Community Safety Select Committee

A meeting of the Community Safety Select Committee was held on Thursday 1 October 2026.

Present:	Cllr Mrs Ann McCoy (Chair), Cllr Katie Zagoria (Vice-Chair), Cllr Bob Cook, Cllr John Coulson, Cllr Lynn Hall (sub for Cllr Jason French), Cllr Shakeel Hussain, Cllr Barbara Inman
Officers:	Richard Bradford, Phil Hardie, Kellie Hopkins, Leanne Maloney-Kelly, Simon Milner, James Ruddock, Marc Stephenson (N); John Angus (R&IG); Ged Morton, Gary Woods (CS)
Also in attendance:	Cllr Richard Eglington (SBC Cabinet Member for Housing and Transport); Patrick Walker (Hartlepool Borough Council)
Apologies:	Cllr Jason French, Cllr Alan Watson

CSS/29/26 Livestreaming

The Chair announced to those present that the meeting would be livestreamed.

CSS/30/26 Evacuation Procedure

The evacuation procedure was noted.

CSS/31/26 Declarations of Interest

There were no interests declared.

CSS/32/26 Minutes

Consideration was given to the minutes of the Community Safety Select Committee meeting which was held on 30 July 2026 for approval and signature.

AGREED that the minutes of the Committee meeting held on 30 July 2026 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

CSS/33/26 Scrutiny Review of Community Participation Budget and Ward Transport Budget

Consideration was given to the draft final report for the Committee's Scrutiny Review of Community Participation Budget (CPB) and Ward Transport Budget (WTB). Specific attention was drawn to the following:

- Conclusion & Recommendations: Regarding recommendation 3 (*Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council (SBC) considers creating additional resource to support the processing of CPB / WTB proposals (and subsequent communication on these to SBC Ward Councillors)*), an amendment was proposed to emphasise that further support should be provided via existing (not additional) resources. The Committee subsequently agreed to change this recommendation to '*SBC considers how*

existing resources can best support and improve the timely processing of CPB / WTB proposals and ensure effective communication with SBC Ward Councillors throughout the process'.

Responses to Member queries in relation to the originally quoted underspend for the two budget schemes, and possible financial implications for some of the other recommendations, were provided. Regarding the former, the Committee was reminded that whilst an underspend was reported at the time, evidence was also given that numerous project proposals were still being processed or were in development, and that the underspend was not representative of a lack of demand (more a reflection of resource limitations and, for example, legal requirements or site constraints). As for the latter, it was felt that the proposed recommendations could be met through a refined in-house offer and would not have any direct financial implications for the Council.

The dissatisfaction from Members (relayed via the SBC Ward Councillor survey) towards existing CPB / WTB arrangements was highlighted, though it was also noted that officers had expressed a strong willingness throughout the review to make improvements to these budget schemes (some of which had already been taken on board and actioned).

The Committee approved the content of the draft final report, subject to the identified minor amendment to recommendation 3, and was informed that the agreed version would be presented to Cabinet later in October 2026.

AGREED that the Community Participation Budget and Ward Transport Budget final report be approved for submission to Cabinet.

CSS/34/26 Overview & Performance Report: SBC Neighbourhoods (Regulated Services: Trading Standards, Community Safety & Emergency Planning)

The Committee received an overview and performance report from the Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council (SBC) Neighbourhoods directorate which provided details of key achievements and challenges in 2025-2026 for the Regulated Services department (with specific focus on Trading Standards, Community Safety, and Emergency Planning), as well as emerging issues within these areas of Council activity.

Introduced by the SBC Assistant Director – Regulated Services and Transformation, the report was supplemented by a presentation which initially outlined the following key messages:

- The services (whose work often takes place behind the scenes) are central to public protection, community confidence, and supporting local businesses.
- Demand is increasingly complex, often involving vulnerability, crime, anti-social behaviour (ASB), and organised criminality.
- Strong partnership working remains essential to achieving positive outcomes (with work also undertaken to address the root causes of presenting issues).

COMMUNITY SAFETY

The SBC Community Safety Services Manager led the Committee through the Community Safety part of the presentation which included the following:

- What the Service Does: The SBC Community Safety team protected residents, businesses and visitors through ASB case management, civic enforcement, CCTV and Control Room operations, community cohesion and engagement, violence reduction initiatives, emergency planning and business continuity, safeguarding vulnerable people, and multi-agency partnership working (with police and fire services, the NHS, housing providers and voluntary sector partners). It helped make Stockton-on-Tees a safer place to live, work and visit through prevention, intervention, enforcement and partnership working.

- Key Headlines 2025/26: During 2025-2026, 3,181 ASB hotspot patrols were delivered and 11,092 reports of ASB were received across police and Council systems. Stockton-on-Tees continued to have the lowest combined ASB reporting rate in Cleveland, with reductions seen in Ropner (34.2%), Billingham (10.2%), and Norton (2.6%). In terms of town centre safety, shop theft had reduced by 17.8% in Stockton Town Centre, *Operation Shield* and Joint Action Group (JAG) activity continued to be delivered, and support was provided for Stockton Waterfront Urban Park opening and major events.

- Civic Enforcement: The Civic Enforcement Team provided a visible presence across town centres, residential neighbourhoods, parks and open spaces, schools, and identified hotspot locations. Its key responsibilities were tackling ASB, fly-tipping / littering / dog fouling enforcement, environmental crime investigations, unsafe and inconsiderate parking, unauthorised encampments, community reassurance patrols, and intelligence gathering and evidence collection. The team gave added value as a result of its visible deterrent against offending, rapid response to community concerns, joint operations with Cleveland Police, and support for vulnerable residents and communities.

- Public Spaces Protection Orders (PSPOs): PSPOs for Stockton Town Centre and Norton were reviewed and strengthened during 2025-2026, addressing aggressive begging, street drinking and associated behaviour, public urination and defecation, dog fouling, misuse of offroad bikes, and misuse of electric bikes and scooters. In terms of the application of these orders, the service prioritised compliance through advice and warnings before formal enforcement action wherever appropriate.

  A related public consultation undertaken prior to the renewal of these PSPOs saw 528 responses received, with 93% identifying begging and 96% identifying street drinking as problems. 87% believed the new PSPO would improve feelings of safety.

- Case Study: An example of the way in which persistent offenders were tackled highlighted joint working between Case Management Officers and Civic Enforcement Officers to secure a three-year Criminal Behaviour Order, with an individual prohibited from entering Norton Village following repeated ASB and racial abuse directed toward a Civic Enforcement Officer. These outcomes mattered as they protected businesses and residents, reduced repeat offending, demonstrated effective partnership working, and sent a strong message that ASB would not be tolerated.

- CCTV Control Room: The CCTV Control Room provided continuous (24/7) monitoring across the Borough, crime prevention and detection support, real-time incident management, support to emergency services, safeguarding of vulnerable

people, crowd and event monitoring, major incident coordination, and evidential support for investigations.

- CCTV Control Room Headlines: In 2025-2026, there were a total of 1,070 monitored cameras across the Borough (589 public space; 481 remote site). Regarding operational activity, 6,510 live incidents were managed, 2,402 evidential requests were fulfilled, and 1,036 arrests were assisted through CCTV intelligence and evidence.

- CCTV Control Room Functions: The CCTV Control Room helps protect vulnerable people, with operators regularly assisted with missing persons, mental health-related concerns, exploitation risks, rough sleeping interventions, and substance misuse-related vulnerability. It also supported enforcement / police by providing live intelligence to deployed officers, tracking suspect movements, preserving evidence, and enabling rapid partner communication. Events were also aided through crowd monitoring, public safety management, situational awareness, and emergency response co-ordination.

- Looking Ahead – Key Priorities: From a Community Safety perspective, priorities moving forward were intelligence-led hotspot patrols, repeat offender management, increased focus on vulnerability and safeguarding, stronger partnership working, and tackling violence against women and girls (VAWG). Future CCTV-related focus would centre on modernising CCTV infrastructure, developing analytical capability, expanding technology and intelligence use, maintaining a resilient 24/7 service, and enhancing drone and surveillance capabilities in support of community safety objectives.

- Key Challenges: Several community safety-related challenges were relayed:

    - Increasing demand from ASB, vulnerability, exploitation, mental health-related incidents, and repeat offenders.
    - Cases becoming more complex, often involving substance misuse, poverty, social exclusion, safeguarding concerns, and multi-agency requirements.
    - Public expectations for visible enforcement, rapid responses and immediate solutions.
    - Maintaining safe and welcoming town centres and public spaces was increasingly important as regeneration projects and visitor numbers grew across the Borough.
    - Recruiting and retaining experienced and specialist staff remained difficult.
    - New and emerging legislation, including VAWG, Serious Violence Duty, etc. would increase future service demands.
    - Criminality was becoming more sophisticated, with increasing use of technology, social media and organised crime group (OCG) networks requiring more intelligence-led responses.
    - Officers facing increasing verbal abuse, intimidation, threats and violence (particularly when dealing with persistent offenders and organised crime).

TRADING STANDARDS

The SBC Trading Standards and Licensing Services Manager led the Committee through the Trading Standards part of the presentation which noted the following:

- What the Service Does: SBC Trading Standards protected consumers from unfair, unsafe and illegal trading practices, and supported legitimate businesses to comply with the law. It also tackled scams, rogue traders, counterfeit goods, unsafe products and age-restricted sales, and worked with the police, His Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC), Border Force, National Crime Agency, regional partners, and neighbouring authorities. The service had recently merged with the Council's Licensing Services to create a stronger, more joined-up regulatory function.

- Key Performance Headlines 2025/26: 1,722 enforcement actions were carried out during 2025-2026, with 360 inspections and compliance visits completed, and 820 complaints and service requests investigated. £164,270 was secured in consumer redress, and 305 businesses had received advice and guidance.

- Fraud, Scams and Vulnerable Residents: The Financial Fraud Advocate supported victims of fraud and scams to recover losses and reduce repeat victimisation. Since January 2025, £1,285,666.88 had been regained overall, with £358,620.16 recovered for fraud victims within Stockton-on-Tees. This work supported vulnerable residents and strengthened the wider prevention approach.

- Illicit Goods and Enforcement: 512,620 illicit and counterfeit cigarettes had been seized, along with 97.7kg of hand rolling tobacco and 1,329 illegal vapes. 11 closure orders were obtained against premises involved in the supply of illicit and counterfeit tobacco and vaping products, and two HMRC Track and Trace referrals led to £5,000 fines for each trader.

- Key Challenges: Existing / future Trading Standards-related challenges were:

    - Online marketplaces, social media enabled fraud, and increasingly sophisticated scams were changing the nature of consumer harm.
    - Workforce sustainability was a key risk in a small specialist team.
    - The Tobacco and Vapes Act 2026 would bring new responsibilities and enforcement expectations.
    - Officer safety and OCGs were increasingly linked to illicit goods and high street premises.

The presentation concluded with a 'final thought' in relation to these service areas which were '*delivering strong outcomes in an increasingly complex environment: rising demand, evolving threats, workforce pressures and the need for continued investment in people, partnerships and technology.*'

Commending officers for the depth of information provided, as well as those staff whose efforts continued to keep the Borough's residents safe, the Committee began its response by highlighting the scourge of shoplifting. Members expressed concerns over the greater impact of this crime on small businesses (as their percentage loss was higher) and the speed at which individuals convicted of shoplifting seemed to re-appear on the streets to continue such behaviour. Officers recognised that shoplifting was a challenge (as was assaults upon staff) which was regularly discussed within the Safer Stockton Partnership (SSP), and whilst many would view it as a police issue, it was important to work in partnership to identify and prevent / deter this activity. CCTV capabilities and officer presence on streets helped in this regard, and whilst recorded incidents had recently spiked, much of this could be attributed to improved reporting. On a broader level, there was a need to understand why shoplifting happened (often

as a result of addictions, complex lives, and / or deprivation), something which aligned with SBCs focus on long-term, preventative measures to address deep-rooted issues. Assurance was also given around related developments within the Pride in Place initiative which offered funding to make a difference to local communities.

Continuing on the theme of shoplifting, the Committee asked if SBC Civic Enforcement received many calls from shops and whether those reporting concerns were directed to the police. Officers stated that whilst people would often ring whoever they felt would provide the best answer / response, there did not seem to be an issue with reporting, and that mechanisms existed to transfer any calls received on this (or other crime) matter. That said, live communication with the police control room / officers was in place, and available resources were utilised to support in the fight against this type of crime. Members highlighted the Cleveland Online Policing App (COPA) which enabled the public to submit information about policing and community safety matters.

Attention moved onto community safety considerations in relation to the Stockton Waterfront Park, with Members raising queries on cordoned-off play equipment, bike-riding within the contained play area, and the closing times for the park during winter. Regarding the equipment, officers were not aware of any acts of vandalism (though incidents involving trees was known) and confirmed that the area was fully covered by CCTV – checks would be made after this meeting. On the concerns around bikes, reports had been received over bikes being used in prohibited areas, with officers continuing to patrol this space. In terms of the park's opening hours, this would be amended once clocks changed in October, with closing time likely to be 5.00pm (in line with other parks across the Borough).

Praising the impressive statistics within the report and presentation, and the successful funding application for a Tobacco and Vapes Apprentice, the Committee requested the number of Criminal Behaviour Orders (CBOs) that had been issued, and asked whether any wards had seen an increase in crime and ASB (possibly as a result of the new Stockton Waterfront Park dispersing problem behaviour elsewhere). For both queries, data would need to be provided after this meeting, though it was noted that CBOs were difficult and resource-intensive to secure (new Respect Orders, due to be implemented in April 2027, would be easier to obtain) and that SBC used these as a preventative measure, too (i.e. positive obligations around attending drug and alcohol services).

Discussion switched to the stated shop closure orders for illicit goods, with Members being informed that length of closure was likely to increased, and agreeing with officers that it was important to move to targeting the individuals behind this activity as opposed to the premises itself (given perpetrators often opened a new shop soon after a previous one was closed).

Emphasising that a zero-tolerance approach towards abuse against staff was imperative, the Committee then raised the well-established issue of street sex workers within the Ropner ward (Yarm Road) – a significant concern for residents and one which may require the use of a PSPO given the numerous attempts to address this. Officers again recognised this ongoing challenge which continued to adversely affect that particular community (as well as the women involved in this activity), advising that, whilst a PSPO could only be implemented as a 'last resort' measure, it was certainly something to explore.

Comments in response to other Member queries concluded with confirmation that the Council had a fledgling drone unit (mostly used for planning / emergency planning work), and that a multi-agency publicity campaign in relation to the use of scooters was planned for the forthcoming Christmas period.

EMERGENCY PLANNING

With reference to an additional Emergency Planning Update briefing paper circulated to the Committee prior to the meeting, the Senior Emergency Planning Officer (Stockton) reflected on the Council's Emergency Management Arrangements (EMA), including the work of Cleveland Emergency Planning Unit (CEPU), and provided an update on the Cleveland Local Resilience Forum (CLRF), as well as recent incidents and exercises. Covering the period from 17 February 2026 to 3 September 2026, content included:

- Background: The Civil Contingencies Act 2004 identified agencies that had a statutory duty to respond to emergencies as category one or two responders. Local Authorities were defined under the Act as a category one responder, therefore, the SBC had a duty, through collaboration with partner agencies, to assess risk, prepare and test emergency plans, and ensure internal business continuity, along with warning and informing the public, and promoting business continuity externally.

- CEPU Update: Hosted by Hartlepool Borough Council, and located within Stockton (Police Station Annex), the CEPU covered the geographic area of 'Cleveland' (Tees Valley minus Darlington) and consisted of four Senior Emergency Planning Officers, a Business Support Officer, an Industry-specific officer, a Principal Emergency Planning Officer, and a Chief Emergency Planning Officer (who was also LRF Manager). The CEPU continued to report to the Emergency Planning Joint Committee (comprised of Elected Members from the four Local Authorities involved).

  The Local Resilience Forum (LRF) operated in parallel with the CEPU. However, it had additional staff with distinct LRF duties, these being a Community Resilience Officer and an LRF Co-ordinator. The lines between LRF and Cleveland Emergency Planning Unit were inextricably linked.

- Cleveland LRF Update: The LRF benefitted from significant support and buy-in from SBC, including support from the CEPU which undertook several duties on behalf of the authority. Represented by the SBC Business Continuity & Resilience Manager at Tactical Business Group (TBG) and the SBC Assistant Director – Regulated Services and Transformation at Strategic Board (SB), the various subgroups benefitted from SBC participation, with functional experts contributing to specialist areas. Stockton-on-Tees continued to provide regular attendance and contribution to the LRF, attending 16 of the 17 (SB and TBG) meetings held in the last three years. The Action Plan for 2025-2026 was being worked through, with no major issues for completion identified.

  Key Cleveland LRF peer review findings showed that it was one of the first areas to recognise the role of the Voluntary Development Agency through full membership of the LRF. Furthermore, it was the first area to be trialled under the new Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government of the United Kingdom (MHCLG) peer review process which highlighted strong partnership

cohesion, effective responsive co-ordination, solid infrastructure and regional working, and early recovery thinking. The review also noted that a mutual aid agreement was in place (agreed in July 2026 by SBC in conjunction with North East, Yorkshire and Cumbria Local Authorities) which strengthened responses to emergencies.

- Legal: There was a high confidence that SBC was legally compliant regarding the Civil Contingencies Act 2004, the Control of Major Accident Hazard Regulations 2015 (COMAH), and the Pipeline Safety Regulations 1996 (MAHP) (statutory duties and regulations of which were subsequently listed).

- Guidance: As well as statutory duties, there were a number of official guidance documents that the CEPU considered when planning, training and exercising. Again, there was a high degree of confidence that the CEPU followed these guidance documents and the Unit's work was assessed against the guidance on an annual basis as part of the CEPU workplan.

- Incidents: Within this period, there had been a higher number of incidents in Stockton-on-Tees (these were listed and included dates, locations, types, and associated comments), with tactical co-ordinating groups being established for two of these (all attended by Stockton and the CEPU). For the major incident declaration (Yarm Lane Fire), a recovery group was also stood-up and chaired by Stockton-on-Tees.

- Exercises: COMAH-related exercises were undertaken at Exolum Seal Sands (North & South) in May 2026 and CATS Terminal (Seal Sands) in July 2026.

- Training: Key training priorities identified included tactical multi-agency training, strategic multi-agency training, recovery and crisis communications, Resilience Direct (RD) training, and Joint Emergency Services Interoperability Principles (JESIP) awareness. Training for Borough Co-ordination Officers (BCOs) and strategic on-call staff were held centrally by the CEPU which monitored any refresher training requirements or training gaps of staff. Further training could be provided for Elected Members, too (who could get in touch if interested).

- Community Resilience: The CEPU was currently in the process of another run of community grants (up to £2,000), with applications open until 11 September 2026. Since 2023, £18,502.75 of grants had been distributed to community organisations within Stockton-on-Tees supporting projects from hate crime awareness events to storage space for foodbank resource donations.

Welcoming this update, the Committee commended officers for the prompt and effective response to the major Galaxy Blinds (Yarm Lane) fire in May 2026 and asked how community grant funding was accessed – officers agreed to share the criteria following this meeting.

Officers were thanked for their contributions to this meeting and were asked to relay the Committee's appreciation to their respective teams for the important role they played in keeping the people of the Borough safe.

AGREED that the Overview & Performance Report: SBC Neighbourhoods (Regulated Services: Trading Standards, Community Safety & Emergency Planning) (and

presentation) and the additional Emergency Planning Update briefing paper be noted, and that further information be provided as identified.

CSS/35/26 Scrutiny Review of Alley Gates

The first evidence-gathering session for the Committee's review of Alley Gates considered information from the Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council (SBC) Community Safety and Care For Your Area departments. Presented by the SBC Community Safety Services Manager and supported by the SBC Principal Projects Officer, the submission included the following:

- Background: During the 2001-2002 municipal year, a pilot project to install alley gates to three streets in the Newtown ward was initiated (Middlesbrough and Hartlepool had already run similar pilots at this time), with the aim being to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour (ASB) in these areas. Following its success, funding was secured from the SBC capital programme, along with additional finance from the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund, the Cleaner, Safer and Greener Fund, and the New Opportunities Fund.

  The Borough's alley gates programme ran until 2012-2013 whereupon 327 gates were in place on Council / adopted land. Some of these had been installed via the SBC Ward Councillor Community Participation Budget (CPB), with others owned by, and the responsibility of, Thirteen Housing Group.

- Locations: The six wards within the Borough that currently had the most alley gates installed were Ropner (116), Mandale & Victoria (82), Newtown (61), Stockton Town Centre (61), Norton South (9), and Norton Centre (6). Yarm ward had three, Billingham South ward had two, and Billingham West & Wolviston, Hardwick & Salters Lane, Southern Villages, and Village wards all had one alley gate in place. Maps indicating the locations of alley gates for Newtown, Mandale & Victoria, and Ropner wards were provided, as was a link to a full audit of all gates within the Borough.

- Legislation associated with alley gates: During the pilot and the early stages of the alley gate programme, legislation under the Highways Act was utilised (with Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs)). In 2005, new legislation was introduced to allow the installation of alley gates through Gating Orders via the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act.

  In 2014, the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act introduced Public Spaces Protection Orders (PSPOs) which replaced the previous legislation to allow the installation of gates to restrict access. A PSPO could be used to restrict activity that had a detrimental effect on the locality, was (or was likely to be) persistent in nature, was (or was likely to be) unreasonable, and justified the restrictions being imposed. A PSPO must clearly set out what the detrimental activities were and what was deemed 'anti-social' or 'unreasonable', so could be challenging.

- How effective have the alley gates been: 2005 data highlighted that the alley gate programme had resulted in a substantial decrease in incidents of crime in the gated areas: 43% reduction in domestic burglary, 64% reduction in deliberate fires, 58% reduction in ASB, and 52% reduction in fly-tipping.

- Feedback from the community: In 2004, a consultation exercise was undertaken to gauge the views of residents where alley gates had been installed and been in place for over six months – the response was very positive. Since the gates were installed, the majority of respondents felt safer, thought that burglaries, people loitering, vandalism, and fly-tipping had all reduced, and would move to other alley gated areas.

- Lawrence Street, Stockton – April 2024: In April 2024, a resident was injured by an alley gate in Lawrence Street, Stockton falling on them. Following an accident investigation, all the Borough's gates were subsequently assessed, with professional engineers providing a recommendation to upgrade the hinge mechanism. £70,000 was allocated to undertake emergency upgrades, and the gates were now assessed on a six-monthly rota.

- Public reported stats: 2023 – 28 reports of alley gate damage; 2024 – 226 reports (year of Lawrence Street accident); 2025 – 126 reports; 2026 (up to September) – 70 reports.

- Non-budgeted maintenance spend (not including inspections): 2023-2024 – £9,000; 2024-2025 – £25,000; 2025-2026 – £43,000.

- Financial implications: The costs for the replacement of one set of gates were estimated by the manufacturer as between £5,000 and £7,000 (depending on location and individual requirements). Lock replacements were £90 (plus two hours labour), with the cost for the removal of current gates set (no replacement) being £1,000. Current inspection and maintenance-identified works had no budget allocation and were currently an overspend on the Highways budget. The total replacement of all the alley gates on the Borough's scheme would be in excess of £2,000,000.

- Future policy options / considerations: A number of options were noted in relation to future considerations around this community safety measure. Continuing with existing arrangements (i.e. no change) carried high risk, whilst there were funding implications for the like-for-like replacement of the Borough's alley gates as part of a multi-year programme. SBC could look to re-evaluate the locations where these gates were currently in place (replacing key gates where required and reducing overall numbers), or could undertake the phased removal of all current alley gates over multiple years (though this would still have budgetary demands and, possibly, political resistance). Consideration could also be given to any other community safety options (e.g. CCTV) which might be able to more effectively deter crime and ASB in alleyways, and consultation could be initiated to ascertain what residents living within the proximity of alleyways think / feel about existing and future measures.

Thanking SBC officers for the information provided, Committee discussions initially took place on the quoted full replacement costs and whether it would be more prudent to focus on problematic parts (e.g. hinges / bolts / locks) rather than the entire gates themselves, many of which were in decent condition. Members also acknowledged that the design could be somewhat of an eyesore, that costs were incurred due to damage to locks, and that effectiveness could be compromised by people vandalising / climbing over the top of them.

Further Committee comments were made in relation to the initial effort to dissuade individuals from using alleyways as rat-runs, as well as attempts to address fly-tipping and ASB (which was an issue at the time they were installed). Whilst they clearly served a community safety purpose, they needed to be inspected on a regular basis to avoid accidents / injuries – something which officers subsequently provided assurance around (with gates being more regularly checked after the Lawrence Street incident). Also, resident views on the value / effectiveness of the gates may have changed over time and needed to be sought.

Returning to the theme of the overall look of the gates, Members asked if any information was available from other Local Authorities with regard the designs they had installed. Officers stated that most gates comprised a standardised design, and that more ornate structures may not be as effective despite being better from a visual perspective.

SCOPE AND PROJECT PLAN

It was noted that the next evidence session later this month would feature a submission from Cleveland Police, with proposed questions for the intended survey for SBC Ward Councillors also being considered. A written response from Cleveland Fire Brigade would also be shared prior to the next meeting.

AGREED that the information provided by the Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council (SBC) Community Safety and Care For Your Area departments be noted.

CSS/36/26 Chair's Update and Select Committee Work Programme 2026-2027

CHAIR'S UPDATE

The Chair noted a recent regional joint Members / officers scrutiny network meeting which included a proposal to explore Local Authority scrutiny functions across the North East. The Chair had been contacted by the North East Regional Employers Organisation (NEREO) and would be meeting with the Chair to look at ways of facilitating the communication of information / best practice across the region.

The Chair also reiterated thanks to officers for their contributions to this meeting and asked that appreciation be relayed back to relevant teams / colleagues for their ongoing efforts in keeping people of the Borough safe.

WORK PROGRAMME 2026-2027

The next meeting was due to take place on 22 October 2026 and would involve the next Scrutiny Review of Alley Gates evidence-gathering session, a progress update on outstanding actions in relation to recommendation from the Committee's 2020 Fly-Grazed Horses review, and the annual Air Quality update.

AGREED that the Chair's Update and Community Safety Select Committee Work Programme 2026-2027 be noted.

Chair: ……