- 11.0 Any person is to leave the Restricted Area immediately, if directed to do so by a Constable or an Authorised Person, and not return for a period not exceeding 24 hours, unless for a lawful reason or with reasonable excuse, where the Constable or an Authorised Person is of the opinion that the individual:-
- (a) is in breach of any of the prohibitions or requirements contained within this Order, or
 - (b) is behaving in a manner causing or likely to cause harassment, alarm, or distress to any person within the Restricted Area.
- 11.1 A Constable or an Authorised Person may give a direction under this Part only where they reasonably believe it is necessary and proportionate to prevent or reduce anti-social behaviour within the Restricted Area.
- 11.2 Where a person identifies to the Constable or an Authorised Person a specific, time-critical and lawful need to enter the Restricted Area during the direction period (for example, to attend a scheduled medical appointment, to obtain legal advice or representation, or pre-booked employment duty), the Constable or an Authorised Person must consider whether it is reasonably practicable to tailor the direction (including by limited exceptions) while still achieving the purpose of preventing or reducing anti-social behaviour.

Part 12: Failure to comply with this Order

- 12.0. In relation to Part 2 of this Order, any person who fails without reasonable excuse to comply with a requirement properly imposed under paragraph 2.1 commits an offence under section 63 of the Act. A person guilty of such an offence is liable to a fine not exceeding level 2 on the standard scale. A fixed penalty notice may be issued in accordance with section 68.
- 12.1 Section 67 of the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 says that it is an offence for a person without reasonable excuse – (a) to do anything that the person is prohibited from doing by a Public Spaces Protection Order, or (b) to fail to comply with a

requirement to which the person is subject under a Public Spaces Protection Order. A person guilty of an offence under Section 67 is liable on conviction in magistrates court to a fine not exceeding level 3 on the standard scale (£1000). This therefore applies to Parts 3 to 11 of this Order. A person does not commit an offence by failing to comply with a prohibition or requirement that the Council did not have power to include in the Order.

12.2 It is at the Council’s discretion whether a person who commits an offence under this Order is issued with a fixed penalty notice or not. The Council may decide to seek a prosecution in the first instance, for a breach of this Order, and not issue a fixed penalty notice, if it is deemed appropriate.

12.3 Where a fixed penalty notice is issued for an offence under this order; (i) no proceedings may be taken for the offence before the end of the 14-day period following the date of the fixed penalty notice, and (ii) the person may not be convicted of the offence if the person pays the fixed penalty notice amount before the end of that period.

Part 13: Byelaws

13.0 A byelaw that prohibits, by the creation of an offence, an activity regulated by a Public Spaces Protection Order is of no effect in relation to the Restricted Area for the duration of this Order.

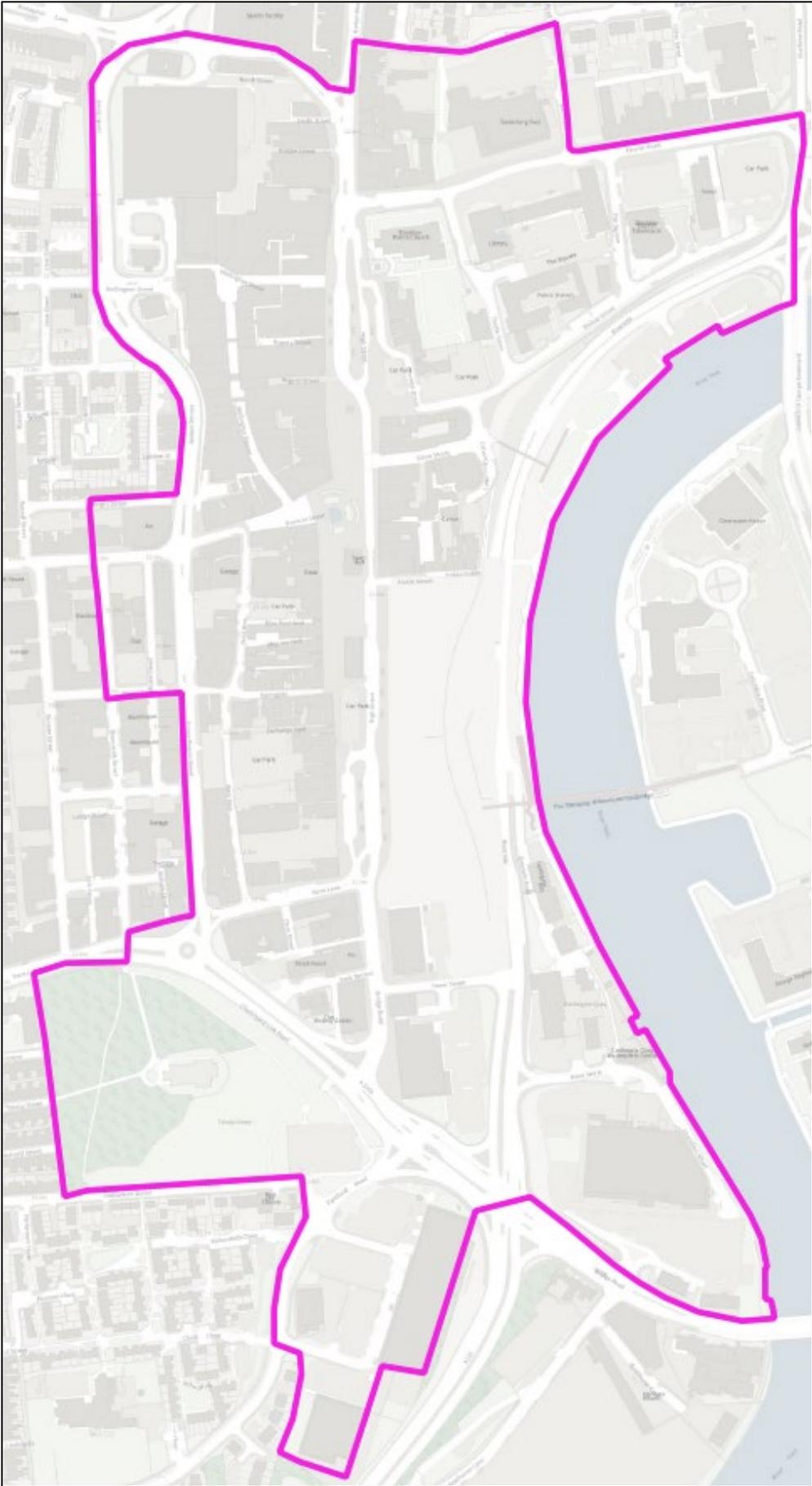
Part 14: Appeals

14.0 In accordance with Section 66 of the Act, any interested person who wishes to challenge the validity of this Order on the grounds that the Council did not have the power to make the Order or that a requirement under the Act has not been complied with may apply to the High Court within six weeks from the date upon which the Order is made.

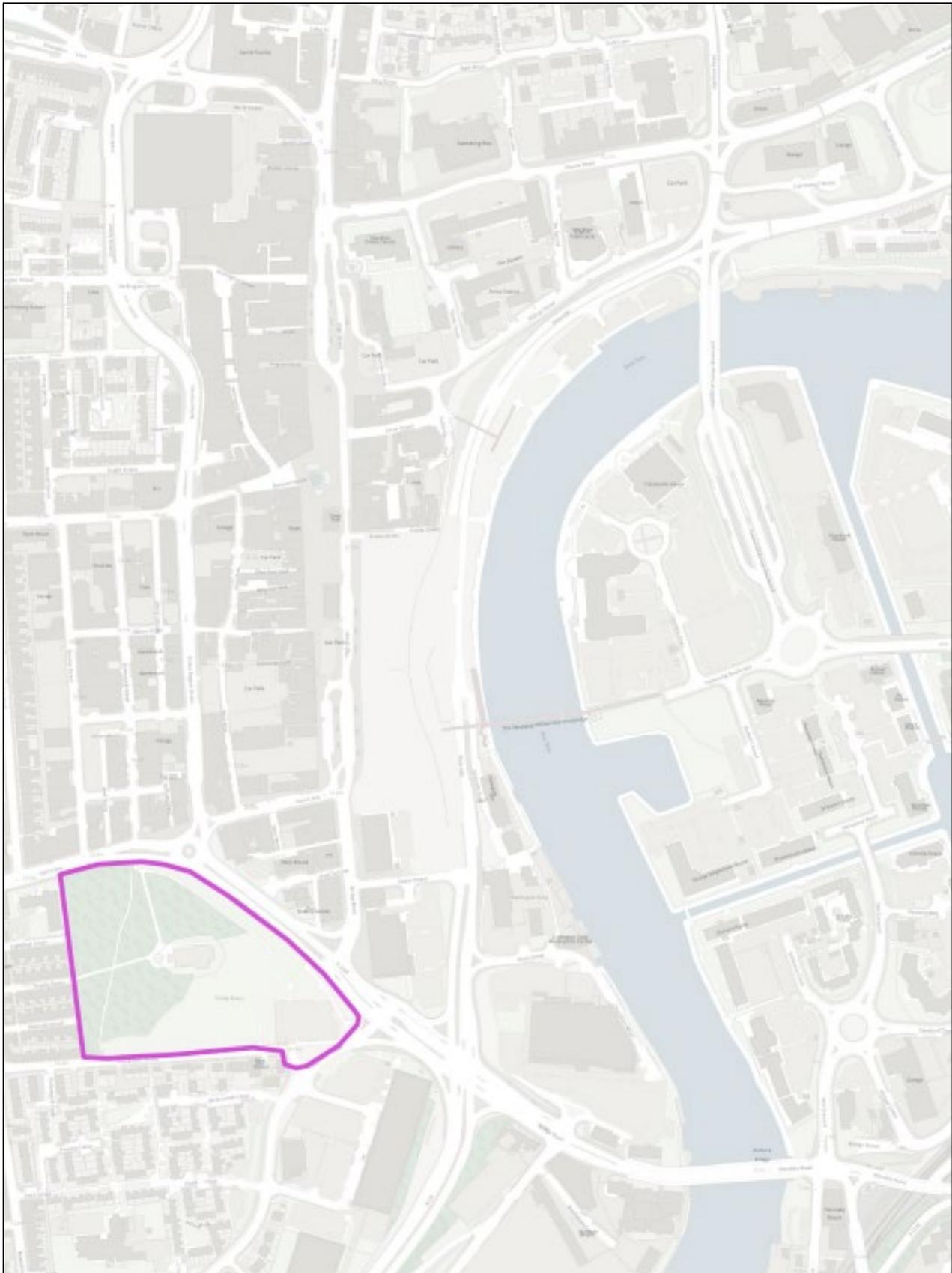
IN WITNESS WHEREOF)
THE COMMON SEAL OF)
THE COUNCIL OF THE BOROUGH)
OF STOCKTON-ON-TEES)
Was hereunto affixed in the)
presence of)

.....
Authorised Officer

Appendix 1



Appendix 2



By virtue of paragraph(s) 2, 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

Document is Restricted

This page is intentionally left blank

By virtue of paragraph(s) 5 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

Document is Restricted

This page is intentionally left blank