

Date:

Wednesday 20 May 2026 at 6.00 pm

Venue:

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

Agenda

1. Livestreaming

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.

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

If there are any technical difficulties with the livestreaming, the meeting will still proceed.

2. Welcome and Evacuation Procedure (Pages 7 - 10)

3. Apologies for Absence

4. Declarations of Interest

5. Minutes (Pages 11 - 38)

To approve the minutes of the last meetings held on 18 March 2026 and 1 April 2026.

6. Public Question Time (Pages 39 - 42)

7. Appointments to Committees and Outside Bodies 2026/27 (Pages 43 - 44)

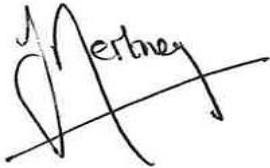
8. Stockton on Tees Local Plan (Pages 45 - 58)

9. Houses in Multiple Occupation Supplementary Planning Document and Article 4 Direction (Pages 59 - 122)

10. Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council Consent Street Trading Policy Review 2026 (Pages 123 - 126)

11. Motions to Council (Pages 127 - 130)

12. **Members' Question Time** (Pages 131 - 134)
13. **Forward Plan and Leader's Statement**



Jonathan Nertney
Head of Democratic Services
Tuesday 12 May 2026

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 Manager, Judy Trainer on email judy.trainer@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

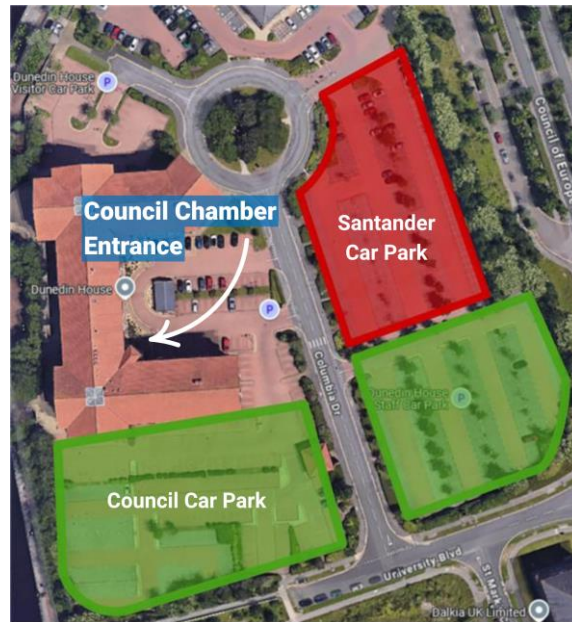
You must register as an Other Registrable Interest:

- 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.

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Agenda Item 5

Council

A meeting of Council was held on Wednesday 18th March 2026.

Present: The Worshipful the Mayor (Cllr Stephen Richardson)
Cllr Stefan Barnes, Cllr Jim Beall, Cllr Pauline Beall, Cllr Michelle Bendelow, Cllr Clare Besford, Cllr Marc Besford, Cllr Carol Clark, Cllr Diane Clarke OBE, Cllr Robert Cook, Cllr Nigel Cooke, Cllr John Coulson, Cllr Ian Dalgarno, Cllr Stephen Dodds, Cllr Richard Eglington, Cllr Lisa Evans, Cllr Dan Fagan, Cllr Kevin Faulks, Cllr Nathan Gale, Cllr John Gardner, Cllr Lynn Hall, Cllr Elsi Hampton, Cllr Stefan Houghton, Cllr Shakeel Hussain, Cllr Barbara Inman, Cllr Niall Innes, Cllr Eileen Johnson, Cllr Mohammed Mazi, Cllr Mrs Ann McCoy, Cllr Jack Miller, Cllr Mick Moore, Cllr Sufi Mubeen, Cllr Ross Patterson, Cllr David Reynard, Cllr Tony Riordan, Cllr Paul Rowling, Cllr Vanessa Sewell, Cllr Andrew Sherris, Cllr Norma Stephenson OBE, Cllr Mick Stoker, Cllr Hugo Stratton, Cllr Ted Strike, Cllr Marilyn Surtees, Cllr Emily Tate, Cllr Jim Taylor, Cllr Hilary Vickers, Cllr Marcus Vickers, Cllr Sylvia Walmsley, Cllr Alan Watson, Cllr Sally Ann Watson, Cllr Katie Weston and Cllr Paul Weston

Officers: Mike Greene, Tracey Carter, Clare Harper, Marc Stephenson, Julie Butcher, Kirsty Grundy, Judy Trainer, Michael Henderson, Peter Bell, John Devine and Junita Agyapong

Also in attendance: Press and public

Apologies: Cllr Jason French and Cllr Ray Godwin

COU/82/25 Welcome and Evacuation Procedure

The Worshipful the Mayor welcomed everyone and outlined the arrangements for the meeting.

COU/83/25 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

COU/84/25 Minutes

Consideration was given to the minutes of the meetings held on 21 January 2026 and 18 February 2026.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meetings held on 21 January 2026 and 18 February 2026 be confirmed and signed by the Worshipful the Mayor as a correct record.

COU/85/25 Minutes Silence Former Councillor Chris Coombs

Members observed a minute's silence as a mark of respect for former Councillor Chris Coombs who had recently passed away.

COU/86/25 Public Question Time

Question 1

A public question had been submitted. However, the questioner was not present at the meeting therefore it was advised that a written reply would be sent.

Question 2

A public question had been submitted by Samuel Bradford. However, the questioner was not present at the meeting therefore it was advised that a written reply would be sent to him.

Question 3

A public question had been submitted by Samuel Bradford. However, the questioner was not present at the meeting therefore it was advised that a written reply would be sent to him.

Question 4

The following question was submitted by Karlee Atkinson:

"Both myself, my councillor and others have reported on numerous occasions over the last 12 months about the illegal, dangerous and inconsiderate parking around Billingham South School. Particularly around Belasis Avenue and Bedale Avenue. Please can you tell me how many times that this area has been visited by enforcement and how many PCNs have been issued to vehicles in this area at school run times in that time?"

The Cabinet Member for Access, Communities and Community Safety (Cllr Norma Stephenson) responded with:

"Thank you for bringing this issue to the Council's attention. I share your concern regarding illegal and dangerous parking, especially around schools in our borough.

Civil Enforcement Officers have been carrying out targeted patrols in this area. Where officers observe vehicles parked in contravention of restrictions, enforcement action is taken in accordance with legislation. Unfortunately, there are significant demands on the time of our Civic Enforcement Officers who cannot be at every school, at the same time. It is therefore important that parents and carers also play their own part in keeping young children and pedestrians safe by parking in a safe and legal manner.

In the current financial year, 21 Penalty Charge Notices have been issued in this area, compared with 8 issued in the previous financial year which demonstrates an increase in enforcement activity although issues associated with school parking cannot be dealt with through enforcement activity alone.

A patrol tasking in this area remains in place, and recent visits have shown improved compliance. I recognise the concern that enforcement activity may not always be visible. Enforcement is intelligence led and balanced against demand across the borough, but officers are instructed to take action whenever contraventions are witnessed. Alongside enforcement, the Council continues to focus on education and visibility to encourage better driver behaviour and improve compliance over time.

The Council will continue to monitor this area closely and adjust enforcement activity where necessary. The safety of pedestrians, particularly around schools, remains a priority and we will continue to use both enforcement and engagement to reduce the risk of serious incidents.”

Karlee Atkinson asked the following supplementary question:

“Three weeks ago, during school run time, an enforcement van was observed driving at a snail’s pace passed cars parked illegally. Enforcement Officers were seen walking in areas where there are parking bays but ignored the problem area. What is the Council going to do about this?”

The Cabinet Member for Access, Communities and Community Safety (Cllr Norma Stephenson) responded with:

“Parking is not within the Council’s remit, but we do our best to address the problem. Thank you for raising this issue. I will investigate.”

Question 5

The following question was submitted by Christopher Liphthorpe:

“Will the council ban all contracts with Palantir?”

I am concerned about Palantir's technology being used for social credit scoring and crime prediction in Teesside. This is a dystopian system which can lead to self-censorship and a loss of individual autonomy.

Palantir is also developing AI-powered weapons systems for use in Israel's conflict with Palestinians in Gaza. This violates international humanitarian law, human rights and our basic privacy and freedoms.”

The Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Resources and Transport (Cllr Paul Rowling) responded with:

“Thank you, Mr Liphthorpe, for your question.

I completely understand why residents raise concerns about the ethics of new technologies and about the behaviour of some of the very large companies operating in that space. Those are legitimate issues, and it is right that people scrutinise them.

But it is also important to be clear about the role of a local authority. Councils cannot pick and choose which companies to exclude from procurement based on political views or international matters. We are required to follow national procurement law and to run fair, open and transparent processes that show value for money and comply fully with UK legislation.

What we can do, and what this administration is very clear about, is make sure that any technology used by this council meets the highest standards of data protection, transparency and accountability. And where digital or AI systems are involved, they must comply with UK law and sit within proper governance and oversight.

And just to remove any doubt: there are no proposals before this council to introduce any kind of social credit scoring in our borough.

I am pleased to assure Mr Lipthorpe that our focus will remain exactly where it should be on protecting residents' rights, using technology responsibly, and ensuring that all decisions are taken openly and comply with the law. That is the standard we have set, and it is the standard we will continue to apply."

Christopher Lipthorpe asked the following supplementary question:

"What personal and anonymised data is shared with Palantir or other similar agencies?"

The Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Resources and Transport (Cllr Paul Rowling) responded with:

"To my knowledge none but I will check and give a comprehensive answer to the questioner and share with all Councillors."

Question 6

The following question was submitted by John McDermottroe:

"In regard to the MTFP Of the £6.7 million savings required in 2026/27, how much is currently supported by fully costed and approved proposals rather than assumptions within Phase 2 of transformation?"

The Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Resources and Transport (Cllr Paul Rowling) responded with:

"To close the budget gap, we're continuing to take a planned and well managed approach to transformation and change through our Powering Our Future framework. Our programme management processes are now well embedded, and we've already seen the benefits — including the overachievement of savings delivered in Phase 1 of the Transformation Programme.

Phase 2 is now underway. This stage is focused on improving day to day efficiency, carrying out detailed service reviews and looking at opportunities across the whole council. As part of this, we're also developing our project management approach so it remains fit for purpose and able to support us through the significant financial pressures ahead, while still ensuring we deliver high quality services for our communities.

Good progress has already been made. All reviews are now being taken through a clear and robust governance process, and many are now in the design stage. This includes detailed baselining work, identifying the outcomes we want to achieve, and

starting to map out how savings and other benefits will be delivered. We're also exploring invest to save options and new opportunities to generate income.

At this stage, part of the £6.7 million savings needed for 2026/27 is supported by fully costed proposals. The remaining amount is based on assumptions linked to the ongoing Phase 2 Transformation work, which is moving through the gateway process. We expect fully developed, costed options to be ready for approval ahead of the next formal update of the MTFP as business cases are completed.”

John McDermottroe asked the following supplementary question:

“If a significant number of proposals are at design stage, what contingency measures have been identified to avoid using reserves?”

The Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Resources and Transport (Cllr Paul Rowling) responded with:

“We decided last month that reserves are too low and agreed a process to replenish these. There is nothing to indicate that we won't meet our targets and do not envisage using reserves.”

Question 7

The following question was submitted by John McDermottoe:

“Children's Social Care is projected to require an additional £5 million next year, rising to £13 million by 2028/29. What structural changes are being implemented to reduce reliance on high-cost external placements?”

The Cabinet Member for Children and Young People (Cllr Clare Besford) responded with:

“Like many Authorities across the country, Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council is experiencing sustained pressure on the Children's Services budget, particularly in relation to the cost of external care arrangements. In response, we are implementing a range of structural changes designed to reduce our use of high-cost external care whilst ensuring that children continue to receive safe, stable and consistent support.

A central aspect of this work is the expansion of our own in house children's home provision. We are developing new residential children's homes specifically designed to support children with complex social and emotional needs, including those who have experienced significant trauma. These homes will provide a therapeutic environment with skilled staff and specialist multi-disciplinary support so that more children can receive the care they need locally rather than in high cost, external and sometimes out of area settings.

We are strengthening our fostering service. We have redesigned our fostering offer as we seek to recruit, train and retain more foster carers, including carers with the skills and confidence to support children with more complex needs. Increasing the number of local fostering families helps to ensure that children can remain in family-based care arrangements wherever possible, reducing the need to use external provision.

We also work closely with ethical and high-quality providers as part of our sufficiency and commissioning strategy. Our focus is on shaping the local care market so that the homes available reflect the needs of our children. We seek to work with partners who share our values and who are committed to delivering stable, child-centred care, whilst offering better value for the Council.

Regionally, we are contributing to the development of Regional Care Cooperatives (RCCs). RCCs seek to support councils to work together to plan, commission and develop residential and fostering provision. By working at scale, we expect to have greater influence over the market, improve sufficiency and reduce the cost pressures associated with spot purchasing external care arrangements.

We are also strengthening our borough level sufficiency planning, using better forecasting and data to ensure we have the right mix of homes and care arrangements to meet current and future need. This includes a stronger focus on kinship care, helping more children to remain safely within their wider family network where appropriate.

Alongside this, we are committed to providing earlier help and edge of care support for families. By providing targeted interventions, intensive family support and specialist services at an earlier stage, we aim to reduce the number of children who need to come into care in the first place. This improves outcomes for families and reduces long term demand for high-cost care arrangements.

Finally, we are continuing to stabilise our workforce. Reducing reliance on agency staff supports more consistent planning for children, reduces the risk of care arrangements breaking down and helps us to make timely, well-informed decisions about the most appropriate support for each child.

Together, these measures form a long-term strategy to reduce our use of high-cost external care arrangements, strengthen local capacity and ensure that children receive the right support at the right time.”

John McDermottroe asked the following supplementary question:

“How many placements are external and what is the cost? What is the target to reduce these over the next two years?”

The Cabinet Member for Children and Young People (Cllr Clare Besford) responded with:

“We cannot share the number of placements publicly but will provide average costs as a written response.”

Question 8

A public question had been submitted by Geoffrey Mawson. However, the questioner was not present at the meeting therefore it was advised that a written reply would be sent to him.

Question 9

The following question was submitted by Jess Hobson:

“Thirteen, the non-profit social housing provider, have increased rents by 1% over inflation year-on-year for 5 years whilst increasing capital reserves to over £800 million. At the same time, social housing tenants face high levels of poverty and deprivation across Teesside which will be further embedded by increased rent. Given this, will the council write to Thirteen and urge them to implement a rent freeze?”

The Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Housing (Cllr Richard Eglington) responded with:

“In making its annual rent determination, Thirteen has taken a number of factors into account. In summary, these include:

- The need to invest in improving existing homes, ensuring they are energy-efficient and meet required standards.
- The importance of providing appropriate, high-quality housing and tenancy services that meet their tenants’ needs.
- Working with tenants to build stronger communities.

Thirteen has advised its tenants how it plans to spend money in 2026/27. They anticipate spending £320 million, which includes:

- Modernising homes: £68.4m
- Supporting people and communities: £9m
- Repairs and maintenance: £64.3m
- Service charges (the costs of running and maintaining shared buildings and spaces): £17.9m
- Building new homes: £78.6m (funded by grants and loans)
- Managing homes: £33.7m
- Interest payments: £21.9m

It is also important to acknowledge that the rules for setting rents are determined by the Regulator of Social Housing. These rules ensure rents are fair and affordable. The regulator allows housing associations such as Thirteen to increase rents by:

- The Consumer Price Index (CPI) inflation rate from the previous September
- Plus 1%

In September, CPI was 3.8%, resulting in a total permitted increase of 4.8% from April 2026.

While the Council recognises the pressures on household incomes, we also acknowledge the rising costs that Thirteen faces—for example, increased prices for building materials and essential services required to keep homes safe and in good condition. Taking all of these factors into consideration, the Council does not feel it is appropriate on this occasion to write to Thirteen to ask them not to implement a rent increase.”

Jess Hobson asked the following supplementary question:

“Do you advocate increasing funding from Central Government?”

The Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Housing (Cllr Richard Eglington) responded with:

“Organisations have to resolve their funding issues themselves. However, we do work with all social housing providers to keep rent down as much as possible.”

COU/87/25 Appointments to Committees for 2026/27

Consideration was given to a report seeking changes to Committee memberships in accordance with the wishes of political groups.

RESOLVED

- (1) That Councillor Sylvia Walmsley replace Councillor Ian Dalgarno on People Select Committee.
- (2) That Councillor Steve Dodds replace Councillor Dan Fagan on Planning Committee.

COU/88/25 Revisions to the Council's Constitution

Consideration was given to a report asking Council to approve revisions to the Council's Constitution following consideration by Member' Advisory Panel and Cabinet.

RESOLVED

- (1) That 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) That 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) That 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).

COU/89/25 Motions to Council

Motion 1

It was moved by Cllr Ted Strike and seconded by Cllr Tony Riordan and

RESOLVED That

“Council notes that:

Adult Social Care is a national statutory responsibility placed upon local authorities by Parliament, yet the current funding framework depends heavily on locally raised council tax, including the Adult Social Care precept. Because council tax bases vary significantly across England, residents in areas with lower property values are required to contribute proportionally more to raise the equivalent level of Adult Social Care funding as those in areas with stronger tax bases. This creates a structural and systemic inequity in the financing of what is, by law, a national service. Council further notes that, despite repeated commitments from successive governments to reform Adult Social Care funding, the present arrangements remain unchanged.

Council further notes that:

The continued reliance on local taxation to fund a national statutory service is both unsustainable and unfair. The responsibility for addressing this inequity, and for establishing a fair and resilient national funding model for Adult Social Care, rests squarely with Central Government.

Council therefore resolves:

- (1) That the Chief Executive be instructed to write to the Chancellor of the Exchequer
 - (a) seeking an immediate and definitive timetable for the introduction of a replacement national funding model for Adult Social Care; and
 - (b) calling upon the Government to introduce, without delay, an interim national equalisation mechanism for the Adult Social Care element of council tax, such that residents in equivalent council tax bands contribute on a consistent basis across England regardless of variations in local tax base.
- (2) That the communication make clear that this Council considers the current funding model inequitable and in urgent need of reform.
- (3) That any response received from the Chancellor of the Exchequer be reported to Full Council at the earliest available meeting.”

Motion 2

It was moved by Councillor Niall Innes and seconded by Councillor Tony Riordan:

“This Council notes:

- (1) That the Labour Government’s approach to public service funding, including the so-called “Fair Funding” arrangements and recent national settlements, has failed to deliver genuinely fair or needs-based funding for policing, fire and rescue services, or local government in areas such as Cleveland.
- (2) That Cleveland Police has publicly and repeatedly warned that current Government funding settlements are inadequate, unfair, and unsustainable, resulting in a projected funding shortfall of around £2.4 million, equivalent to

approximately 40 frontline police officers, despite continued high levels of crime, vulnerability, and demand. Between 2024-2025, national police forces have seen a net decrease of 2,195 officers.

- (3) That Cleveland Police received the lowest percentage funding increase nationally, a settlement which its Labour Police and Crime Commissioner has described as deeply unfair and disconnected from operational reality, placing frontline policing at risk.
- (4) That since Labour came to power in 2024, police forces nationally have faced ongoing real-terms funding pressure, with forces such as Cleveland being forced to plan for reductions in officer numbers, fewer specialist roles, and reduced neighbourhood policing capacity, not because demand has fallen, but because Government funding has failed to keep pace with costs.
- (5) That Cleveland Fire Brigade remains one of the most financially constrained fire services in the country, with a structural funding gap projected at around £1.77 million, even after proposed council tax precept increases.
- (6) That Cleveland Fire Brigade has made clear that continued under-funding places frontline resilience at risk, forcing difficult decisions on staffing, appliances, and service delivery, and transferring the burden of national funding failures onto local residents.
- (7) That Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council has itself been negatively impacted by the Government's funding framework, including:
 - A worsening financial position driving poor fiscal planning.
 - Missing out entirely on any share of the additional £740 million announced in the Final Local Government Finance Settlement, despite significant local need.
 - Being excluded from multiple support grants purely because of headline Core Spending Power calculations that mask real-world pressures.

This Council believes:

- (1) That the Government's "Fair Funding" approach is neither fair nor reflective of need and systematically disadvantages areas such as Stockton-on-Tees and the wider Cleveland area.
- (2) That current under-funding of police and fire services directly undermines public safety, increases risk to residents, and erodes confidence in essential public services.
- (3) That the Government's reliance on council tax precepts to prop up police and fire funding is regressive, unfairly shifting responsibility from the Exchequer to local households, many of whom are already under severe cost-of-living pressure.

This Council resolves:

- (1) That the Council write to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, expressing this Council's deep concern and strong opposition to the impact of the Labour

Government's funding policies on Police and Fire Services, particularly the consequences of the current Fair Funding approach.

(2) That the correspondence explicitly highlights:

- The severe and disproportionate impact of funding shortfalls on Cleveland Police, including the real risk of losing frontline officers and reduced community policing in Stockton-on-Tees.
- The ongoing financial fragility of Cleveland Fire Brigade, and the unacceptable risks this creates for emergency response and public safety.
- The failure of national funding decisions to recognise the needs of Stockton-on-Tees and the wider Cleveland area, despite unambiguous evidence of demand and need.

(3) That the Council calls on the Chancellor to urgently review and reform current funding arrangements, to:

- Deliver genuinely fair, needs-based funding for Police and Fire Services
- Provide immediate redress for Forces and Brigades facing funding-driven reductions.
- Ensure areas such as Cleveland Police and Cleveland Fire Brigade services are no longer penalised by flawed funding formulas.

(4) That the letter be issued on behalf of the Council by the Chief Executive.”

Councillor Paul Rowling moved and Councillor Norma Stephenson seconded the following amendment:

“This Council notes:

- (1) Recent national settlements, have failed to deliver genuinely fair or needs-based funding for policing, fire and rescue services, or local government in areas such as Cleveland.
- (2) That Cleveland Police has publicly and repeatedly warned that current Government funding settlements are inadequate, unfair, and unsustainable, resulting in a projected funding shortfall of around £2.4 million, equivalent to approximately 40 frontline police officers, despite continued high levels of crime, vulnerability, and demand.
- (3) That Cleveland Police received the lowest percentage funding increase nationally, a settlement which its Labour Police and Crime Commissioner has described as deeply unfair and disconnected from operational reality, placing frontline policing at risk.
- (4) Since 2010, police forces nationally have faced ongoing real-terms funding pressure, with forces such as Cleveland being forced to plan for reductions in officer numbers, fewer specialist roles, and reduced neighbourhood policing

capacity, not because demand has fallen, but because Government funding has failed to keep pace with costs.

- (5) That Cleveland Fire Brigade remains one of the most financially constrained fire services in the country, with a structural funding gap projected at around £1.77 million, even after agreed council tax precept increases.
- (6) That Cleveland Fire Brigade has made clear that continued under-funding places frontline resilience at risk, forcing difficult decisions on staffing, appliances, and service delivery, and transferring the burden of national funding failures onto local residents.
- (7) That Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council has itself been impacted by the Government's funding framework, including:
 - Increases in funding not keeping up with service demand.
 - Missing out entirely on any share of the additional £740 million announced in the Final Local Government Finance Settlement, despite significant local need.
 - Being excluded from multiple support grants purely because of headline Core Spending Power calculations that mask real-world pressures.

This Council believes:

- (1) That the funding approach seen over the last decade and the first-year allocation under "Fair Funding" is neither fair nor reflective of need and systematically disadvantages areas such as Stockton-on-Tees and the wider Cleveland area.
- (2) That current under-funding of police and fire services directly undermines public safety, increases risk to residents, and erodes confidence in essential public services.
- (3) That the Government's reliance on council tax precepts to prop up police and fire funding is regressive, unfairly shifting responsibility from the Exchequer to local households, many of whom are already under severe cost-of-living pressure.

This Council resolves:

- (1) That the Council write to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, expressing this Council's deep concern and strong opposition to the impact of funding policies since 2010 on Police and Fire Services.
- (2) That the correspondence explicitly highlights:
 - The severe and disproportionate impact of funding shortfalls on Cleveland Police, including the real risk of losing frontline officers and reduced community policing in Stockton-on-Tees.
 - The ongoing financial fragility of Cleveland Fire Brigade, and the potential risks this creates for emergency response and public safety.

- The failure of national funding decisions to recognise the needs of Stockton-on-Tees and the wider Cleveland area, despite unambiguous evidence of demand and need.

(3) That the Council calls on the Chancellor to urgently review and reform current funding arrangements, to:

- Deliver genuinely fair, needs-based funding for Police and Fire Services
- Provide immediate redress for Forces and Brigades facing funding-driven reductions.
- Ensure areas such as Cleveland Police and Cleveland Fire Brigade services are no longer penalised by flawed funding formulas.

(4) That the letter be issued on behalf of the Council by the Chief Executive.”

Following debate and in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 3.65, it was requested that a recorded vote be taken on the amendment, which was supported by at least a quarter of the Members present.

Members in favour of the amendment:

Cllr Jim Beall, Cllr Pauline Beall, Cllr Michelle Bendelow, Cllr Clare Besford, Cllr Marc Besford, Cllr Carol Clark, Cllr Bob Cook, Cllr Nigel Cooke, Cllr Richard Eglinton, Cllr Lisa Evans, Cllr Nathan Gale, Cllr Barbara Inman, Cllr Eileen Johnson, Cllr Mrs Ann McCoy, Cllr Steve Nelson, Cllr Ross Patterson, Cllr Paul Rowling, Cllr Norma Stephenson OBE, Cllr Mick Stoker, Cllr Ted Strike, Cllr Marilyn Surtees, Cllr Katie Weston, Cllr Paul Weston and Cllr Barry Woodhouse.

Members against the amendment:

Cllr Diane Clarke OBE, Cllr John Coulson, Cllr Stephen Dodds, Cllr Dan Fagan, Cllr John Gardner, Cllr Lynn Hall, Cllr Elsi Hampton, Cllr Stefan Houghton, Cllr Shakeel Hussain, Cllr Niall Innes, Cllr Mohammed Mazi, Cllr Jack Miller, Cllr Sufi Mubeen, Cllr David Reynard, Cllr Stephen Richardson, Cllr Tony Riordan, Cllr Vanessa Sewell, Cllr Andrew Sherris, Cllr Hugo Stratton, Cllr Emily Tate, Cllr Jim Taylor, Cllr Hilary Vickers and Cllr Marcus Vickers, Cllr Alan Watson and Cllr Sally Ann Watson.

Abstained:

Cllr Stefan Barnes, Cllr Ian Dalgarno, Cllr Kevin Faulks, Cllr Mick Moore and Cllr Sylvia Walmsely.

24 for the amendment

25 against the amendment

5 abstained

The amendment was declared not carried.

Following debate and in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 3.65, it was requested that a recorded vote be taken on the substantive motion, which was supported by at least a quarter of the Members present.

Members in favour of the motion:

Cllr Stefan Barnes, Cllr Diane Clarke OBE, Cllr John Coulson, Cllr Stephen Dodds, Cllr Dan Fagan, Cllr Kevin Faulks, Cllr John Gardner, Cllr Lynn Hall, Cllr Elsi Hampton, Cllr Stefan Houghton, Cllr Shakeel Hussain, Cllr Niall Innes, Cllr Mohammed Mazi, Cllr Jack Miller, Cllr Sufi Mubeen, Cllr David Reynard, Cllr Stephen Richardson, Cllr Tony Riordan, Cllr Vanessa Sewell, Cllr Andrew Sherris, Cllr Hugo Stratton, Cllr Ted Strike, Cllr Emily Tate, Cllr Jim Taylor, Cllr Hilary Vickers and Cllr Marcus Vickers, Cllr Sylvia Walmsley, Cllr Alan Watson and Cllr Sally Ann Watson.

Members against the motion:

Cllr Jim Beall, Cllr Pauline Beall, Cllr Michelle Bendelow, Cllr Clare Besford, Cllr Marc Besford, Cllr Carol Clark, Cllr Bob Cook, Cllr Nigel Cooke, Cllr Richard Eglington, Cllr Lisa Evans, Cllr Nathan Gale, Cllr Barbara Inman, Cllr Eileen Johnson, Cllr Mrs Ann McCoy, Cllr Steve Nelson, Cllr Paul Rowling, Cllr Norma Stephenson OBE, Cllr Mick Stoker, Cllr Marilyn Surtees, Cllr Katie Weston, Cllr Paul Weston and Cllr Barry Woodhouse.

Abstained:

Cllr Ian Dalgarno, Cllr Mick Moore and Cllr Ross Patterson.

29 for the motion

22 against the motion

3 abstained

The motion was declared carried and it was

RESOLVED

“This Council notes:

- (1) That the Labour Government’s approach to public service funding, including the so-called “Fair Funding” arrangements and recent national settlements, has failed to deliver genuinely fair or needs-based funding for policing, fire and rescue services, or local government in areas such as Cleveland.
- (2) That Cleveland Police has publicly and repeatedly warned that current Government funding settlements are inadequate, unfair, and unsustainable, resulting in a projected funding shortfall of around £2.4 million, equivalent to approximately 40 frontline police officers, despite continued high levels of crime, vulnerability, and demand. Between 2024 2025, national police forces have seen a net decrease of 2,195 officers.
- (3) That Cleveland Police received the lowest percentage funding increase nationally, a settlement which its Labour Police and Crime Commissioner has described as

deeply unfair and disconnected from operational reality, placing frontline policing at risk.

- (4) That since Labour came to power in 2024, police forces nationally have faced ongoing real-terms funding pressure, with forces such as Cleveland being forced to plan for reductions in officer numbers, fewer specialist roles, and reduced neighbourhood policing capacity, not because demand has fallen, but because Government funding has failed to keep pace with costs.
- (5) That Cleveland Fire Brigade remains one of the most financially constrained fire services in the country, with a structural funding gap projected at around £1.77 million, even after proposed council tax precept increases.
- (6) That Cleveland Fire Brigade has made clear that continued under-funding places frontline resilience at risk, forcing difficult decisions on staffing, appliances, and service delivery, and transferring the burden of national funding failures onto local residents.
- (7) That Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council has itself been negatively impacted by the Government's funding framework, including:
 - A worsening financial position driving poor fiscal planning.
 - Missing out entirely on any share of the additional £740 million announced in the Final Local Government Finance Settlement, despite significant local need.
 - Being excluded from multiple support grants purely because of headline Core Spending Power calculations that mask real-world pressures.

This Council believes:

- (1) That the Government's "Fair Funding" approach is neither fair nor reflective of need and systematically disadvantages areas such as Stockton-on-Tees and the wider Cleveland area.
- (2) That current under-funding of police and fire services directly undermines public safety, increases risk to residents, and erodes confidence in essential public services.
- (3) That the Government's reliance on council tax precepts to prop up police and fire funding is regressive, unfairly shifting responsibility from the Exchequer to local households, many of whom are already under severe cost-of-living pressure.

This Council resolves:

- (1) That the Council write to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, expressing this Council's deep concern and strong opposition to the impact of the Labour Government's funding policies on Police and Fire Services, particularly the consequences of the current Fair Funding approach.
- (2) That the correspondence explicitly highlights:

- The severe and disproportionate impact of funding shortfalls on Cleveland Police, including the real risk of losing frontline officers and reduced community policing in Stockton-on-Tees.
- The ongoing financial fragility of Cleveland Fire Brigade, and the unacceptable risks this creates for emergency response and public safety.
- The failure of national funding decisions to recognise the needs of Stockton-on-Tees and the wider Cleveland area, despite unambiguous evidence of demand and need.

(3) That the Council calls on the Chancellor to urgently review and reform current funding arrangements, to:

- Deliver genuinely fair, needs-based funding for Police and Fire Services
- Provide immediate redress for Forces and Brigades facing funding-driven reductions.
- Ensure areas such as Cleveland Police and Cleveland Fire Brigade services are no longer penalised by flawed funding formulas.

(4) That the letter be issued on behalf of the Council by the Chief Executive.”

COU/90/25 Members' Question Time

Question 1

Councillor Nathan Gale withdrew his question.

Question 2

The following question was submitted by Cllr Barbara Inman:

“In light of the Government’s Best Start in Life Strategy which sets ambitious targets for all local authorities to significantly increase the proportion of children achieving a Good Level of Development (GLD) by 2028, what are Stockton Council’s planned measures to improve GLD outcomes for children and how will these initiatives support early years settings, families and communities across the Borough?”

The Cabinet Member for Children and Young People (Cllr Clare Besford responded with:

“I am pleased to update Council on the progress we are making through our Best Start in Life work—progress that reflects this authority’s determination to address inequality at its roots, not simply talk about it.

Members will be aware that achieving a Good Level of Development is a key measure of school readiness, capturing children’s early communication, physical development, personal and social skills, literacy and maths. These are the foundations of opportunity. If we are serious about fairness, if we truly believe in equality of opportunity, then we cannot allow gaps to widen before a child even starts school.

Last week, I presented to Cabinet our new Best Start in Life Plan, co-produced with families and partners. This plan is not just another strategy on a shelf. It is a clear statement of intent: that persistent inequalities in this borough must be confronted, not accepted; and that every child—regardless of background, postcode or circumstance—deserves the same strong start.

Our plan focuses on three priority areas.

First, strengthening family support and the home learning environment. Through our Family Hubs, we are improving access to parenting support, early literacy and play sessions, and providing clear information on child development. This is about practical action that empowers families, not rhetoric.

Second, improving speech, language and communication. We are promoting consistent early communication messages, improving joint work at the 2 to 2½ year review, expanding evidence-based programmes and investing in workforce skills. Early intervention is one of the strongest tools we have to break cycles of disadvantage.

Third, supporting high quality early years provision. We are working with settings to strengthen quality, improve SEND support and increase take up of funded childcare places. Access to good early education should never depend on how well a family can navigate the system.

To deliver this, we have established a multi-agency School Readiness Focus Group, bringing together health, education, early years providers and the voluntary sector. And in Redhill, we are testing an enhanced 0–5 offer through a new Best Start Family Hub—learning what works before scaling it borough wide.

Mr Mayor, improving GLD outcomes is ambitious, but it is essential if we want a fairer, more equal Stockton on Tees. This Council has made a commitment: that every child should have the strongest possible start in life. And through this plan, we are acting on that commitment.

I want to be clear: this is not the responsibility of one service or one administration. It is a responsibility we share with our partners, with our members.

We each have a role in championing early years, supporting families in our communities, promoting the use of Family Hubs, and challenging inequality wherever we see it.

let us work together, across parties and across wards, to support this plan, to communicate it in our communities, and to stand behind the principle that every child in Stockton on Tees deserves the very best start in life.”

Cllr Barbara Inman asked the following supplementary question:

“Would you please comment on school readiness?”

The Cabinet Member for Children and Young People (Cllr Clare Besford) responded with:

“This is being picked up by the School Readiness Group.”

Question 3

Councillor Sufi Mubeen had submitted a question but as he had left the meeting before the question could be asked, under the Constitution, the question would be referred to the next Council meeting.

Question 4

The following question was submitted by Cllr Marcus Vickers:

“Many residents enjoy doing their part to recycle household waste; however, the current recycling system of bags and boxes is often cited as a point of frustration for a lot of residents, particularly our elderly folk who are sometimes physically challenged with the handling of them.

Given the decision to transition to fortnightly waste collections, will the Cabinet Member agree with me, and a great number of our residents, that a standard recycling wheelie bin, like the ones used by our Neighbouring Authorities, would remove the frustration and physical challenges for our residents and make it easier for them to take part in the recycling initiative?”

The Cabinet Member for Environment, Leisure and Culture (Cllr Nigel Cooke): responded with:

“The Government’s new Simpler Recycling legislation, which comes into effect in April 2026, requires paper and card to be collected separately from other recyclables to reduce contamination from food and liquids. If we were to introduce wheeled bins, we would need to issue two bins per household to comply with this requirement, which presents additional logistical and space challenges for many residents as well as significant cost at a time when we can least afford it. For these reasons and following a full analysis of all options which was conducted as part of a cross party scrutiny review, the Council has decided to retain the use of bags and boxes for recycling collections. This collection arrangement also provided the most cost-effective option for the Council when considering that Council’s that use bins see contamination rates in excess of 30%, whereas Stockton’s contamination rates are less than 5%.

From April, general waste will be collected fortnightly in the green wheeled bin, while recycling will be collected weekly using the existing white hessian bag, blue box, and a new blue hessian bag. Food waste will also be collected weekly using a lockable external caddy and a small internal kitchen caddy, in line with Simpler Recycling legislation. To address concerns about bags blowing away or becoming too heavy, we have previously redesigned the white bags with fastening mechanisms and weighted bottoms, and the new blue bag is now heavier at 1kg, reducing incidences of bags blowing away in extremely windy conditions. These changes are based on national legislation and evidence from WRAP (Waste and Resources Action Programme), which shows that reducing residual waste collections and increasing recycling collections improves recycling rates and therefore provides the most cost-effective collection solution.”

Cllr Marcus Vickers asked the following supplementary question:

“To maximise flexibility for local authorities and households, DEFRA introduced an exemption to allow the co-collection of food and garden waste. Concluding that there was no evidence that it would affect the ability to be recycled or composted, since the materials can always be processed through in-vessel composting when mixed.

Will the Cabinet Member agree with me that if this Labour Led Council had followed the DEFRA exemption, like many other councils, then our residents would have been able to place their garden and food waste into one wheelie bin, the costs of which were covered by DEFRA, the co-mingled waste would still be collected weekly, making it easier for residents, and the unnecessary desire to hit residents with their annual garden waste tax was entirely avoidable.?”

The Cabinet Member for Environment, Leisure and Culture (Cllr Nigel Cooke):
responded with:

“We offer a subscription service but no one is obliged to participate. Our approach is based on the recommendations of the cross-party scrutiny committee. We have to consider the end point and although the Council has the option to co-mingle garden and food waste, this is not the best approach for every Local Authority.”

Question 5

The following question was submitted by Cllr Jack Miller:

“Given the council’s decision to move to fortnightly residual waste collections, what specific provisions will be put in place to support households that produce unavoidable sanitary and incontinence waste, particularly those with disabled or vulnerable children and adults, to ensure they are not disproportionately affected by the change?”

The Cabinet Member for Environment, Leisure and Culture (Cllr Nigel Cooke):
responded with:

“From Tuesday 31st March, general waste collected in the green wheeled bin will move to a fortnightly schedule. This change brings Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council in line with national practice, where over 75% of local authorities in England have operated fortnightly general waste collections for many years. At the same time, the Council will introduce a new nationally mandated separate weekly food waste collection and we have also taken the decision to increase dry recycling collections to from fortnightly to weekly, helping to divert as much recyclable and compostable material as possible away from the general waste bin.

Recent compositional analysis of waste across the Borough showed that, on average, 33% of refuse placed in the general waste bin was food waste—material that will now be captured by the new weekly food waste service. In addition, more than 60% of the bin contents were also found to be recyclable through existing kerbside services. These changes are designed to maximise capacity, reduce disposal costs and support residents in managing their waste effectively.

We appreciate that some households, particularly those with medical needs, may find it more challenging to store waste for two weeks. To support residents in these circumstances, the Council offers additional capacity in the form of a 360 litre bin for households that meet the eligibility criteria. This includes households with six or more occupants and those with medical needs such as the use of incontinence pads.

Eligibility is assessed through a recycling assessment to ensure households are effectively recycling prior to accepting the request.”

Cllr Jack Miller asked the following supplementary question:

“Residents are already expressing concern that fortnightly collections could create distressing and unsanitary conditions for families managing incontinence or medical needs. Will the Council commit to introducing or significantly expanding a dedicated hygiene or clinical waste collection service, and guarantee that vulnerable households can access it easily without complex application processes or stigma?”

The Cabinet Member for Environment, Leisure and Culture (Cllr Nigel Cooke): responded with:

“We are meeting the requirements of the legislation and following similar practice to other Local Authorities. If anyone is struggling, I would advise them to contact the Care for Your Area team to explore what could be done to make life easier.”

Question 6

The following question was submitted by Cllr Barry Woodhouse:

“As the Chair of the Audit Committee. I would like to ask the Leader of the Council about her ability to comment on the finances of the council?”

The Leader of the Council (Cllr Lisa Evans) responded with:

“Thank you for your question, Councillor Woodhouse.

I think your question arises from the last Council meeting where many members of the opposition read out pre-prepared speeches, questioning my ability to understand the Council’s finances.

This approach was totally expected. I knew that it was coming and I was actually quite amused by it. It must be difficult having to direct insults to me at every single meeting.

Do I understand the budget process? Of course I do. I am constantly briefed on the Council’s finances by Clare Harper our Chief Finance Officer, Cllr Paul Rowling as the Cabinet Member responsible for finance, yourself as the Chair of Audit and also the Chief Executive.

What I did say in a previous meeting was that I ask for things to be explained in simple English. I hold my hands up at that and I stand by that. I am not a finance expert.

I am a very self-aware person. I understand my strengths, weaknesses and where I need to develop. Am I the best person to take the finance lead? No.

The measure to me of a good Leader is to look at the team around me. Look at their strengths and weaknesses. Identify the skillset of the team and appoint into roles accordingly. That is what you call leadership.

After the meeting, a member of the public who was present at the meeting, wrote to me. “About tonight’s meeting, Cllr Evans. I would just like to say that I am not sure of the context you made the comment about liking things in plain English, but for you to

be continually criticised for being less than perfect (and regarding a subject that most Cllrs of all colours do struggle with) sadly reflects on the petty toxicity of politics. If you have been open about your self-perception of not being a finance expert, then this is to your credit.”

I chose not to respond to these pre-prepared speeches at the meeting as I believe that’s exactly what was wanted of me. I won’t take any advice from the opposition on finances or the way that I choose my Cabinet.

Thank you.”

Cllr Barry Woodhouse asked the following supplementary question:

“Can the Leader comment on her ability to understand Tees Valley Combined Authority budgets?”

The Leader of the Council (Cllr Lisa Evans) responded with:

“I also understand the complexities of Combined Authority budgets and do get regular briefings.”

Question 7

The following question was submitted by Cllr Carol Clark:

“How many children benefited from the HAF scheme this half term?”

The Cabinet Member for Children and Young People (Cllr Clare Besford) responded with:

“1704 spaces were available and booked and 1461 attended which gives 85.7% of children brought to provision.

Of the 1461 spaces attended, we had 443 primary children and 183 secondary aged children, amounting to an overall total of 626 unique children.

This can be further analysed showing we hit our target of 85% of children attending met the essential criteria of benefit-related free school meals.”

Cllr Carol Clark asked the following supplementary question:

“How is the new booking system operating?”

The Cabinet Member for Children and Young People (Cllr Clare Besford) responded with:

“The frustrations with the old booking system were well documented as part of the scrutiny review. I am pleased to say that the new booking system is working really well and is much slicker. It is much easier for larger families to navigate and we have had positive feedback from parents and providers.”

Question 8

The following question was submitted by Cllr Marc Besford:

“Why did the minister for innovation recently visit?”

The Cabinet Member for Health and Adult Social Care (Cllr Pauline Beall): responded with:

“Chris McDonald MP Stockton North was aware that Dr Zubir Ahmed MP (Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State at the Department of Health and Social Care) was in the Borough for the opening of Fujifilm Biotechnologies and invited him to meet the Chief Executive and Leader of the Council, to discuss our Vision for the Tees Valley Care and Health Innovation Zone.

His visit demonstrates the national significance of our Vision, which has the potential to be game changing. By bringing together health, care, academic and industrial partners, we aim to drive innovation in diagnostics, digital technologies, workforce development and community-based health excellence. Work is already underway, and we have strong commitment from partners across the system.

We were encouraged by the Minister’s support across several critical areas which we hope will help accelerate progress and embed Stockton’s role and vision as the regional centre for Care and Health Innovation.”

Question 9

The following question was submitted by Cllr Eileen Johnson:

“Can I ask Cllr Richard Eglington about the recent public consultation into the Yarm Levelling up funding?”

The Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Housing (Cllr Richard Eglington): responded with:

“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. The bid focussed on delivery of improvements to cultural facilities in, and enhancements to, Preston Park Museum and Grounds (PPMG), and public realm enhancements on Yarm High Street and delivery of cycleway connections in Yarm and Eaglescliffe.

The majority of the LUF programme has been delivered or is in construction with the successful redevelopment of Yarm Town Hall, completion of the Spence Building at Preston Park in September 2025, featuring a remodelled cafe and new toilets, additional parking and improvements to the Aviary and playground and work has commenced on the improved cycle link along Durham Lane to connect key employment sites and surrounding residential areas commenced.

The consultation on the remaining works to Yarm High Street concluded in January and the result was a clear consensus from the people of Yarm with 86% of

respondents do not in support the scheme. Residents also provided some alternative ideas to improve Yarm and at Cabinet last week we considered options for the use of the LUF funding that remains including consideration of the replacement of the Pontoons in the river. We thank the public for engaging and have asked officers to bring back costed viable options for the use of remaining funding, considering the ideas identified through the consultation.”

COU/91/25 Forward Plan and Leader’s Statement

“Thank you for attending Council tonight.

Our last full Council meeting took place on 18 February where the 2026/27 budget and indicative medium term financial plan were approved. Since then, Cabinet has met once, last week, on 12 March. It was a busy agenda, among the items discussed were:

- The final report of the Adult Social Care and Health Select Committee on the Scrutiny Review of the Stockton-on-Tees Adult Carer’s Support Service
- The Adult Social Care Strategy for 2026-2030
- An update on the Round 1 Levelling Up Fund programme and Yarm High Street public realm scheme
- An update on the Accelerated Affordable housing delivery programme
- The decision records have been circulated to all Members and the minutes are available online.

The next Cabinet meeting is on 23 April 2026. So far among the items on the Forward Plan for that meeting are an update on the Central Stockton and North Thornaby Pride in Place Programme.

I have had the pleasure of being at Preston Hall many times recently, including viewing exhibitions and showing guests around. If you haven't been yet, make sure you plan a visit to this Easter. The new exhibition celebrating internationally acclaimed performer, La Voix, is on until June, showcasing the extraordinary career of one of the Borough's most successful entertainers.

La Voix has kindly loaned the museum a selection of her iconic costumes, accessories, photographs and personal memorabilia, giving visitors a rare glimpse into her celebrated career.

There will be a host of Easter themed activities too and the beautiful walled garden will reopen on 28 March for all to enjoy.

In the coming months our flagship regeneration project Stockton Waterfront urban park will open.

Stockton Waterfront is the latest chapter in the transformation of Stockton Town Centre. Once open, it will connect the town centre to the River Tees once more and will be an iconic new public space to host vibrant events, impressive play areas and heritage opportunities for residents and visitors.

The Borough is on the cusp of some of the biggest regeneration programmes of this generation and Stockton Waterfront is a huge opportunity to drive further change in the area for years to come.

The annual Mayor's Civic Awards will take place on 1 April at the Annual Meeting and will recognise those who have gone above and beyond helping to make Stockton-on-Tees a great place to live. It's always a celebration of everything that is good about Stockton-on-Tees and a great opportunity to highlight the amazing residents and organisations going out of their way to help boost community spirit.

At the Council's Annual Meeting on Wednesday 1 April, Councillor Richardson will use his final engagement as outgoing Mayor to honour the winners of the seven award categories.

I look forward to seeing you all there.”

Mayor

Council

A meeting of Council was held on Wednesday 1st April 2026.

Present: The Worshipful the Mayor (Cllr Robert Cook)
Cllr Stefan Barnes, Cllr Jim Beall, Cllr Pauline Beall, Cllr Michelle Bendelow, Cllr Clare Besford, Cllr Marc Besford, Cllr Carol Clark, Cllr Diane Clarke OBE, Cllr Nigel Cooke, Cllr John Coulson, Cllr Ian Dalgarno, Cllr Stephen Dodds, Cllr Richard Eglinton, Cllr Lisa Evans, Cllr Kevin Faulks, Cllr Nathan Gale, Cllr John Gardner, Cllr Lynn Hall, Cllr Elsi Hampton, Cllr Stefan Houghton, Cllr Shakeel Hussain, Cllr Barbara Inman, Cllr Eileen Johnson, Cllr Mohammed Mazi, Cllr Mrs Ann McCoy, Cllr Jack Miller, Cllr Mick Moore, Cllr Sufi Mubeen, Cllr Steve Nelson, Cllr Ross Patterson, Cllr Stephen Richardson, Cllr Tony Riordan, Cllr Paul Rowling, Cllr Vanessa Sewell, Cllr Andrew Sherris, Cllr Mick Stoker, Cllr Hugo Stratton, Cllr Ted Strike, Cllr Marilyn Surtees, Cllr Emily Tate, Cllr Hilary Vickers, Cllr Marcus Vickers, Cllr Sylvia Walmsley, Cllr Alan Watson, Cllr Sally Ann Watson, Cllr Katie Weston, Cllr Paul Weston and Cllr Barry Woodhouse

Officers: Mike Greene, Majella McCarthy, Clare Harper, Reuben Kench, Neil Mitchell, Carolyn Nice, Marc Stephenson, Iain Robinson, Ged Morton, Julie Butcher, Judy Trainer, Peter Bell and Tom Coates

Also in attendance: Civic Dignitaries and Invited Guests

Apologies: Cllr Dan Fagan, Cllr Jason French, Cllr Ray Godwin, Cllr Niall Innes, Cllr David Reynard and Cllr Jim Taylor

COU/1/26 Welcome and Evacuation Procedure

The Worshipful the Mayor welcomed everyone to the meeting and advised all present of the premises evacuation procedure in the event of an emergency.

COU/2/26 Appointment of The Mayor of the Borough for the Municipal Year 2026/27

Moved by Councillor Jim Beall and seconded by Councillor Eileen Johnson, that Councillor Bob Cook be appointed Mayor for the Municipal Year 2026/2027.

RESOLVED that Councillor Bob Cook be appointed Mayor for the Municipal Year 2026/2027.

COU/3/26 Appointment of the Deputy Mayor of the Borough for the Municipal Year 2026/27

Moved by Councillor Jim Beall and seconded by Councillor Lisa Evans, that Councillor Marilyn Surtees be appointed Deputy Mayor for the Municipal Year 2026/2027.

RESOLVED that Councillor Marilyn Surtees be appointed Deputy Mayor for the Municipal Year 2026/2027.

COU/4/26 Return of Thanks for Appointment by The Mayor

The Worshipful the Mayor, Councillor Bob Cook, returned thanks for his appointment and addressed the meeting regarding his ambitions for the year ahead.

COU/5/26 Return of Thanks for Appointment by the Deputy Mayor

The Deputy Mayor returned thanks for her appointment.

COU/6/26 Vote of Thanks to Retired Mayor

Moved by Councillor Lynn Hall and seconded by Councillor Tony Riordan, that a vote of thanks be extended to the retired Mayor for the admirable way in which he has discharged his duties during his term of office.

RESOLVED that thanks be extended to the retired Mayor for the admirable way in which he has discharged his duties during his term of office.

COU/7/26 Presentation of Medallions and Commemorative Digital Album to the Retired Mayor and Mayoress

The Worshipful the Mayor presented the retired Mayor and Mayoress with Medallions and a commemorative album.

COU/8/26 Address by the Retired Mayor

The Retired Mayor addressed the meeting to reflect on his year in office.

COU/9/26 Mayor's Civic Award Scheme

The Retired Mayor recognised the achievements of those who had been successfully nominated for a Mayor's Civic Award:

- Young Person Award – Ariadne Goldsmith
- Service to the Community Award – Individual – Janet Hodgson
- Service to the Community Award – Groups and Organisations – Hope Cancer Community Group
- Service to the Community Award – Business – Choco-Latte
- Health and Wellbeing Award – Stockton Volunteer Driver Service
- Green Award – Bright Minds, Big Futures
- Mayor's Special Award – Olga Maloney

COU/10/26 Presentation to Retired Mayor's Charities

A presentation was made to the Mayor's Charities.

The Retired Mayor presented Brian and Stella Jones from The Moses Project and Amanda Baker and Helen Shaw from Butterwick Hospice with cheques for £20,054.84 raised during his civic year.

COU/11/26 Long Service Awards

The Retired Mayor recognised the special contribution of a unique group of staff who had all achieved 25 years' service as a Local Government employee:

- Rachel Douglas
- Colin Dyball
- Derek Hall

Colin Dyball was in attendance at the meeting and the Retired Mayor invited him to come to the stage to receive his long service certificate.

COU/12/26 Presentation of Silver Salver to Retiring Deputy Mayor

On behalf of the Council, the retiring Mayor presented a silver salver to the retiring Deputy Mayor for his services during 2025/26.

COU/13/26 Presentation of Bible to the Mayor by the Mayor's Chaplain

Reverend Paul Neville presented the Bible to the Worshipful the Mayor.

COU/14/26 Presentation of Floral Arrangements

Floral arrangements were presented to the Mayoress, the retired Mayoress and the Deputy Mayor.

COU/15/26 Council's Constitution

Council was invited to approve the Council's Constitution. Members had been provided with a link to the Constitution.

RESOLVED that the Council's Constitution be agreed.

COU/16/26 Meetings of Council

RESOLVED that meetings of the Council be held at 6.00pm (except where otherwise stated) during the Municipal Year on the following dates:

- 20 May 2026
- 22 July 2026
- 23 September 2026
- 18 November 2026
- 20 January 2027
- 24 February 2027 (Special - MTFP)
- 17 March 2027
- 26 May 2027 (Annual Meeting - 11.00 am)

COU/17/26 Announcement of Cabinet Members for 2026/27

The Leader announced her Cabinet for the Municipal Years 2026/27:

- Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Resources and Transport – Councillor Paul Rowling
- Cabinet Member for Health and Adult Social Care – Councillor Pauline Beall
- Cabinet Member for Children and Young People – Councillor Clare Besford

- Cabinet Member for Environment, Leisure and Culture – Councillor Nigel Cooke
- Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Housing – Councillor Richard Eglington
- Cabinet Member for Access, Communities and Community Safety – Councillor Norma Stephenson

COU/18/26 Appointments 2026/27

No changes were proposed to Committee appointments.

COU/19/26 Corporate Parenting Pledge

The Worshipful the Mayor signed the Corporate Parenting Pledge on behalf of the Council accepting all Members' role as Corporate Parents.

COU/20/26 The Mayor will close the Meeting

The Worshipful the Mayor closed the meeting and invited guests to the civic reception.

COUNCIL – 20 MAY 2026 PUBLIC QUESTIONS

QUESTION 1

Public Question submitted by Dan Poole:

“I set up a suicide prevention initiative called One More Life in 2017 and was making some good progress in 2019, sadly my best friend tragically took his own life on December 6th 2019. I am currently going through the process of registering as a charitable organisation in Stockton. What support can I access through the council in terms of people, infrastructure, and resources to ensure that we have a robust set up this time round and that we can reduce our high rates of suicide locally?”

Received 26 April 2026 08:03

QUESTION 2

Public Question submitted by John McDermottoe:

“What assessment has Stockton Borough Council made of the financial impact that Net Zero-related policies are having on local industry, manufacturing competitiveness and household costs across the Borough?”

Received 6 May 2026 17:30

QUESTION 3

Public Question submitted by John McDermottoe:

“What assessment has Stockton Borough Council made of the impact that rising levels of migration and asylum accommodation are having on local housing availability, temporary accommodation demand and public services within the Borough?”

Received 6 May 2026 17:30

QUESTION 4

Public Question submitted by David Blair:

“Can I take it that the High Street will no longer be subject to closures or re directions to public transport with the opening of "Castlegate Park" in due course? The closures have previously been a total inconvenience to anyone using buses on numerous days due to "events" I take it the Council has considered this?”

Received 8 May 2026 16:00

REPORT TO COUNCIL

20 MAY 2026

REPORT OF CORPORATE
MANAGEMENT TEAM

Appointments to Committees and Outside Bodies 2026/27

Summary

This report relates to appointments to committees and outside bodies etc.

Recommended

That Council considers the nomination.

Details

A vacancy exists for a Council member to sit on the Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE), and the Labour Group has indicated that it wishes to nominate Cllr Marc Besford to the position. Other nominations to the vacancy may be submitted.

In addition, political groups have been invited to propose any changes they may wish to make to their existing appointments to Council committees, at this meeting.

Legal Implications

The Education Act 1996 requires representatives from the local authority to sit on the Advisory Council.

Certain seats must be allocated to political groups, as prescribed by the Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990.

Consultation with Ward/Councillors

Consultation has taken place with political group leaders.

Background Papers

None

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REPORT TO COUNCIL

20 MAY 2026

REPORT OF CORPORATE
MANAGEMENT TEAM

Stockton on Tees Local Plan

Summary

In January 2024, in accordance with Regulation 10A of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012, a five-year review of the Local Plan concluded that a full update through a new Local Plan was required. Council agreed that progressing a new Local Plan under the emerging plan-making system was the most robust and cost-effective approach.

The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2026 came into force on 25 March 2026, introducing a new regulatory framework for the preparation of Local Plans, Minerals and Waste Plans, and Supplementary Plans.

This report seeks Council's agreement to commence a new Local Plan in accordance with the 2026 Regulations, authorising all required elements to allow for progression through the 'getting ready' stage, including giving a notice of intention to MHCLG by 31 December 2026, and meeting all the necessary requirements to enable the commencement of Gateway 1 by 30 April 2027.

The report also seeks approval to establish a cross-party consultative and advisory steering group to support the Local Plan process.

Cabinet will be considering this report at its meeting on 14 May 2026 and are being asked to make the following recommendations to Council.

Recommendations

1. That Council approves the commencement of a full update of the Stockton on Tees Local Plan in accordance with the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004) as amended and the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2026.
2. That Council delegates the preparation, publication and submission of a 'Notice of intention to commence the Stockton on Tees Local Plan' to the Director of Regeneration & Inclusive Growth in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Housing and that this will be made available in accordance with the Local Plan Timetable and no later than September 2026.

3. That Council approves the preparation and submission of an updated Local Plan Timetable in broad accordance with Appendix 1 and authorises its submission to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) and its publication.
4. That Council delegates authority to the Director of Inclusive Growth and Regeneration in consultation with the Cabinet Member to update and publish the Local Plan Timetable monthly or as required, to ensure an up-to-date timetable is publicly available in accordance with Regulation 6 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2026.
5. That Council approves the commencement of a Design Guide Supplementary Plan to comply with the requirement of Section 15B and 15F(1) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended) and delegates authority to the Director of Inclusive Growth and Regeneration in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Housing to produce a draft document for consultation.
6. That Council authorises officers to explore the preparation of a Joint Minerals and Waste Plan with neighbouring Local Planning Authorities and delegate to the Director of Regeneration and Inclusive Growth in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Housing, the responsibility for all matters relating to Stockton-on-Tees Borough, including;
 - a. the commissioning of an associated evidence base (as necessary);
 - b. develop a 'Joint Minerals and Waste Plan agreement' under section 15I of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004) as amended;
 - c. develop a Minerals and Waste Plan Timetable;
 - d. undertake a 'scoping consultation' on the joint Tees Valley Minerals and Waste Local Plan; and
 - e. produce all associated documentation to allow to progress the joint Tees Valley Minerals and Waste Local Plan to progress through Gateway 1.
7. That Council delegates authority to the Director of Inclusive Growth and Regeneration in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Housing, to agree commencement of the scoping consultation for the Local Plan which will:
 - a. provide an opportunity for residents, community groups, businesses and other interested parties to register to be notified of Local Plan updates, via the Council website;

- b. consultation taking place in accordance with the Local Plan Regulations;
 - c. consultation material being made publicly available; and
 - d. a consultation plan being produced prior to Gateway 1 after having regard to comments made during the statutory scoping consultation.
8. That Council delegates authority to the Director of Inclusive Growth and Regeneration in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Housing, to undertake all necessary steps to inform and prepare the documents for the Gateway 1 self-assessment which may include commissioning evidence, undertaking a call for sites and preparing draft vision, Local Plan content and consultation plan, on the proposed local plan.
 9. That Council approves the formation of a cross-party consultative and advisory Members working group in broad accordance with the draft Terms of Reference at Appendix 2 to support the Local Plan process.

A New Plan Making system

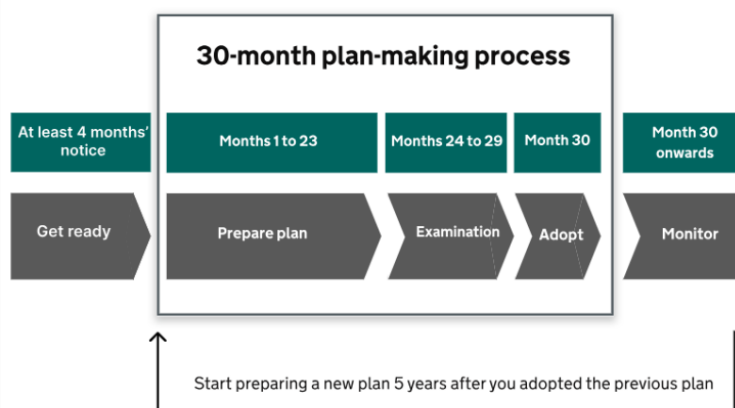
1. In January 2024, in accordance with Regulation 10A of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012, a five year review of the Local Plan was undertaken. This review concluded that a full update, in the form of a new Local Plan, was required. Council agreed with this recommendation and confirmed that progressing a new Local Plan under the emerging plan making system represented the most robust and cost-effective way forward.
2. In the interim period, work has progressed on developing internal governance arrangements, preparing conservation area appraisals, and building up elements of the evidence base.
3. The Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023 introduced a new plan-making framework that fundamentally reshapes the development plan system with a streamlined 30-month process. The Government has since introduced the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2026 on 25 March 2026 confirming the procedures for this new plan-making framework.
4. The purpose of this report is to seek Council's agreement to commence a new Local Plan in accordance with the 2026 Regulations and to give notice to MHCLG of the Council's intention to commence plan-making. This will ensure compliance with the Government's backstop deadline of 31 December 2026. The associated recommendations will enable progression of the Local Plan through the 'getting ready' stage and support the completion of all necessary preparatory steps required to enter the formal plan-making process, known as Gateway 1.
5. As part of the new Local Plan process, all plans prepared under the new system must publish a Gateway 1 self-assessment by 30 April 2027. Upon entering Gateway 1, there is a statutory 30-month period within which the Local Plan must progress through all stages to adoption.

6. To ensure timely progress and compliance with statutory requirements, appropriate delegations will be required to enable officers to undertake and complete the necessary procedural steps, with Council continuing to make decisions on the substantive elements at the relevant stages of the process.
7. At this stage, authorisation is sought to proceed through the various preparatory steps to enable progression towards Gateway 1. Further reports providing updates and seeking relevant approvals and delegations will be presented at the appropriate stages.
8. For completeness, Members should be aware that the Secretary of State has powers to intervene in the plan-making process where key milestones are not achieved or where satisfactory progress is not being made.

Process Overview

9. Under the new plan-making system, there are new statutory requirements which the council must adhere to, to ensure a plan process is compliant with legislation. This includes a 30-month timeframe for plan preparation and adoption and involves scoping consultation, two plan consultations and progression through three gateways as the Local Plan progresses through the system.
10. The overall process is outlined within the figures below;

Figure 1 – 30-month Local Plan process



11. As part of the new Local Plan process, all plans under the new system must give notice of intention to commence by 31st December 2026 and publish a Gateway 1 self-assessment by 30th April 2027.

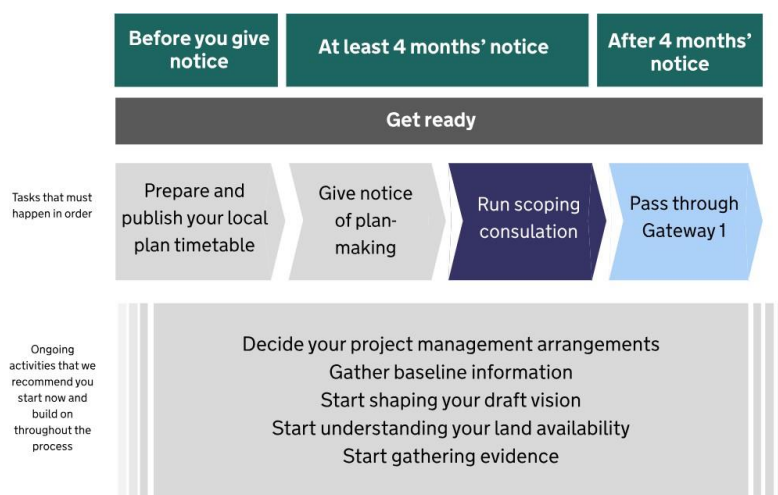
‘Getting ready’ stage (a minimum of four months prior to Gateway 1)

12. Prior to progressing through ‘Gateway 1’ is the ‘Getting ready stage’ which should occur a minimum of four months before. This stage is about being ready to start plan making and being confident that adoption can be achieved within the 30-month timeframe. The focus is on plan preparation rather than the technical detail.
13. The key requirements of this stage are;

- preparing and publishing a local plan timetable;

- issuing a notice to commence plan making;
- establishing project management and governance arrangements about the preparation of the plan;
- developing an approach to consulting and engaging on the plan;
- developing the anticipated content of the plan, including base line information, vision, land availability and evidence; and
- progressing the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)

Figure 2 – ‘Getting ready’ - before the 30 month process starts



14. The steps required under the new statutory plan making processes can only be undertaken once a notice of intention to commence and a Local Plan Timetable have been submitted to MHCLG and published.

Preparing the plan (months 1-23)

15. Once Gateway 1 is passed, the 30-month period begins and a summary of the scoping consultation must be published. This must explain the key issues raised and how the responses received have been considered.

16. During this phase the authority must also;

- finalise the draft vision, aims and objectives of the Local Plan;
- consider site selection and gather evidence to support key priorities and allocations such as housing, employment land and infrastructure;
- undertake stakeholder engagement and address cross-boundary matters;
- begin drafting planning policies based on the evidence/appropriate justification; and
- undertake public consultation on the proposed plan content and evidence for a minimum of six weeks.

17. A consultation summary must then be published, highlighting those issues raised and how they have been considered. Where appropriate this may influence the overall strategy and policies which would inform a draft version of the Local Plan.

1. Figure 3 – Local Plan preparation process



Gateway 2

18. The next stage is to seek the observations and advice from the Planning Inspectorate on the draft version of the Local Plan, which seeks to achieve an early resolution on its soundness and likely areas of concern ahead of progress towards Gateway 3.
19. After consideration by the Planning Inspectorate, the advice received must be published alongside any necessary updates to the Local Plan. An eight week consultation is then undertaken of the proposed Local Plan and associated information including policies map and supporting evidence, again a consultation summary must then be published.

Gateway 3

20. This stage seeks to establish whether the plan is ready to progress to an examination. The Local Plan to be examined must be submitted alongside other supporting information and a statement of compliance.
21. An assessor from the Planning Inspectorate will advise and decide whether the plan is ready to be submitted for examination. If Gateway 3 is passed, then the plan must be submitted for examination. If not, the necessary changes will need to be made and the gateway must be done again.

Examination and adoption (Months 24-30)

22. At this stage the Local Plan is submitted for examination by the Planning Inspectorate where its overall soundness is tested. Those who have commented on the plan will have the opportunity to present their view at the examination.
23. As a result of the examination further modifications may be suggested and these will need to be consulted on and considered prior to any adoption of the Local Plan.

24. In some instances, the Inspector may consider that further work is required and the examination may be paused for up to 6 months to allow for that work out to be carried out.
25. Following a successful examination, the Local Plan can be adopted and the policies map published.

Supplementary Plans

26. The Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023 introduces Supplementary Plans as a replacement for Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) which have traditionally been used to provide additional detail to support Local Plan policies and are a material consideration in decision making.
27. Under the reformed system, SPDs will no longer be capable of being adopted after 30 June 2026. Instead, Supplementary Plans will form part of the statutory development plan alongside the Local Plan, although these are subject to formal process, including preparation (including consultation), examination and adoption.
28. During the transition period, existing SPDs will remain in effect until a new Local Plan under the new plan making system is adopted.
29. Consideration will be given to incorporating the key aspects of the current SPD's into future planning policy or whether to produce supplementary plans, at this stage a design guide supplementary plan is considered necessary and recommendation 6 of this report seeks approval to begin work on the pre-commencement stage of a Design Guide Supplementary Plan, and delegates the formal publication of a 'notice of commencement' to the Director of Inclusive Growth and Regeneration in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Housing at the appropriate time.

Members Working group

30. To ensure that the new Local Plan has broad Member support across the political spectrum, from its inception to adoption, it is considered essential to have Member involvement.
31. To facilitate that aim, a cross-party working group acting as a consultative and advisory group is proposed, providing ongoing debate / dialogue as the emerging Local Plan progresses. It would remain that substantive decisions and updates to the Local Plans progress would be reported through to place-making board, CMT, and then through Cabinet/Committee.
32. The group would be politically balanced and based on the current composition of the Council. It would consist of the following;
 - Seven elected members
 - Based on the current political balance, include three Labour members (including chair), three Conservatives members and a representative from the Thornaby Independent Association.

- Representation on the group will be via nominations from group leaders
 - Membership of the group will be reviewed annually through the Council's AGM to maintain political balance
33. The group would be supported at officer level by the Planning Services Manager and Principal Planning Policy Officer with support and input from other officers responsible for producing elements of the evidence base or policies as appropriate. It is envisaged that the group would meet on a quarterly basis, with the potential for more frequent meetings should there be a requirement, depending on the stage of the Local Plan.
34. As the new Local Plan system requires a new plan to be produced every 5 years, it is anticipated that the working group is likely to be required beyond this new Local Plan.

Resource Implications

35. An existing budget for the Local Plan preparation has been agreed and at this stage there are no additional Local Plan costs associated with commencing plan-making under the new system.
36. The Local Plan will continue to be progressed by the current resources of the Planning Services team which will remain under review to confirm that sufficient capacity and resource remain available to ensure delivery is achieved. However, to achieve timely progress in line with statutory requirements, delegations to Officers will be necessary at various stages of the plan making process.
37. Additionally cross service support on the production of the plan and associated evidence base will be provided as necessary.
38. Members should also be aware that the Secretary of State has powers to intervene in the plan making process should the relevant milestones not be achieved and that satisfactory progress is not being made

Community Impact and Equality and Poverty Impact Assessment

39. An equality impact assessment will be undertaken, and due regard will be given to Section 149 of the Equality Act as the Local Plan progresses.

Corporate Parenting Implications

40. The report does not contain any corporate parenting implications.

Financial Implications

41. The production of a new Local Plan, associated evidence base can be met from existing budgets.

Legal Implications

42. The new plan-making system has introduced new legislative requirements which the Stockton on Tees Local Plan will need to be progressed against.

43. In line with the Council's constitution, plan making system is the sole responsibility of full Council

44. The Local Plan is subject to a statutory procedure and is open to legal challenge.

Risk Assessment

45. The development of a new Local Plan 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

46. A new Local Plan will introduce a series of planning policies which will apply and inform decision making across all wards in the Borough.

Background Papers

- National Planning Policy Framework
- National Planning Practice Guidance
- Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2026
- [New local plan-making system roadmap - GOV.UK](#)
- [30-month local plan process: an overview - GOV.UK](#)

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APPENDIX 1 – LOCAL PLAN TMEABLE (DRAFT)

Activity	Indicative start date
Notice of intention to commence plan preparation available	June 2026
Start of the 'scoping consultation'	October 2026
End of 'scoping consultation'	November 2026
Publication of Gateway 1 self-assessment	Feb/March 2027
Plan preparation period	March 2027 – Feb 2029
Consultation on 'proposed local plan content and evidence' starts	September 2027
Consultation on "proposed local plan content and evidence" ends	Mid October 2027
Gateway 2 Submission	November 2027
Consultation on "proposed local plan" starts	October 2028
Consultation on "proposed local plan" ends	December 2028
Gateway 3 Submission	February 2029
Submit examination	March 2029
Adoption	September/October 2029

APPENDIX 2– STOCKTON ON TEES LOCAL PLAN – MEMEBRS WORKING GROUP TERMS OF REFERENCE (DRAFT)

Role and Purpose of the Local Plan Working Group

1. This Local Plan working group is being established to support the development of the Stockton on Tees Local Plan.
2. The Local Plan must be in conformity with the National Planning Policy Framework and be informed by the available evidence gathered.
3. Members will be asked to share their knowledge and insights of Stockton on Tees as a whole and help create an informed local plan, which aims to meet the needs of the Borough and benefits all areas our communities.
4. The Working Group is advisory and has no decision-making powers. Its purpose is to aid greater understanding of issues and policy development.
5. The Local Plan working group will;
 - Consider and comment on documents that relate to the Local Plan including (but not restricted to) policy options, draft policies and evidence studies prepared to support the Plan.
 - Identify potential gaps in the evidence base, assist in helping to develop the outputs of technical work and other information into policy development.
 - To monitor progress on the preparation of the Local Plan

Membership of the Local Plan Working Group

6. The group will comprise of seven elected members and be broadly apportioned in line with the political balance of the Council.
7. Membership will be identified by the group leaders of the respective parties. Group leaders are encouraged to try and ensure there is a balance in the geographic representation
8. The Working Group will be chaired by the party with administrative control of the Council
9. The Chair shall be responsible for the effective conduct of meetings and ensuring clear conclusions are reached.
10. Members appointed to the Working Group are expected to make every effort to attend meetings and where they are unable to do so, appoint a substitute. In addition they will be expected to;

- Promote engagement with the Local Plan process particularly with local community groups, residents and stakeholders
- Engage with their political groups, ensuring that all members are kept informed on the local plan progress
- Be proactive in contacting officers to resolve any points of confusion ahead of the meeting

11. The lead officer for the working group will be the Planning Services Manager and supported by the Principal Planning Policy Officer. Items will be prepared and presented to the Group by Officers from the Planning Policy team and officers from the Council when relevant.

Local Plan Working Group - Process and Principles:

12. The Members be supported by officers and consultants as appropriate.
13. The Working Group will support the development of a new Local Plan to ensure progress is made in a timely manner and meets the statutory timeframes and associated Gateways.
14. The focus of the Working Group is on key issues for the Local Plan, not all related detailed issues.
15. Meetings to be held on a quarterly basis or as may be otherwise be required
16. Meetings are not open to the public, but outcomes from the Working Group will be made available to all Members as appropriate.
17. Any associated papers (reports, resolutions, minutes etc.. should be treated as confidential unless it is stated / agreed otherwise, or the information is already in the public domain.
18. Confidential information should not be shared with other parties, including other Councillors and outside organisation.

DRAFT



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REPORT TO COUNCIL

20 MAY 2026

REPORT OF CORPORATE
MANAGEMENT TEAM

Houses in Multiple Occupation Supplementary Planning Document and Article 4 Direction

Summary

This report outlines activities undertaken in the preparation and consultation on a Houses in Multiple Occupation Supplementary Planning Document and Article 4 Direction following the resolution of Cabinet / Council in January 2026. The report seeks adoption of the Houses in Multiple Occupation Supplementary Planning Document and outlines next steps in relation to confirmation of the Article 4 Direction. Cabinet will be considering this report at its meeting on 14 May 2026 and are being asked to make the following recommendations to Council.

Recommendations

Council is recommended to:

1. Note and consider comments of Planning Committee in relation to the Houses in Multiple Occupation Supplementary Planning Document.
2. Adopt the Houses in Multiple Occupation Supplementary Planning Document (Appendix A) and its accompanying technical appendices (Appendices B to D).
3. Delegate authority to approve non-material and minor alterations to the SPD and its accompanying technical appendices to the Director of Regeneration and Inclusive Growth in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Housing, prior to publication.

Detail

Houses in Multiple Occupation Supplementary Planning Document

1. The Houses in Multiple Occupation SPD (Appendix A) has been prepared following the resolution of Council in January 2026 and if adopted will apply to planning applications for new houses of multiple occupation whether that be a new build or through the conversion of an existing property. The document has been produced to ensure proposals for Houses of Multiple Occupation contribute positively to making places better for people, improving standards of accommodation, and reducing detrimental impacts on neighbours. It assists in the interpretation of policies within the Stockton-on-Tees Local Plan and sets out guidance and good practice for planning applicants to enable the delivery of better planning outcomes.

2. The SPD has been prepared in accordance with Government legislation and guidance and has been subject to public consultation in accordance with regulations. The public consultation period on the draft SPD took place between 19th March and the 17th April 2026. A total of 13 responses were received on the contents of the draft SPD. These responses can be summarised as falling into 3 categories:
 - **Organisations-** Natural England, Coal Authority, Home Office, Prism Planning, North Yorkshire Council, Historic England
 - **Local Resident-** 6 local residents
 - **Ward Councillor-** one response
3. A consultation statement (Appendix B) has been prepared which contains comments / main issues raised alongside the council's response to them.
4. Also provided are screening assessments in relation to the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) have been undertaken and are available within Appendix C and D respectively.
5. It is recommended that the SPD document (Appendix A) and its technical appendices (Appendices B to D), be adopted which will enable them to be a material consideration in planning applications for relevant proposals. Following adoption, the documents will be made available in the Council's main office, on the Council's website and in public libraries across the Borough. Members should also be aware that legislation makes provision for individuals / organisations to pursue a legal challenge regarding SPDs, and this will end 3-months after adoption of the documents.
6. In accordance with The Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023 (Commencement No. 11 and Saving and Transitional Provisions) Regulations 2026 the Council can adopt Supplementary Planning Documents until 30th June 2026. Adopted SPDs will continue to be a material consideration but they will cease to have effect upon adoption of a new Local Plan.

Article 4 Direction (small Houses of Multiple Occupation)

7. Following the resolution of Cabinet in January 2026, notice has been given that the Council has made a Direction under Article 4(1) of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended). Notice was given on 18th March 2026, and a period of consultation was undertaken from 19th March and the 17th April 2026.
8. If confirmed the direction would require planning consent for the change of use of a building within Class C3 (dwelling houses) to a use falling within Class C4 (houses in multiple occupation) through the removal of permitted development rights for this type of development. The Direction would apply to the entire area of the Borough of Stockton-on-Tees.
9. During the consultation period 18 representations were received. These responses can be summarised as falling into 2 categories:
 - **Organisations-** Natural England, Coal Authority, Home Office, Prism Planning, National Residential Landlords Association, Stockton Liberal Democrats, The Canal & River Trust, North Yorkshire Council, Historic England.

- **Local Resident-** 9 local residents

These representations must be taken into account by the local planning authority in deciding whether to confirm the direction. Having considered and taken into account the representations received (which are available within Appendix H), the local planning authority intends to confirm the Article 4 Direction. Necessary processes will be undertaken, in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended) to confirm the Direction which will come into force on Monday 22nd March 2027.

Community Impact and Equality and Poverty Impact Assessment

10. An equality impact assessment has been undertaken, for both the HMO SPD and Article 4 Direction, and due regard has been given to Section 149 of the Equality Act.

Corporate Parenting Implications

11. The report does not contain any corporate parenting implications.

Financial Implications

12. Existing budgets will be used for all activities associated with Article 4 Direction confirmation and HMO SPD adoption.

Legal Implications

13. The 2004 Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act made provision for the preparation of Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) to provide greater detail on specific policies within the Local Plan.
14. The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 sets out the requirements for producing Supplementary Planning Documents SPDs. SPDs should not contain new policies and should not be contrary to the Local Development Plan or national policy.
15. In accordance with The Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023 (Commencement No. 11 and Saving and Transitional Provisions) Regulations 2026 the Council can adopt Supplementary Planning Documents until 30th June 2026. Adopted SPDs will continue to be a material consideration but they will cease to have effect upon adoption of a new Local Plan.
16. The European Directive 2001/42/EC applied through the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations (SI No.1633) requires a Screening Report for Strategic Environmental Assessment to be produced.
17. The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015 currently grants deemed planning permission for residential properties to be converted to small HMO's without the need for an application. The introduction of an Article 4 Direction will remove this right and all such proposed conversions after the date the Direction will come into force will require a planning application to be submitted, with an associated fee. This affects the property rights of owners of residential properties which needs to be justified and proportionate.
18. Applicants whose applications are subsequently refused have the right to appeal against that decision.

19. An Article 4 Direction can only be made if the Local Planning Authority is satisfied that it is expedient to make it. Schedule 3 of The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 provides the procedures for bringing an Article 4 Directions into force. It is subject to a 21-day consultation period and must then be confirmed by the LPA before it comes into force. The making of the Article 4 Direction is subject to challenge by way of Judicial Review. The Secretary of State must be notified of the making of the Direction and has the power to cancel it before or after its confirmation.

Risk Assessment

20. The introduction of the Article 4 Direction and HMO SPD 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)

21. All elements detailed within the report (HMO SPD and Article 4 Direction) will, or have the potential to, affect all wards in the Borough.

Background Papers

22. Cabinet and Council papers of 15th January and 21st January 2026 respectively.
23. The following documents are provided in relation to the Houses in Multiple Occupation Supplementary Planning Document:
 - Appendix A- Houses in Multiple Occupation Supplementary Planning Document
 - Appendix B- Consultation Statement
 - Appendix C- SEA Scoping Assessment
 - Appendix D- HRA Screening Assessment
24. In relation to the Article 4 Direction the following documents are provided:
 - Appendix E- Article 4 Direction
 - Appendix F- Article 4 Direction Map
 - Appendix G- Article 4 Direction Notice
 - Appendix H- Consultation Representations

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Houses in Multiple Occupation

Supplementary Planning Document (May 2026)

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Section 1: Introduction

Overview

Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) are properties that are rented out by at least three people who are not from one household (such as a family) but share facilities like a bathroom and/or kitchen. They are sometimes known as 'house shares'. HMOs typically fit within one of two main Use Classes¹:

- **Use Class C4 HMO** - Small shared houses occupied by between three and six unrelated individuals, as their only or main residence, who share basic amenities such as a kitchen or bathroom.
- **'Sui Generis'**² - includes HMOs with more than six residents

Both the Stockton-on-Tees Plan and the Powering Our Future programme affirm the Councils commitment to driving economic growth to support community prosperity and well-being. The delivery of good quality, affordable housing in well-connected neighbourhoods is integral to this. Alongside this 'housing and the physical environment' is a main focus area within A Fairer Stockton-on-Tees which provides a strategic framework for tackling inequalities. HMOs form part of the borough's housing supply and contribute to residents housing choice by providing low-cost and flexible housing for residents whose housing options may be limited. They can be home to young professionals, students, people on low-incomes, and those on short-term work contracts.

Most HMOs within the Borough have been created through the conversion of existing properties that were previously in residential use (or other uses) which has seen their usage intensified. Whilst they are present across the borough there are concentrations within particular areas. Whilst there are few instances of this within the local area HMOs can also be purpose-built accommodation (i.e. new build). This document is equally relevant to conversions and new build HMOs.

The majority of HMOs within the borough are well managed and provide decent living standards for residents. However, the overconcentration of HMOs alongside poor design and management have the potential to lead to issues for both occupants and neighbours. Some of the most common concerns expressed in the borough in relation to HMOs relate to:

- Negative changes to the character of the area and the nature of the local community
- Negative impacts on the amenity of neighbours through the greater intensity of use of HMOs
- Pressure on parking provision
- Waste storage and litter
- Anti-social behaviour and crime
- Negative impacts on the physical environment and streetscape
- The provision of inadequate living accommodation for occupiers

The LA has two regulatory controls which can be applied that require landlords to effectively manage these types of properties. These are:

- **Mandatory HMO licencing** – which is a legal duty Housing Act 2004. Where a HMO is to be rented to five or more people who are not from the same household the owner, agent, or manager is required to obtain a licence from the Council.

¹ The [Town and Country Planning \(Use Classes\) Order 1987 \(as amended\)](#) puts uses of land and buildings into various categories known as 'Use Classes'.

² 'Sui generis' is a Latin term that, in this context, means 'in a class of its own'.

- **Selective licensing** – three areas within the borough have been identified for selective licencing (central Stockton, North Thornaby, and Newtown). Selective Licensing was introduced on the basis that these areas are 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 and or is experiencing significant and persistent problems caused by high levels of crime and anti-social behaviour. Within these areas all privately rented properties are required to have a selective licence. Under a licence several mandatory conditions will apply which could be supplemented by discretionary conditions. Not all properties requiring a selective licence will be an HMO.

This Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) has been produced ensure proposals contribute positively to making places better for people, improving standards of accommodation, and reducing detrimental impacts on neighbours. It assists in the interpretation of policies within the Stockton-on-Tees Local Plan and sets out guidance and good practice for planning applicants to enable the delivery of better planning outcomes.

The SPD will not be able to address issues in relation to existing HMOs, but it is an important material consideration in the determination of planning applications for new and expanded HMOs and is applicable throughout the borough. It applies to planning applications for:

- HMOs created through conversions
- Purpose-built HMOs
- The expansion of existing HMOs

This SPD does not consider applications for proposals that do not constitute a HMO for example self-contained flats (whether new build or conversion of an existing premises) unless their occupation would constitute classification as an HMO (i.e. occupied by at least three people who are not from one household but share facilities like a bathroom and/or kitchen. This is covered in more detail within the following section (see 'What isn't a HMO').

Section 2: Background

What is an HMO and what isn't?

What is an HMO?

The full legal definition of an HMO is given under the Housing Act 2004. Types of living accommodation defined include:

“One or more units of living accommodation within a building or part of a building not consisting of self-contained flats occupied by more than one household as their only or main residence with at least one person paying rent and two or more of the households sharing one or more basic amenities (or the building lacks an amenity) such as a bathroom, toilet or cooking facilities.

A self-contained flat within a building occupied by more than one household as their only or main residence with at least one person paying rent and two or more of the households sharing one or more basic amenities (or the building lacks an amenity) such as a bathroom, toilet or cooking facilities.

A converted building where new living accommodation has been created since its construction that is not a self-contained flat or flats and occupied by more than one household as their only or main residence with at least one person paying rent.

A building or part of a building which has been converted into self-contained flats where the conversion works did not comply with 1991 Building Regulations and more than one third of the flats are not owner-occupied.”

HMO's are generally defined as a property (house or flat) rented out by at least three people who do not form a single 'household' who share one or more basic amenities such as a kitchen and/or bathroom. They are often referred to as 'shared houses'.

The Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended) classifies HMOs as:

- **Use Class C4** – accommodating between 3 and 6 unrelated individuals, or;
- **'Sui Generis'** - accommodating 7 or more unrelated individuals.

Figure 1: HMO classification



What isn't an HMO?

There is a popular misconception that flats are HMO, but where such a property is self-contained and is being used in accordance with Use Class C3 then this is not the case.

Within the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended), C4 HMOs have the same meaning as that given in the Housing Act 2004. Schedule 14 of this Act identifies buildings which are not considered to be HMOs often being referred to as 'exempt accommodation'. This includes buildings which are controlled or managed by:

- registered social landlords and housing associations
- educational establishments
- religious communities
- public bodies such as local authorities, health authorities and the police.

Any property falling into the above categories cannot be identified as an HMO and therefore cannot be considered as falling within the C4 Use Class described above. There are three possible Use Class categories defined within the Use Classes Order which the above properties can be identified within:

- C3(b) – for properties with no more than six residents living together as a single household and where care is provided for residents; or
- C3(c) – for properties with no more than six residents living together as a single household where no care is provided to residents; or
- Sui Generis, which is a category for any uses which do not fit within the other classes

There is no statutory definition of a single household. It has been established by case law that it is a matter of fact and degree, considering certain factors. It may be appropriate to consider 'exempt accommodation' when applying the measures within section 4 of the document, but this would be considered on a case-by-case basis taking into consideration local circumstances.

Article 4 Directions and when planning consent is required?

What is an Article 4 Direction?

The Council are in the process of introducing a borough-wide Article 4 Direction which when confirmed will mean that planning permission will be required for the change of use from a dwellinghouse (Use Class C3) to a small HMO (Use Class C4) (3-6 people). Until the Article 4 direction is confirmed planning permission for C3 to C4 will not be required as it remains permitted development.

The date for confirmation is scheduled to be 22nd March 2027. It should be noted that change of use in the opposite direction (C4 to C3) would be 'permitted development' not requiring planning permission.

When is planning consent required?

The following provides the most likely circumstances where planning consent will be required for an HMO:

- Where a 'new build' HMO is proposed
- Change of use of a C3 property to a Sui Generis HMO (accommodating 7 or more unrelated individuals)
- Change of use of a C4 HMO to a Sui Generis HMO

As detailed in the above section change of use of a C3 property to a C4 HMO (accommodating between 3 and 6 unrelated individuals) will require planning consent following the confirmation of the borough-wide Article 4 Direction.

Where else might planning consent be required:

- Existing Sui Generis HMO for the occupation of further residents if the previous planning permission stated the number of residents within the application description, or there was a restrictive condition
- External alterations or extensions

Figure 2: HMO Permitted Development and where planning permission is generally required (prior to Article 4 confirmation)

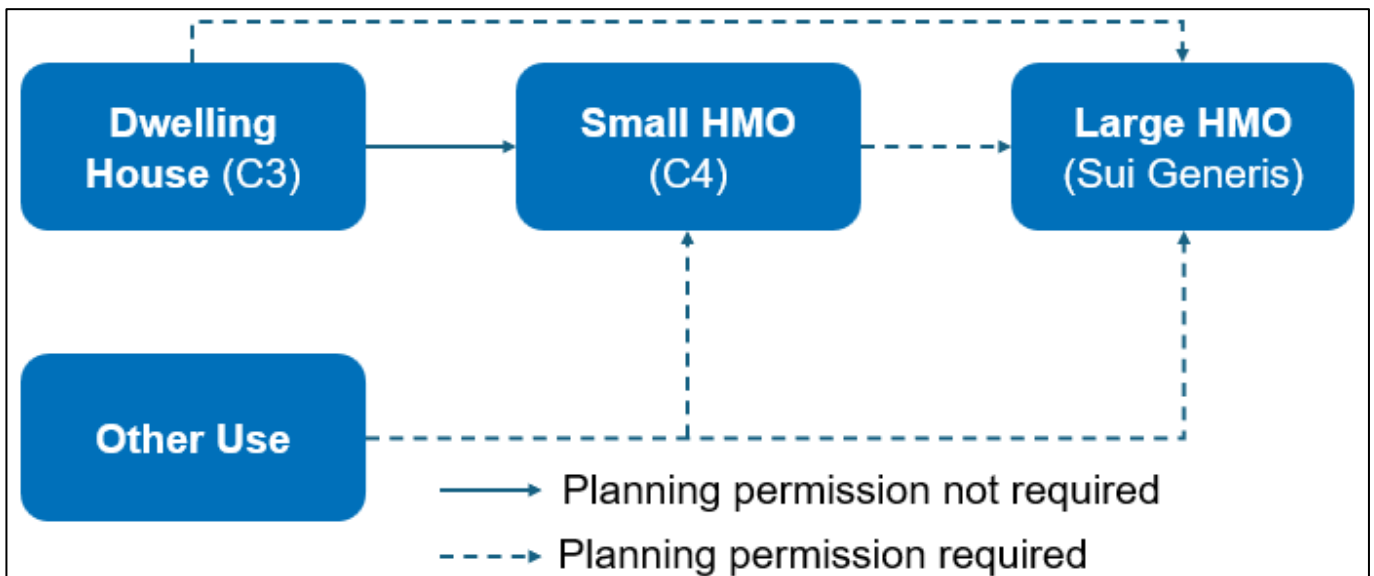
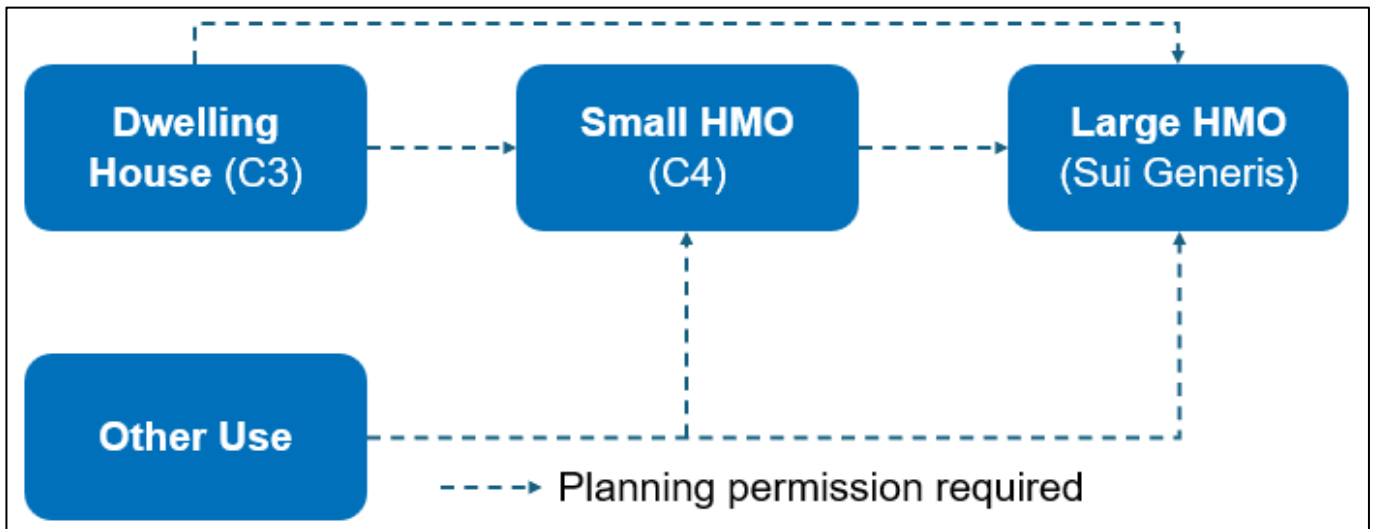


Figure 3: Requirement for HMO planning permission (following Article 4 confirmation)



Section 3: Policy Context

National Planning Policy Framework

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF 2024) sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied. The Framework does not include any specific policies on HMOs but it does provide the following aspects which are of relevance:

- **Chapter 5 Delivering a sufficient supply of homes-** includes a range of policies covering general housing issues.
- **Chapter 8 Promoting healthy and safe communities-** advises that decisions should aim to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places which can be achieved through promoting social interaction, ensuring places are safe and accessible (so that crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion), and enabling and supporting healthy lives.
- **Section 4 Decision Making-** covers the Use of Article 4 directions advising that they be limited to situations where, amongst other elements, are necessary to protect local amenity or the well-being of the area

The Framework is also supported by more detailed planning guidance set out in the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG). However, there is no specific guidance on HMOs contained within the PPG.

A draft NPPF was published in December 2025 as part of a wider consultation on 'proposed reforms and other changes to the planning system'. The consultation concludes in March 2026 and following any necessary amendment it is the Government's intention to replace the current NPPF (2024). The draft NPPF contains the following elements:

- **DM10: Removal of national permitted development rights-** advises, amongst other, things the potential to utilise Article 4 directions where it would prevent an over-concentration of uses which could affect the quality of life or community cohesion.
- **DP3: Key principles for well-designed places-** support healthy, mixed, vibrant and integrated communities

Stockton-on-Tees Local Plan (2019)

A range of policies from the Stockton-on-Tees Local Plan are used in the determination of applications for HMOs. This includes those set out below:

- Policy SD1 - Presumption in favour of Sustainable Development
- Policy SD2 – Strategic Development Needs
- Policy SD3 – Housing Strategy
- Policy SD8 – Sustainable Design Principles
- Policy H4 – Meeting Housing Needs
- Policy TI1 – Transport Infrastructure
- Policy ENV 1 – Energy Efficiency
- Policy ENV7 – Ground, Air, Water, Noise and Light Pollution
- Policy HE2 – Conserving and Enhancing Stockton's Heritage Assets

The most frequently used policies are SD8 'Sustainable Design Principles' and H4 'Meeting Housing Needs'. Key extracts from these policies are set out below:

"...new development... to respond positively to the... Privacy and amenity of all existing and future occupants of land and buildings"

"New development should contribute positively to making places better for people. They should be inclusive and establish a strong sense of place, using streetscapes and buildings to create attractive and comfortable places to live, work and visit."

"Sustainable residential communities will be created by requiring developers to provide a mix and balance of good quality housing of appropriate sizes, types and tenures which reflects local needs and demand, having regard to the Strategic Housing Market Assessment, its successor documents or appropriate supporting documents."

Applicants for planning permission should demonstrate through their applications that they have had regard to all relevant Local Plan policies. Supplementary Planning Documents, including this one and the Local Design Guide SPD (March 2023), are also material considerations in the determination of applications.

Section 4: Guidance

Overview

Both the Stockton-on-Tees Plan and the Powering Our Future programme affirm the Councils commitment to driving economic growth to support community prosperity and well-being. The delivery of good quality, affordable housing in well-connected neighbourhoods is integral to this. HMO form part of the boroughs housing supply, contribute towards meeting housing needs, and can support the continued viable use or re-use of vacant buildings. However, they typically intensify the use of properties, often with more resident and visitor movements than a typical family home, and concentrations of them can impact on the amenity of neighbouring properties and the character of the local area.

To ensure mixed and balanced communities and to ensure that new development does not have an unacceptable adverse impact on local amenity and quality of life, this section of the document sets out guidelines to limit the concentration of HMOs and to manage their proximity to one another. This will contribute to retaining local character, help to ensure a mix of house types and tenures, and reduce potential residential amenity issues. To achieve this, the following measures (or tests) will be applied when assessing planning applications for HMOs:

- [Avoiding concentrations of HMOs](#)
- [Avoiding a grouping of HMOs](#)
- [Avoiding sandwiching](#)

The remainder of this section provides further detail on the application of these measures. It should be noted that these measures are not stand-alone. i.e. achieving a positive outcome to one measure would not mean that the other measures can be disregarded. **All the above measures would need to be applied cumulatively.**

There are areas within the borough where high concentrations of HMOs already exist. These concentrations are in areas typified by medium and large terraced residential properties which have seen the conversion or use of these properties for C4 and Sui Generis HMOs. Concentrations of HMOs have an alignment with the areas selected for selective licencing (Central Stockton, North Thornaby, and Newtown) where all privately rented properties are required to have a selective licence. The extent of selective licencing areas within the borough can be viewed at on the Council website (<https://www.stockton.gov.uk/article/14526/The-purpose-of-Selective-Licensing-and-who-it-applies-to>)

These areas currently experience high levels of crime and anti-social behaviour with the Ropner Ward currently a pilot for the Home Office “Clear, Hold, Build” initiative, under the localised name of ‘Project/Operation Harmony’; a multi-agency problem solving scheme undertaken by relevant local partner agencies, including Stockton Borough Council (SBC), to tackle crime and ASB.

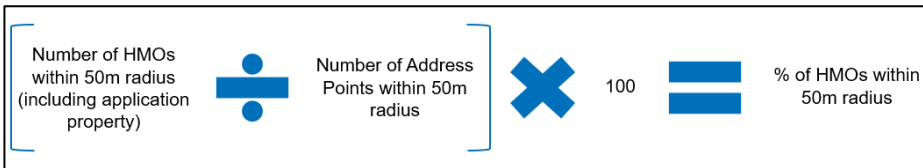
It is likely that consent for an HMO (or extensions to an existing one) will not be acceptable within many parts of our selective licencing areas and some other central locations owing to the ‘avoiding concentrations’ measure within this document.

Avoiding concentrations of HMOs

Proposals for new HMOs or extensions to existing ones will not generally be permitted where the proportion of residential properties would exceed 10% of the residential properties within a 50-metre radius of the application property.

The 50m radius will be measured from the centre-point of the property (this being measured from the properties habitable external walls rather than the properties curtilage). All properties (residential and commercial) within this 50m radius will be counted towards the concentration calculation with the property the subject of the application being counted as being within its proposed use. An example calculation is presented below:

Figure 4: Concentration Calculation



In our example below (see Figure 6):

- An application has been made for the change of use of a residential property to a Sui Generis HMO (blue dot)
- There are 40 other properties (residential or commercial) within 50m radius (green dots)
- In total there are 41 properties within 50m radius (green and blue dots)
- There are already 5 HMOs within the 50m Radius (excluding the proposed HMO)

This would be calculated as follows which creates an outcome of 14.6% meaning an HMO proposal would not generally be permitted:

Figure 5: Example Concentration Calculation

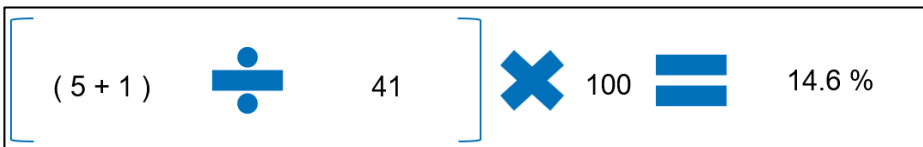
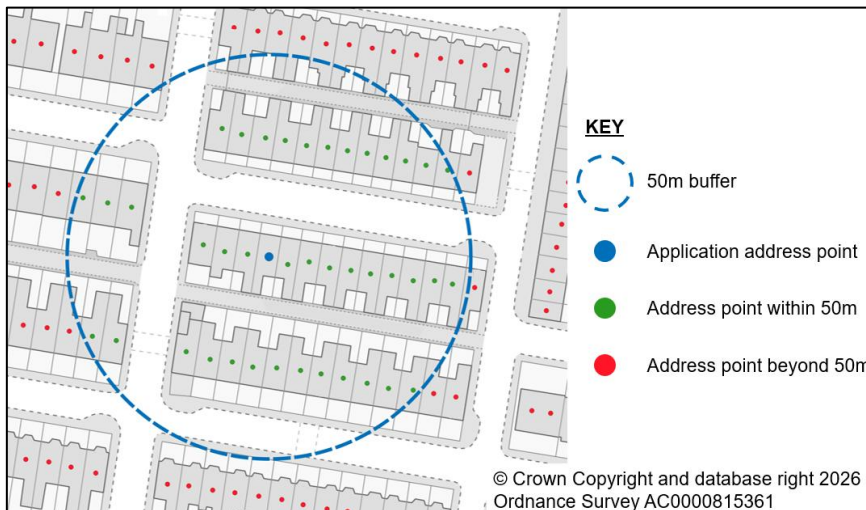


Figure 6- Example Concentration Mapping



When calculating the number of properties within 50m the following principles will be considered:

- **Residential Properties** – calculated based upon address points within the Local Land and Property Gazetteer (LLPG)
- **Flats** - existing properties that have been sub-divided into flats will be counted as single properties for the purposes of the calculation, as they represent the intensification of a property and some of the issues that can be associated with HMOs can also be associated with flat conversions (i.e. a terraced property converted to three flats will be counted as a single property for the purposes of this calculation). However, purpose-built flats will be counted on an individual basis (i.e. one flat counts as one property), as they are not subject to the same constraints as flat conversions and issues should have been fully addressed as part of the planning process.

Other considerations:

- **Physical barrier** – where there is a strong physical barrier such as a railway line with no crossing any properties separated from the application site may be removed from the calculation.
- **Less densely populated areas / more commercial areas** – there may be a particular circumstance where there is a limited number of residential properties within the 50-metre radius. This could present an inflated % outcome albeit an over concentration would not be present. This would need to be taken into consideration by the case officer when determining such an application.

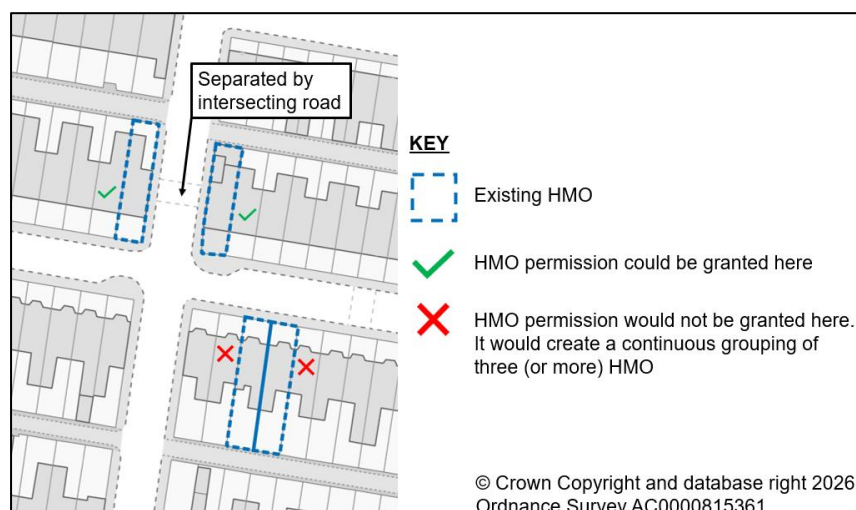
Avoiding groupings of HMOs

Proposals for HMOs will not generally be permitted where this would lead to a block of three or more adjacent HMOs or other non-family residential uses.

Figure 7 shows examples of three or more in a row being created and where planning permission would not generally be granted. This will not apply where properties are separated by a road (an ‘alleyway’ would not count as an intersecting road) or where properties have a back-to-back relationship in different streets. The case officer may consider flexibility of this measure in areas which are not predominantly residential subject to considerations of amenity.

For the purposes of this measure, ‘other non-family residential uses’ is defined as student accommodation, residential accommodation within C1 and C2 Use and self-contained flats as they present similar characteristics.

Figure 7- Grouping Example



Avoiding sandwiching

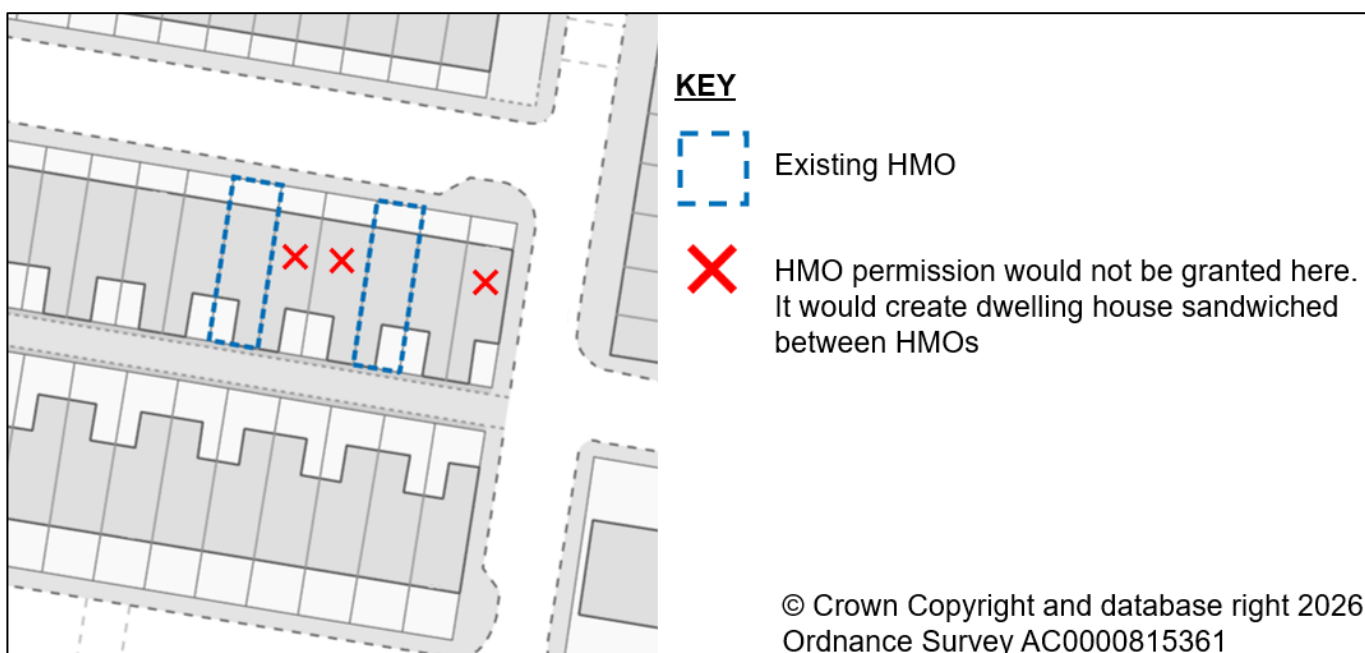
Proposals for HMOs will not generally be permitted where this would result in a C3 family dwellinghouse being sandwiched between two HMOs or other non-family residential uses

The sandwiching of a family house between two HMOs or non-family residential uses can have adverse impacts on the amenity of occupiers of the property that is hemmed in on both sides by such properties.

Non-family residential uses would refer to the same uses as detailed within the groupings measure.

Figure 8 below shows an example of ‘sandwiching’ and where planning permission would not normally be granted. As with the grouping example above this would not apply where the properties are separated by a road or where properties have a back-to-back relationship in different streets.

Figure 8- Sandwiching Example



Section 5: Achieving good accommodation standards

HMO Amenity Guidance

The Council's HMO Amenity Guidance provides various standards covering, room sizes and permitted occupation (bedrooms / communal rooms), washing facilities, heating, communal kitchens, kitchens provided within the unit of accommodation, fire precautionary facilities, lighting, water supply, refuse storage and disposal, and ventilation. It is not the purpose of this SPD to repeat information contained within the HMO Amenity Guidance. It is important that any proposals provide healthy living conditions for occupiers and the Council support the achievement of the highest possible amenity standards.

Example residential dwelling to small HMO (C4)

On the next page we have provided an example property to provide some high-level information in relation to what may be acceptable in terms of amenity standards when being considered for a change of use to an HMO (see Figure 10). This does not replace guidance within the HMO Amenity Guidance. Our example property is a 2-bedroom residential dwelling (C3 Use Class) in a terraced street of similar properties. The owner is considering renting out the property (following internal amendments) and obtaining planning consent.

Figure 9- Example C3 property being considered for a change of use to C4

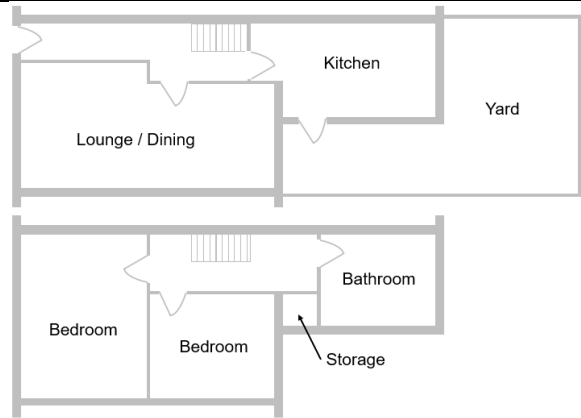


Figure 10- Example Layouts (C3 property being considered for a change of use to C4)

Original Two Bedroom Dwelling House

Property includes:

- Large lounge/dining room
- Kitchen
- Two bedrooms
- Bathroom
- Rear yard



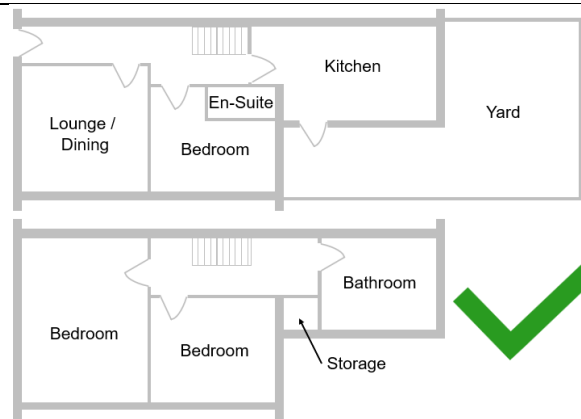
Proposal to convert to a C4 HMO (3 Bedrooms)

This is planned to be achieved through dividing the existing living / dining room into a smaller living / dining room and a bedroom (with En-Suite).

No amendments are made to the upper floors.

This is likely to be acceptable*

*Subject to consideration against HMO Amenity Guidance



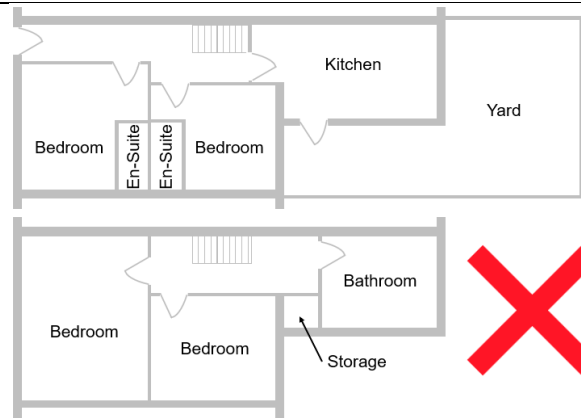
Proposal to convert to a C4 HMO (4 Bedrooms)

This is planned to be achieved through dividing the existing living / dining room into two bedrooms (both with En-Suites).

No amendments are made to the upper floors.

This will not be acceptable

Whilst bedrooms are likely of an acceptable size the kitchen area would serve as the only communal area. It would not be of a sufficient size for cooking, eating and socialising when considering HMO Amenity Guidance.

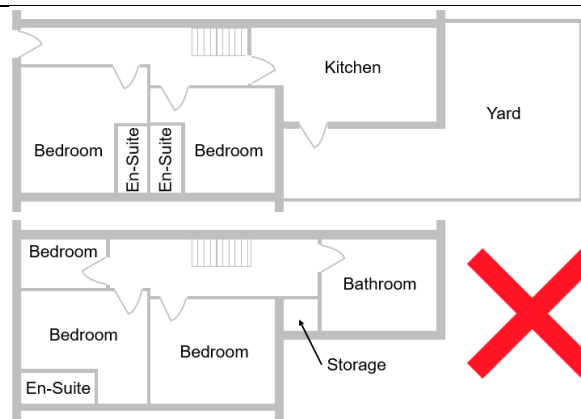


Proposal to convert to a C4 HMO (5 Bedrooms)

In addition to the amendments made in the above example the upstairs front bedroom is divided into two bedrooms (one with an En-Suite)

This would not be acceptable

This is for the same reasons as the above example albeit the position is exacerbated through the addition of another bedroom. In addition, one of the bedrooms created is evidently of a size which would provide insufficient living standards owing to its dimensions.



Outdoor amenity space

Outdoor amenity space is important to help create a better-quality living environment and should be provided in addition to space used for functions such as drying clothes, refuse and recycling storage and cycle storage. Whilst there are no specific requirements for the quantum of outdoor amenity space that should be provided within an HMO as part of the Council's HMO Amenity Guidance document it should be provided within HMO proposals.

HMOs are often created through the conversion of existing properties and are often located in, or near to, town centres where outdoor space may be limited, so all applications will be assessed on a case-by-case basis, but applicants should aim to provide useable outdoor amenity space with an area for drying clothes, wherever possible. The area of amenity space should be identified on the application site plan alongside the elements which are to be used for refuse and recycling storage and cycle storage. All amenity space should be overlooked from within the property by habitable rooms.

Lighting

All HMO proposals should provide healthy living conditions for occupiers and users. An important aspect of this is ensuring that all habitable rooms have adequate access to natural light.

Energy Efficiency

The Stockton-on-Tees Plan and the Powering Our Future programme promote the delivery of good quality housing. In addition to this the Stockton-on-Tees Environmental Sustainability and Carbon Reduction Strategy (2022-2032) contains the aim to 'Achieve net zero greenhouse gas emissions' and to achieve this a series of objectives have been identified including:

- Reduce energy demand wherever possible; and
- Accelerate the shift towards the use of sustainable energy

Where a new build HMO is proposed it will need to be delivered in accordance with building regulations which have seen increased standards introduced for energy efficiency. Where a proposal involves the conversion of an existing property this is the best time to make amendments to improve a property's energy performance. Energy efficiency is an important aspect of this with improved energy efficiency supporting reductions in utility bills and reducing inequality.

HMOs are also subject to the Domestic Minimum Energy Efficiency Standard (DMEES) relating to minimum energy performance ratings. This requires that all-domestic private rented properties must have an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) of at least band E. An EPC rating of a property is not all that's required - adequate heating and insulation must also be provided.

Landlords with properties that have an EPC rating of F or G cannot create or renew a tenancy until the property is improved. Non-compliance with Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards (MEES) can lead to a penalty of up to £5,000. If a landlord is not able to improve the property, a valid exemption must be registered on the PRS national exemptions register.

There is government aim to raise energy performance standards across the private rented sector with as many privately rented homes as possible being upgraded to EPC band C. We support this ambition and future legislation which would enact these requirements. We support HMO proposals which go beyond minimum national requirements.

Waste and recycling storage

The Councils HMO Amenity Guidance provides the following guidance in relation to refuse storage and disposal.

- Ensure that sufficient bins or other suitable containers are provided to meet the number of occupants within the HMO and that they are adequate for their requirements;
- All refuse containers shall be located on hard standings with suitable access for cleansing of the area and removal of containers. Such hard standings shall be located in an area away from habitable rooms and wherever practicable at the rear of the premises. If the hard standing has to be located at the front of the building or other exposed position it shall be provided with a suitable screen where practical. The hard standing shall be positioned so that the bins do not obscure natural lighting from windows below bin height; and
- Accessibility for collection of containers is a fundamental aspect and will need to be identified and demonstrated as accessible as part of the planning application process.

It is important that the location, design and size of external bin storage areas are suitable and that they do not have a negative impact on the amenity of HMO occupants or their neighbours, and do not detract from the general amenity and character of the area. Bins stored at the front of properties can look unsightly and clutter the street scene. Where possible they should be located to the side or rear of a property and screened from view to minimise their impact. Unless suitably screened, bins stored at the front of properties are unlikely to be acceptable. All waste and recycling storage areas should be clearly identified on plans submitted as part of the planning application.

Car parking / cycle storage

HMOs are typically home to more adults than a standard residential property, which could lead to increased pressure for car parking spaces. Many HMOs are conversions of existing properties and the level of parking provision that is possible within the property is often restricted. Therefore, it is not possible to have a 'one size fits all' approach to parking that is suitable for all HMOs.

To reduce parking pressures on the street, provision for parking within the property curtilage should be provided if possible and appropriate. However, any in-curtilage parking provision must complement the residential character of the area and not detract from the entrance and approach to the building. A balance must also be made between the provision of space for car parking and other needs, such as waste storage, cycle storage and the provision of outdoor amenity space.

All applicants for HMOs should set out the parking provision that is proposed as part of their scheme at the planning application stage. The appropriate level of parking provision will need to be agreed with the council based upon:

- The availability and suitability of parking within the curtilage of the property;
- The sustainability of the site in relation to services and amenities;
- The availability of public transport and access to bus stops and cycle routes;
- The availability of existing parking provision in the surrounding locality; and
- Parking demand compared to the use of the building as a standard residential property.

The Parking Provision for Developments SPD provides standards for the quantum of parking and cycling provision within for C4 (small HMOs).

In relation to cycle storage the following key principles will apply:

- It should be secure (with natural surveillance) and covered

- Corridors or landings will not be considered as adequate provision for cycle storage and residents should not be expected to carry a cycle upstairs; and
- Sensitively designed and sited to reduce the impact on neighbouring residents or the street scene.

Provision for car and cycle parking must be identified on site plans.

Entrance and approach

The entrance and approach to an HMO is an important part of how it functions in relation to its surroundings. The Local Design Guide SPD provides guidance in relation to entrances and approaches to properties advocating for active frontages to the street with front doors and windows of primary living spaces being located on this elevation to provide natural surveillance. Entrances to the side of properties will be discouraged as they create opportunities for hiding, increase feelings of insecurity amongst users and can cause other amenity issues for both neighbours and residents. Designing entrances to be visible from the street will mean that HMOs are more secure. HMOs should therefore normally be served by a main entrance at the front of the property.

External alterations

We advocate that any HMO applications make as few changes as possible to the external parts of a property as possible to maintain the established character in the area and maximise the residential amenity of the property. However, we acknowledge that amendments and extensions to properties can be undertaken acceptably as is the case with other existing homes.

Care and attention are required where a proposal is located within a conservation area or is a listed building. Applicants will be required to ensure that proposals accord with policies on conserving and enhancing the historic environment. If a building is located within one of the Borough's 11 conservation areas, we encourage review of the Conservation Area and Historic Environment Folder (CAHEF) Supplementary Planning Document (which incorporates conservation area appraisals and management plans) for guidance on appropriate external alterations.

Where a building is listed, external and internal alterations require listed building consent. Such alterations are required to preserve the special architectural and historic interest of the building. It is important to consider this requirement when designing internal layouts, formulating energy efficiency measures and when considering any alterations to improve natural light, introduce entrance points and provide external storage.

Supporting information

The Council will not specifically request management plans as part of an application for an HMO proposal. However, within planning statements we request that the applicant provide clarity to the Council in relation to matters which would traditionally be provided within a management plan as this provides the case officer, occupants/tenants, neighbours and other interested parties clarity in relation to how it is intended that the proposal will be operated and managed. The Council will seek further information and condition relevant elements where they are necessary to make proposals acceptable in planning terms.

Matters which we recommend to be covered through a planning statement include:

- **Occupancy Terms-** Clearly define the maximum number of residents allowed and demonstrating compliance with local standards. The maximum occupancy should also be outlined within the application description.
- **Maintenance-** process for regular property maintenance to ensure all facilities are in good condition (this includes all common areas and utilities).

- **Tenant Relations/Management-** This would primarily cover the approach to addressing and noise and annoyance caused by residents and any other relevant management procedures.
- **Waste management-** management proposals for the storage, transfer and collection of waste ensuring that appropriate arrangements and facilities are in place.
- **Security and safety-** detailing how proposals have considered safety and security measures including Secured by Design. ensuring all relevant facilities and measures are in place to ensure the safety of tenants is maintained (includes all aspects including fire safety).

This should not prove onerous for landlords and will allow them to highlight good management practices.

Section 7: Further Information

The links below provide further information in relation to aspects of this SPD should you be considering an HMO proposal:

- [Stockton Council Information for Landlords \(https://www.stockton.gov.uk/landlords\)](https://www.stockton.gov.uk/landlords)
 - [House in Multiple Occupation \(HMO\) licences \(https://www.stockton.gov.uk/hmo-licence\)](https://www.stockton.gov.uk/hmo-licence)
 - [Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards \(MEES\) \(https://www.stockton.gov.uk/mees\)](https://www.stockton.gov.uk/mees)
 - [Houses in Multiple Occupation amenity guidance \(https://www.stockton.gov.uk/article/2055/foreword\)](https://www.stockton.gov.uk/article/2055/foreword)
- [Stockton Local Plan \(https://www.stockton.gov.uk/local-plan\)](https://www.stockton.gov.uk/local-plan)
- [Stockton Council Supplementary Planning Documents \(https://www.stockton.gov.uk/supplementary-planning-documents\)](https://www.stockton.gov.uk/supplementary-planning-documents)



Consultation Statement

Incorporating Determination of Likely Significant Environmental Effects Determination and Statement of Reasons

Supplementary Planning Document: Houses in Multiple Occupation

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Document Overview

Consultation undertaken in the preparation of the SPD

Introduction

The purpose of this statement is to provide details about the consultation which has taken place during the production of the draft Supplementary Planning Document (SPD): Houses in Multiple Occupation and the following supporting documents:

- [Strategic Environmental Assessment](#)
- [Habitat Regulation Assessment](#)

Regulation 12 of the 2012 Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) Regulations requires that before a Local Planning Authority adopt an SPD it must: Prepare a statement setting out:

- [the persons the LPA consulted when preparing the SPD;](#)
- [a summary of the main issues raised by those persons; and](#)
- [how those issues have been addressed in the SPD.](#)

In accordance with the relevant regulations, the draft SPD and supporting documents, were made available for public consultation. This Consultation Statement sets out how this was undertaken, the comments which were received and what changes have been made to the document as a result.

Public Consultation Period

The Council made the draft SPD and supporting documents available in accordance with relevant regulations and invited members of the public, relevant authorities, general consultation bodies, specific consultations bodies, duty-to cooperate partners, and any other interested party on the Council's Local Plan Consultation Database to make comments on the documents.

The consultation period within which representations could be made was between Thursday 19th March 2026 and Friday 17th April 2026. Consultation was undertaken in accordance with the Consultation Plan which is contained within Appendix A. The organisations consulted is included at Appendix B.

Public Consultation Responses (main issues raised and how these have been addressed within the SPD)

A total of 13 responses were received on the contents of the draft SPD. These responses can be summarised as falling into three main categories.

- **Organisations-** Natural England, Coal Authority, Home Office, Prism Planning, North Yorkshire Council, Historic England
- **Local Resident-** 6 local residents
- **Ward Councillor**

There is a requirement that a summary of main issues raised and how these have been addressed in the SPD be undertaken. The table below provides a summary of the responses received and how they have been addressed within the SPD.

Responses by Organisations

Respondee	Comment / main issue(s) raised	Council response / how this has been addressed within the SPD
Home Office (Asylum Support)	We have noted the contents of your correspondence. Thank you once again for taking the time to write to the Home Office.	Comments noted
Rod Hepplewhite, Prism Planning	A very sensible move, IMHO, as I fail to understand why CoU from Class C3 to C4 was ever made permitted development in the first place. Class C3(c) should be enough (e.g. your typical student house) without needing planning permission. Good luck with bringing the SPD into force.	Comments noted
The Coal Authority	Is it noted that your Authority's boundary falls outside of the coalfield area. On this basis we have no interest in your plan area and no comments to make on the above consultation or on any future emerging planning policy documents.	Comments noted
Natural England	Whilst we welcome this opportunity to give our views, the topic of the Supplementary Planning Document does not appear to relate to our interests to any significant extent. We therefore do not wish to comment. Should the plan be amended in a way which significantly affects its impact on the natural environment, then, please consult Natural England again.	Comments noted
North Yorkshire Council	We have reviewed your document and conclude that there are no cross-boundary impacts or strategic matters which require cooperation and therefore have no comments to make.	Comments noted
Historic England	Thank you for consulting Historic England on the above. Historic England is the Government's statutory adviser on all matters relating to the historic environment in England. We are a non departmental public body established under the National Heritage Act 1983 and sponsored by the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS). We champion and protect England's historic places, providing expert advice to local planning authorities, developers, owners and communities to help ensure our historic environment is properly understood, enjoyed and cared for. We note how HMOs form part of the boroughs housing supply, contribute towards meeting housing needs, and support the continued viable use or re-use of vacant buildings as set out in Section 4: (Guidance / Overview). They also intensify use of properties and hence concentrations of HMOs can impact on the amenity of neighbouring properties and the character of the local area. The Council are proposing to put in place an Article 4 Direction, and associated SPD, to support mixed and balanced communities and ensure new HMOs do	General comments noted. In relation to the specific points raised the following response is provided: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Section 3- comments welcomed and no amendments required. • Section 4- comments noted in relation to this matter. However, in this instance, no amendments are to be made. The Development Plan should be read as a whole. The Local Plan includes, at policy HE2, confirmation that "In order to promote and enhance local distinctiveness, the Council will support proposals which positively respond to and enhance heritage assets". It will be for the case officer to balance matters such as this when determining planning applications. • Section 5- amendment has been made in relation to this matter as it provides more detailed guidance which will assist applicants.

	<p>not result in adverse impacts on local amenity and quality of life.</p> <p>Draft SPD</p> <p><u>Section 3</u> The adopted heritage policy is included in Section 3 / Policy Context / Local Plan 2019. We support the reference to Policy HE2 – Conserving and Enhancing Stockton’s Heritage Assets. We support the inclusion of this policy.</p> <p><u>Section 4</u> Three measures (or tests) are set out in the SPD. These would be material in the assessment of planning applications for HMOs across the borough including in all conservation areas. These aim to 1) avoid concentrations of HMOs 2) avoid grouping of HMOs and 3) avoid a C3 use being sandwiched between HMOs.</p> <p>We support the positive statement that HMOs support ‘continued viable use or re-use of vacant buildings’ in Section 4, but question why the SPD does not give any weight to a proposal which brings a vacant building back into active use. For example, where an HMO is proposed within a vacant designated heritage asset, or non-designated heritage asset - including those on a Local List put in place by the Council in the future - this could be included as an additional test.</p> <p>We refer you to our publication and research on how repurposing built heritage can help create dynamic, comforting, and sustainable living places Heritage Works for Housing Historic England. Historic England research provides evidence on how empty traditional properties can contribute to housing delivery. Figures from 2025 indicated 670,000 new homes could be provided in vacant floor space within historic buildings across England.</p> <p><u>Section 5</u> There is little reference to the historic environment other than in the Section 5 (Achieving good accommodation standards / External Alterations). The text in this section does not reference works to listed buildings being subject to additional controls. We suggest the following amendments and additions to this paragraph.</p> <p>Care and attention are required where a proposal is located within a conservation area or is a listed building. Applicants will be required to ensure that proposals accord with policies on conserving and enhancing the historic environment.</p> <p>If a building is located within one of the Borough’s 11 conservation areas, we encourage review of</p>	
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	<p>the Conservation Area Management Plan and the associated Character Appraisal Supplementary Planning Document - Conservation and Historic Environment Folder and management plan. As an example, there may be a requirement for features such as original timber windows to be incorporated into conversion schemes for guidance on appropriate external alterations.</p> <p>Where a building is listed, external and internal alterations require listed building consent. Such alterations are required to preserve the special architectural and historic interest of the building. It is important to consider this requirement when designing internal layouts (Figure 10), formulating energy efficiency measures and when considering any alterations to improve natural light, introduce entrance points and provide external storage.</p> <p>If you have any queries about any of the matters raised above or would like to discuss anything further, please do not hesitate to contact me.</p>	
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Responses by Local Residents

Respondee	Comment / main issue(s) raised	Council response / how this has been addressed within the SPD
Local Residents	That there are too many HMOs and issues of anti-social behavior	The SPD has been produced to ensure proposals contribute positively to making places better for people, improving standards of accommodation, and reducing detrimental impacts on neighbours. No amendments are proposed to the SPD.
	Ensuring outside areas are kept clean and tidy and processes for evicting tenants who cause problems to neighbours.	The SPD includes provision for supporting information to be provided alongside planning applications. Conditions to a planning consent will be added to the consent where it is necessary to make proposals acceptable in planning terms. No amendments are proposed to the SPD.
	Priority to veterans over other groups	The SPD informs the determination of planning applications but does not consider the allocation lettings / tenancies. No amendments are proposed to the SPD
	Changes to properties to HMO should be undertaken in consultation and agreement with residents	Where planning permission is required a period of consultation will be undertaken in the determination of planning applications. During this period the views on the proposed development can be expressed by residents and others. No amendments are proposed to the SPD.

Response by Ward Councillor

Respondee	Comment / main issue(s) raised	Council response / how this has been addressed within the SPD
Cllr Dodds	<p>Generally supportive of the proposed Article 4 Direction.</p> <p>Question relates to timing - i.e. if a proposed HMO has received planning but has not been completed prior to the formal adoption of the</p>	At the current time there is no requirement for planning consent for change the use of a dwelling house (C3) to a small HMO (C4) but planning consent would be required for a large HMO (Sui Generis). Should the Article 4 direction be confirmed, there

	<p>Article 4 Direction, will the original approval still be valid or will a new planning application be required as the previous scheme had not been implemented in planning terms?</p>	<p>would be the requirement for a planning application to be made for the change of use from a dwelling house (C3) to a small HMO (C4) once the direction came into force.</p> <p>Should properties change from C3 to C4 before a direction comes into force no planning consent would be required but the property owner would need to demonstrate that the change of use has occurred prior to this date should there be concerns that a property is being used in a manner without the required consent.</p>
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SEA / HRA Screening Consultation

Preliminary SEA and Screening Report was prepared and forwarded to the ‘Consultation Bodies’ – the Environment Agency, Natural England and Historic England for comment. The consultation period was from Thursday 19th February to Thursday 12th March 2026. The comments received can be viewed in the SEA Determination and Statement of reasons document (see Appendix C). Following on, Stockton on Tees Borough Council determined that the draft SPD was not likely to have significant environmental effects. Accordingly, it was considered that an environmental assessment of the SPD was not required.

The SEA Screening Report and SEA Determination and Statement of reasons document were made available throughout the public consultation (between Thursday 19th March 2026 and Friday 17th April 2026).

No fundamental changes to the draft SPD have arisen from the public consultation and only minor non-material changes may be made prior to its publication which will not change the scope or purpose of the SPD, make ‘new’ policy. Therefore, it is considered that the initial determination (contained within Appendix C) remains valid.

The HRA Screening Report was made available to the ‘Consultation Bodies’ from Thursday 19th February to Thursday 12th March 2026 and also made available for public consultation from Thursday 19th March 2026 and Friday 17th April 2026. The HRA Screening Report concludes that the SPD is not likely to have significant adverse effects on the integrity of European sites or Ramsar sites and further Appropriate Assessment is not required. Following consultation the same outcomes remain.

Appendix A

Consultation period, requirements, and approach

Consultation Period

19th March 2026 to 17th April 2026 (4 weeks)

Statutory Requirements

To fulfil the requirements of:

- The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012
- The Stockton-on-Tees Statement of Community Involvement (2016)

Approach to consultation

To ensure a transparent and holistic consultation the Council propose the following approach to consultation which meets statutory requirements.

How will decisions be made and what feedback will be given?

The Councils approach to this is detailed within the Statement of Community Involvement.

Identified activities

Brief description of activity	Date	Who is involved	Expected outcomes
Planning Committee Members Briefing Session – inviting planning committee to pre-consultation briefing session	Prior to consultation period	Planning Committee Members	Awareness Raising
Publish SPDs and Supporting Documents on website- Let's Talk section of website	Start of consultation period (19 th March 2026)	Planning Services / Communications Team	Awareness raising and consultation responses
Use of corporate Facebook and Twitter accounts- to publicise consultation	Throughout consultation period as appropriate	Communications Team	Awareness raising and consultation responses
Press release	Prior/during consultation	Communications Team	Awareness Raising
Letter/email to those on Consultation Database- stating where documentation is available. Those included on the Local Plan consultation database will be sent an e-mail/letter.	Both letters and e-mails to be sent prior to start of consultation period	Includes general/specific consultation bodies as well as local residents, local voluntary/community sector organisations, local businesses, and national organisations/agencies.	Awareness raising and consultation responses
E-mail to chair of Community Partnerships- stating where documentation is available	Start of consultation period	Forum members	Awareness raising and consultation responses

Email to all Council Members- stating where documentation is available	Start of consultation period	All Council Members to notify and allow them to raise awareness as considered appropriate	Awareness raising and consultation responses
Make documents available within libraries and customer service centres/principal office	Throughout consultation period	Planning Services / Library Service	Awareness raising and consultation responses
Attendance at meetings of groups	Subject to interest	Considered where formal invitation received by interested group.	Awareness raising and consultation responses

Appendix B

Organisations Consulted

Accent Group	Maltby Northern Edge Resident's Group
Adlington Planning Team	Maltby Parish Council
AECOM	Marine Management Organisation
Airport Operators Association	Marrons Planning
Anchor Trust	Matthew Trotter & Miller Architects
Appletons Chartered Surveyors	Metropolis PD
Arcus Consultancy Services Ltd (Planning Division)	Michael Mealing (Planning)
Arriva	Middlesbrough Borough Council
Arup	Middleton St George Parish Council
Atisha Buddhist Centre	Miller Homes
Augean PLC	Ministry of Defence
Avant Homes (North East)	Montagu Evans LLP
Avison Young	Nathaniel Lichfield and Partners
Baines Goldston	National Farmers Union
Baines Jewitt	National Gas Transmission
Bangladeshi Muslim Welfare Association	National Grid c/o Fisher German
Banks Developments	Natural England
Banks Property Ltd	Network Rail
Baptist Union of Great Britain	Newby Parish Council
Barclays Bank c/o Shire Consulting	NFU
Barratt David Wilson Homes North East	NG Bailey
Barratt Homes	NHS England North
Barton Willmore	NHS Hartlepool and Stockton-on-Tees Clinical Commissioning Group
Barton Willmore (on behalf of Church Commissioners)	NHS Property Services Ltd
Bede Sixth Form College	NHS Stockton - Public Health
Bellway Homes	North East Ambulance Service NHS Trust
Big Tree Planning Ltd	North East Chamber of Commerce
Billingham Town Council	North East Civic Trust
Bishopton Parish Council	North East Community Forests
Blackett Hart and Pratt	North East Land and Planning Agency
BNP Paribas	North Star Housing Group
BOC Gases	North Tees Limited
British Geological Survey	North Tees NHS Trust
British Toilet Association	North Yorkshire County Council
BT Group plc	Northern Consortium of Housing
BTCV	Northern Gas Networks Ltd
Building Design Consultant	Northern Powergrid
Building Research Establishment	Northumbria Garden Trust

Business & Resident Action Group - Norton High Street	Northumbrian Water Ltd
Cameron Hall Developments c/o England and Lyle Ltd	Norton Village Association
Campaign for Real Ale	Npower Renewables
Canals and Rivers Trust	Ofcom
Carlton Parish Council	Office for Nuclear Regulation
Carter Jonas LLP	Office of Rail and Road
Carter Jonas LLP on behalf of DG Dale and Sons	Office of the Durham Police, Crime and Victims' Commissioner
Catalyst	Office of the North Yorkshire Police and Crime Commissioner
Caterpillar Stockton	Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Cleveland
CB Richard Ellis Ltd	Openreach
CH2M (Highways England)	Oxbridge Residents Association
Charles Church	P&M Properties
Childrens Society	PD Ports
Chris Thomas Ltd	Peacock and Smith
Church Commissioners	Pegasus Group
Churchill Retirement Living	Persimmon Homes
Civil Aviation Authority	Persimmon Homes Teesside
CLA North	Philips Petroleum
Cleveland Fire Brigade	Picton Parish Meeting
Cleveland Police Dedicated Designing Out Crime Officers	Places for People
Cleveland Police Headquarters	Plainview Planning Ltd
Coal Authority	PlanInfo
Coast & County Housing	Planning Potential
Colliers International	Planning Prospects
Community Welfare Trust	Planning Team, Bond Dickinson
Concept Town Planning Ltd	Planning Works Ltd
Connect Property North East Ltd	Planware Ltd
ConocoPhillips Petroleum UK	Police and Crime Commissioner for Cleveland
Co-operative Group	Preston Farm Developments
Council for British Archaeology	Preston on Tees Parish Council
Countryside Properties	Primeland Consultants Limited
Cowpen Bewley Village Residents Association	Prism Planning
CPRE	PX House
CPRE North Yorkshire	Quod
Crathorne Parish Council	Rae Watson Development Surveyors
CRC- Churches Regional Commission in the North East	Railway Housing Association
Crown Estate Office	Ramblers Association, Stockton
Cushman and Wakefield	Rapleys
Cussins (North East) Ltd	Redcar and Cleveland Borough Council

Dalton Warner Davis Chartered Surveyors	Redmarshall Parish Council
Darlington Borough Council	rg+p Ltd
David Kitchen Associates	RGB Ltd
Davis Planning Partnership	Road Haulage Association - Northern Office
DEFRA	Robert Halstead Chartered Surveyor
Deloitte	RPS Group Plc
Deloitte Real Estate	RSPB
Department for Business Innovation and Skills	RSPB (Northern England Region)
Department for Transport	Rudby Parish Council
Design Council	Sabir UK Petrochemicals Ltd
DevPlan	Sadberge Parish Council
Dodds Brown	Saddington Taylor
DPDS Consulting Group	Sanderson Weatherall on behalf of Lidl UK
DPP (Newcastle)	Satnam Group
DPP Planning	SAVE
DTZ	Savills
Durham County Council	School of Architecture, Planning & Landscape
Durham Diocesan Secretary	Seamer Parish Council
Durham University	Sedgefield Town Council
Eaglescliffe Preservation Action Group	Sembcorp Energy UK
Education Funding Agency	Shri Guru Nanak Gurdwara and Sikh Community Centre
Education Training Collective	Shuttleworth Picknett & Associates LLP
EE	Signet Newcastle
Egglecliffe & Egglecliffe Parish Council	Signet Planning
Egglecliffe Youth Group	Sita UK
ELG Planning	Smiths Gore
Elwick Parish Council	Society for the Promotion and Advancement of Romany Culture
Emery Planning	Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings (SPAB)
Endeavour Housing Association	Solutions Northern
Endeavour Partnership	Southlands Management Ltd
Environment Agency	sp&architects
Esh Developments	Spawforths
Estate Directorate, Ministry of Justice	Spacia c/o Network Rail
Fairhurst	Sport England
Federation of Small Businesses	SSA Planning Limited
FFT Planning	SSA Planning Limited (on behalf of KFC Ltd)
Fields in Trust	St Modwen
Firstplan	St. James's Street Property Management
Forest Enterprise	Stagecarriage
Forestry Commission (County Durham)	Stagecoach
Forestry Commission (Morpeth)	Stagecoach Transit
Forestry England	Stainton and Thornton Parish Council
Freight Transport Association	Stephenson Halliday

Friends of Tees Heritage Park	Steve Hesmondhaigh & Associates
Friends of the Darlington Stockton Railway	Stillington & Whitton Parish Council
Friends of the Earth - Middlesbrough & Redcar	Stockton Business Forum
Garden History Society	Stockton Renaissance
Gentoo Homes	Stockton Residents' Association
Geoplan Ltd	Stockton Sixth Form College
George F White	Stockton Town Pastors
Gerald Eve LLP	Story Homes
Girsby Parish Council	Taylor Wimpey
GL Hearn Property Consultants	Tees and Hartlepool Port Authority Ltd
Gladman Developments	Tees Archaeology
GO Northern	Tees Valley Combined Authority
Great Stainton Parish Council	Tees Valley Local Access Forum
Greatham Parish Council	Tees Valley Nature Partnership
Greenery Terminal Limited	Tees Valley Rural Community Council
Grindon and Thorpe Thewles Parish Council	Tees Valley Wildlife Trust
Groundwork Trust	Teesside Humanist Society
H J Banks & Co. Ltd.	Teesside International Airport
Habiteg	Tesni Properties Limited
Hale	Tetlow King Planning
Hambleton District Council	The Ancient Monuments Society
Hanover Housing	The Co-operative Group
Hart Properties	The Council for British Archaeology
Hartburn Residents Association	The Energy Workshop
Hartlepool Borough Council	The Gardens Trust
Hartlepool Water	The Georgian Group
Health & Safety Executive	The Gypsy Council UK Office
Hedley Planning Services	The National Federation of Gypsy Liaison Groups
Hellens Group	The Planning Bureau Ltd
Highways England	The Sirius Group
Highways England - Northumberland & Durham	The Theatres Trust
Highways England Tees Valley	The Twentieth Century Society
Highways England Tyne & Wear	The Victorian Society
Hilton Parish Council	The Woodland Trust
Hindu Culture Centre	Thirteen Group
Historic England	Thornaby Town Council
Historic Towns Forum	Thoroughbred Homes Ltd
HJ Banks & Co Limited	Thorpe Thewles Residents Association
Hobson 7 Smith, Builders	Three
Home Builders Federation	TM Urban Developments
Home Group	Tomlinson Hall
Home Office	Transco
Homes England	Traveller Law Reform Coalition
How Planning	Turley Associates

Husband and Brown Limited	Turley Associates on behalf of Tees Valley Airport
Ian Derby Partnership	U.K Land Estates
Indigo Planning	University of Durham
Industry Nature Conservation Association	Vernon and Co
INEOS Chlor Vinyls Ltd	Virgin Media
Ingleby Barwick Town Council	Vodafone and O2
Inovyn Enterprises Ltd	Vopak
Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority	Ward Hadaway
Inter Terminals	Wardell Armstrong
Interserve Construction Limited	Wellington 2004 Estate Company c/o Dalton Warner Davis
Jayline Travel	Wellington Square Shopping Centre
Jeffrey Tarren & Associates	Westbury Mosque
JG Eaglescliffe (Holdings) Ltd c/o Sanderson Weatherall	White Young Green Planning
JigSaw Planning	Williams Gallagher c/o Total Planning Solutions
Jomast Developments	Wolviston Parish Council
Jon Tweddell Planning	Woodland Trust
JWPC Limited	Worsall Parish Council
Karbon Homes	Wright Construction (Durham) Ltd.
Kirklevington & Castle Leavington Parish Council	Wyevale Garden Centres Ltd
Kirklevington Property Co Ltd c/o Peacock and Smith	WYG
KLR Planning	Wynyard Estates c/o Nathaniel Lichfield and Partners
Knight Frank LLP	Wynyard Parish Council
KT Associates	Wynyard Park
Lafarge Aggregates Ltd	Wynyard Residents Association
Lambert Smith Hampton	Yarm and Willie Flats Residents Group
Letch Lane Residents	Yarm Chamber of Trade
Lexington Communications	Yarm Civic Society
Limes Developments	Yarm Residents Group
Local clinical commissioning group	Yarm Town Council
Long Newton Parish Council	York Diocesan Society
Lovell Johns	Yorkshire Gardens Trust
Lovells	Zero Waste Ltd

Appendix C

SEA Determination and Statement of Reasons

STOCKTON ON TEES BOROUGH COUNCIL

The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004

Part 9 Determination of Likely Significant Environmental Effects

Determination and Statement of Reasons under Part 9 (1) and (3)

Consultation Draft Supplementary Planning Document

Houses in Multiple Occupation

Part 9 (1) Determination

Stockton on Tees Borough Council has determined, having consulted Natural England, the Environment Agency and Historic England, that the Draft Supplementary Planning Document: Houses in Multiple Occupation is not likely to have significant environmental effects. Accordingly, it is considered that an environmental assessment of the SPD is not required.

Part 9 (3) Statement of Reasons

1. The preliminary SEA Screening Report contains the detail of the assessment and reasons. This statement is made to satisfy Part 9 (3) of the Regulations.
2. In making the determination, the Council has taken account of the fact the 'Parent Policies', Strategies and Priorities to which the SPD relates have, in the course of their preparation, been subject to Sustainability Appraisal including SEA and Habitats Regulations Assessment (with Appropriate Assessment).
3. The Council determined at Stage 1 of the Screening Process that SEA is relevant to the SPD. The Council's opinion at Stage 2 is that the SPD is unlikely to cause significant environmental effects in its application to decision taking, particularly as the parent policies in the adopted Stockton on Tees Local Plan have been subject to rigorous assessment in this respect both in preparation and in their final form through formal Examination in Public.
4. The SPD will provide information on the interpretation and implementation of the Council's Local Plan policies. The SPD primarily relates to Local Plan policy SD8 Sustainable Design and H4 Meeting Housing Need. The SPD seeks to ensure proposals contribute positively to making places better for people, improving standards of accommodation, and reducing detrimental impacts on neighbours.

5. In view of the assessment at Stage 2, it is the Council's preliminary opinion, at Stage 3, that an Environmental Report would not be required.
6. Under Regulation 9 (2), the preliminary SEA Screening Report was forwarded to the 'Consultation Bodies' – the Environment Agency, Natural England and Historic England for comment on content and conclusion. The responses received from Natural England and Historic England did not dispute the Council's conclusions at Stage 3. A response was not received from the Environment Agency. A copy of responses is provided within Appendix 1 of this document.

Where can I find a copy of these Documents

A copy of this determination and the Assessment containing the reasons for this determination can be found on the Council's website at: <https://www.stockton.gov.uk/current-consultations>, or inspected at any of the libraries within the borough during opening hours (details are available at <https://www.stockton.gov.uk/find-library>) alongside our principal office Dunedin House, Columbia Drive, Thornaby, Stockton-on-Tees, TS17 6BJ.

Alternatively, by email request sent to planningpolicy@stockton.gov.uk; by telephone: 01642 393939 or by post to Planning Policy, Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council, Dunedin House, Columbia Drive, Thornaby, Stockton-on-Tees, TS17 6BJ.

Appendix 1

Responses of Consultation Bodies to the Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening Report

Historic England (received 11th March 2026)

Thank you for consulting Historic England on the above. We note the consultation is on the screening opinion only. It does not request our comments on the content of the confidential draft HMO SPD also received via email on the 19th February 2026.

In terms of our area of interest, given the nature of the draft SPD we would concur with your assessment that the SPD is unlikely to result in any significant environmental effects. We accept the SPD is intended to provide clarity on the interpretation of policies within the Stockton-on-Tees Local Plan which has already been subject to a SA/SEA. As a result, we would endorse the Local Planning Authority's conclusions that it is not necessary to undertake a Strategic Environmental Assessment of this particular SPD.

Historic England has produced guidance for all involved in undertaking SA and SEA exercises which covers issues relating to the historic environment and when SA/SEAs are necessary.

For the avoidance of doubt, this does not affect our obligation to advise you on draft versions of the SPD when it is subject to consultation. If you have any queries about any of the matters raised above or would like to discuss anything further, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Natural England (received 26th February 2026)

Thank you for your consultation request on the above dated and received by Natural England on 19th February 2026.

Natural England is a non-departmental public body. Our statutory purpose is to ensure that the natural environment is conserved, enhanced, and managed for the benefit of present and future generations, thereby contributing to sustainable development.

Our remit includes protected sites and landscapes, biodiversity, geodiversity, soils, protected species, landscape character, green infrastructure and access to and enjoyment of nature.

Whilst we welcome this opportunity to give our views, the topic of the Supplementary Planning Document does not appear to relate to our interests to any significant extent. We therefore do not wish to comment.

Natural England does agree with your conclusion that it does not require an SEA / HRA.

Should the plan be amended in a way which significantly affects its impact on the natural environment, then, please consult Natural England again.

Strategic Environmental Assessment/Habitats Regulations Assessment. A SPD requires a Strategic Environmental Assessment only in exceptional circumstances as set out in the Planning Practice Guidance here. While SPDs are unlikely to give rise to likely significant effects on European Sites, they should be considered as a plan under the Habitats Regulations in the same way as any other plan or project. If your SPD requires a Strategic Environmental Assessment or Habitats Regulation Assessment, you are required to consult us at certain stages as set out in the Planning Practice Guidance.

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Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening Assessment

Houses in Multiple Occupation Draft Supplementary Planning Document (March 2026)

1: Introduction

There is no legal requirement for Supplementary Planning Documents to be accompanied by Sustainability Appraisal. However, “in exceptional circumstances” there may be a requirement for SPDs to be subject to Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) where it is considered likely that they may have a significant effect on the environment that has not already been assessed within the SEA of the local plan¹. A screening assessment has been undertaken to assess whether such an assessment is necessary.

2: SEA screening criteria and procedure

To assess whether an SEA is required, there is a requirement to undertake a screening assessment, based on a standard set of criteria as set out in the Regulations, to determine whether the draft SPD is likely to have significant environmental effects. The screening must then be subject to consultation with the three statutory bodies Historic England, Natural England and the Environment Agency. Following consultation, the results of the screening process must be detailed in a publicly available statement.

The consultation with the three statutory bodies is to be undertaken between 19th February and 12th March 2026. Two responses were received within the consultation period with response summarised below:

- **Natural England-** the topic of the Supplementary Planning Document does not appear to relate to our interests to any significant extent. We therefore do not wish to comment. Natural England does agree with your conclusion that it does not require an SEA / HRA. Should the plan be amended in a way which significantly affects its impact on the natural environment, then, please consult Natural England again.
- **Historic England-** given the nature of the draft SPD we would concur with your assessment that the SPD is unlikely to result in any significant environmental effects. We accept the SPD is intended to provide clarity on the interpretation of policies within the Stockton-on-Tees Local Plan which has already been subject to a SA/SEA. As a result, we would endorse the Local Planning Authority’s conclusions.

3: SEA screening assessment

The table outlined within Appendix 1 sets out the Council’s assessment of whether significant environmental effects are likely and is based on the criteria specified in Schedule 1 to the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004.

4: Conclusions

As a result of the assessment carried out in Appendix 1, it is considered that it is unlikely that any significant environmental effects will arise because of the Houses in Multiple Occupation SPD.

Notably, the SPD does not propose any policies or allocations, instead offering clarity on the interpretation of policies within the Stockton-on-Tees Local Plan and sets out guidance and good practice for planning applicants to enable the delivery of better planning outcomes. The SPD will not result in any significant new development; it simply provides additional guidance on proposals for HMOs.

The Council has therefore determined that a Strategic Environmental Assessment is not necessary for the Houses in Multiple Occupation SPD.

However, it is important to note that this screening assessment is based on a draft version of the SPD. Consequently, if the content or purpose of the SPD should materially change then the SEA screening will need to be re-assessed and updated.

¹ Planning Practice Guidance (paragraph 008, Reference ID: 11-008-20140306)

Appendix 1: Screening Assessment

Determining the likely significance of effects on the environment

Criteria		Assessment	Likely significant effect?
1	Characteristics of the plan or programme		
1a	The degree to which the plan or programme sets a framework for projects and other activities, either with regard to the location, nature, size and operating conditions or by allocating resources	The SPD provides supplementary guidance to support the implementation of Local Plan policies (principally SD8 and H4). Whilst the SPD will establish a framework for the implementation of policies within the Local Plan it does not determine the detail of the framework i.e. it does not establish policy.	No
1b	The degree to which the plan or programme influences other plans and programmes including those in a hierarchy.	The SPD adds further detail to existing policies within the Development Plan. It is not intended to influence other plans and programmes.	No
1c	The relevance of the plan or programme for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development.	The SPD is relevant in terms of promoting sustainable development as it ensures HMO proposals meet appropriate standards and seeks to reduce potential for negative impacts. Given the topics in the SPD, it is not likely that there would be any significant environmental effects arising from the SPD.	No
1d	Environmental problems relevant to the plan or programme.	The SPD provides supplementary guidance to support the implementation of Local Plan policies aiming to ensure that appropriate standards for HMOs are met. It is not anticipated that there will be any environmental problems introduced because of the SPD.	No
1e	The relevance of the plan or programme for the implementation of Community legislation on the environment (e.g. plans and programmes linked to waste-management or water protection).	The SPD supplements Local Plan policies and seeks to ensure that appropriate waste management provision is made for HMOs. It is not likely that there would be any significant environmental effects arising from the SPD.	No
2	Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected		
2a	The probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects.	The anticipated effects are expected to be positive as the SPD will ensure that HMOs provide appropriate standards of accommodation and seeks to reduce potential for negative impacts. The duration of the effects will depend upon the long-term use of premises but could be considered permanent unless HMOs are subsequently converted to other uses. The frequency of effects will be	No

Criteria		Assessment	Likely significant effect?
		linked to the number of planning applications for HMOs that are submitted.	
2b	The cumulative nature of the effects.	Its implementation will assist in mitigating potential negative effects that may arise from development of HMOs.	No
2c	The trans-boundary nature of the effects.	The SPD is to be applied borough wide where HMO applications are received. However, no trans-boundary effects anticipated from the SPD owing to the nature of its content.	No
2d	The risks to human health or the environment (for example, due to accidents).	No risks identified as the SPD seeks to ensure suitable standards are met in applications for HMOs.	No
2e	The magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected).	The SPD will be applied to all HMO planning applications in the borough. Its effects will be more likely felt at a more local scale (i.e. street or neighbourhood level) but it would not result in any additional development than would otherwise be the case.	No
2f	<p>The value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Special natural characteristics or cultural heritage; ii. exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values; or iii. intensive land-use 	<p>The SPD supplements the higher level Local Plan policies and will not in itself result in any additional development. The SPD will not give rise to any significant effects on special natural characteristics or cultural heritage. The SPD provides guidance on determination of planning applications for HMOs. It does not promote development which is likely to lead to environmental quality standards or limit values being exceeded.</p> <p>The SPD will not give rise to any significant effects because of the intensification of land use – it will not in itself result in any additional development. Any applications for development will be required to satisfy the relevant policies for the protection of the character of the area before permission is granted.</p>	No
2g	The effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, community or international protection status.	The SPD will not give rise to any significant adverse effects on nearby protected areas or landscapes.	No



Habitat Regulation Assessment Screening Assessment

Houses in Multiple Occupation Draft Supplementary Planning Document (March 2026)

1: Introduction

It is a requirement under the Habitats Directive to establish the potential effects of “plans or projects” on designated European sites, and therefore Ramsar sites. The first stage in the HRA process is to establish whether a “significant effect” is likely. This is referred to as the “screening stage”. If it is found that a significant effect is not likely, then no further action is required. If potential effects are identified and deemed to be significant then Appropriate Assessment is required and used as a tool to help modify the plan or project to ensure that impacts are removed, or if this is not possible mitigated to prevent an adverse effect upon the integrity of the site.

2: HRA screening assessment

The purpose of the Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) of land use plans is to ensure that protection of the integrity of European sites is part of the planning process. The requirements for HRA of plans and projects is outlined in the European Communities (1992) Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora otherwise known as the Habitats Directive. The Habitats Directive requirement to carry out HRA for land use plans is primarily transposed into English law under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010.

European sites are Special Protection Areas (SPAs), Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and Ramsar sites. The Borough of Stockton-on-Tees contains one designated site - the Teesmouth and Cleveland Coast SPA. The site has also been recognised as a wetland of international importance for nature conservation, under the Ramsar Convention. Other SPAs / SACs and Ramsar sites located within adjacent of more distant authorities include North York Moors SPA/SAC (approx. 9 km), Thrislington SAC (approx. 9 miles), Castle Eden Dene SAC (approx. 10 miles), Durham Coast SAC (approx. 10 miles), and Northumbria Coast SPA/Ramsar (approx. 10 miles).

3: HRA screening conclusions

The SPD does not propose any policies or allocations, instead offering clarity on the interpretation of policies within the Stockton-on-Tees Local Plan and sets out guidance and good practice for planning applicants to enable the delivery of better planning outcomes. The SPD will not result in any significant new development; it simply provides additional guidance on proposals for HMOs. The Houses in Multiple Occupation SPD is therefore not likely to have significant adverse effects on the integrity of European sites or Ramsar sites and further Appropriate Assessment is not required

It is important to note that this screening assessment is based on the consultation version of the SPD. Consequently, if the content or purpose of the SPD should materially change then the HRA screening will need to be re-assessed and updated.

THE COUNCIL OF THE BOROUGH OF STOCKTON-ON-TEES
TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (GENERAL PERMITTED DEVELOPMENT)
(ENGLAND) ORDER 2015 (AS AMENDED)
DIRECTION MADE UNDER ARTICLE 4(1)

WHEREAS The Council of the Borough of Stockton-on-Tees ("the Council") being the appropriate local planning authority within the meaning of article 4(5) of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 ("the Order"), are satisfied that it is expedient that development of the description set out in Schedule 1 below should not be carried out on the land described in Schedule 2 below unless planning permission is granted on an application made under Part III of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).

NOW THEREFORE the Council in pursuance of the power conferred on them by article 4(1) of the Order hereby direct that the permission granted by article 3 of the Order shall not apply to development of the description set out in Schedule 1 below on the said land of the description set out in Schedule 2 below:

SCHEDULE 1

Development consisting of a change of use of a building from a use falling within Class C3 (dwellinghouses) of Schedule 1 to the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended) to a use falling within Class C4 (houses in multiple occupation) of that Schedule being development compromised within Class L(b) of Part 3 of Schedule 2 to the Order and not being development compromised within any other Class.

SCHEDULE 2

Land comprising the entire area of the Borough of Stockton-on-Tees shown edged red on the attached map.

THIS DIRECTION is made under article 4(1) of the Order and in accordance with Schedule 3 to the Order and shall come into force, if confirmed, on 22 March 2027.

Made under the Common Seal of The Council of the Borough of Stockton-on-Tees this 18th day of March 2026.

The Common Seal of The Council of the Borough of Stockton-on-Tees was affixed to this Direction in the presence of:



Authorised Signatory

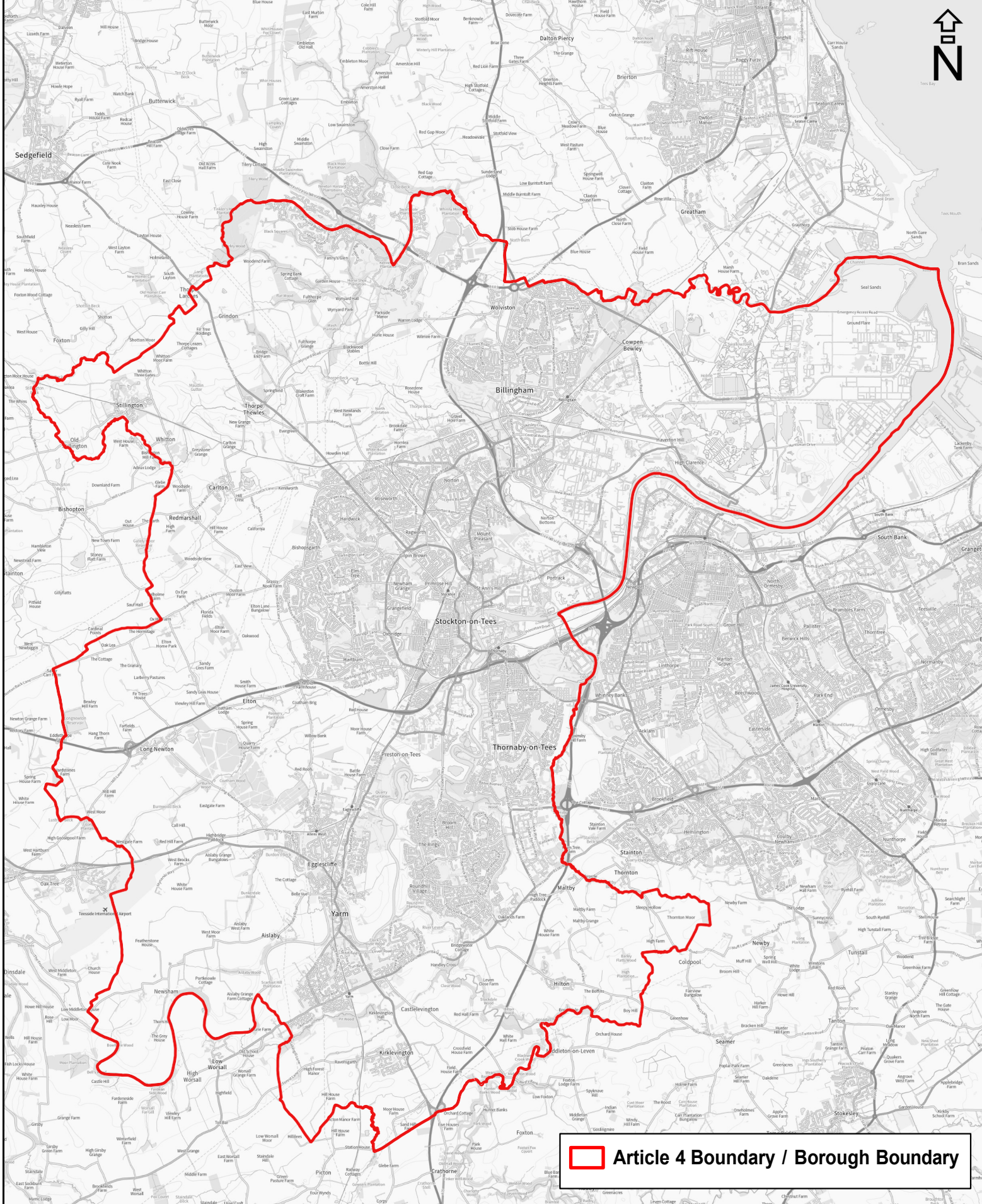



46251
Delegated

Confirmed under the Common Seal of The Council of the Borough of Stockton-on-Tees this day of
202

The Common Seal of The Council of the Borough of Stockton-on-Tees was affixed to this Direction in
the presence of:

Authorised Signatory



 **Article 4 Boundary / Borough Boundary**



Map Produced by Planning Policy
Planning Services

Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council
Dunedin Road, Columbia Drive,
Thornaby, Stockton-on-Tees, TS17 6BJ
Telephone: (01642) 393939

Title

Article 4 Direction

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THE COUNCIL OF THE BOROUGH OF STOCKTON-ON-TEES
TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (GENERAL PERMITTED DEVELOPMENT)
(ENGLAND) ORDER 2015 (AS AMENDED)

NOTICE OF MAKING AN ARTICLE 4(1) DIRECTION

NOTICE is hereby given that the Council of the Borough of Stockton-on-Tees (“the Council”) has made a Direction under Article 4(1) of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended) on Wednesday 18th March 2026 (“the Direction”).

The Direction relates to development consisting of a change of use of a building from a use falling within Class C3 (dwellinghouses) of Schedule 1 to the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended) to a use falling within Class C4 (houses in multiple occupation) of that Schedule being development comprised within Class L(b) of Part 3 of Schedule 2 to the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended) and removes permitted development rights for this type of development from the date on which the Direction comes in force. Therefore, from that date, planning permission will be required for this type of development.

The Direction, subject to confirmation by the Council, shall come into force on Monday 22nd March 2027 (unless a different date is specified by the Secretary of State).

The Direction applies to the entire area of the Borough of Stockton-on-Tees shown edged red on the map attached to the Direction. A copy of the Direction including the map can be viewed at Stockton Central Library and Customer Service Centre, Church Road, Stockton-on-Tees, TS18 1TU and all other libraries within the borough during normal opening hours. A copy of the Direction including the maps can also be viewed online at www.stockton.gov.uk/current-consultations.

Representations may be made concerning the Direction between Thursday 19th March 2026 and Friday 17th April 2026. If you wish to make representations you may do so using the online response form at www.stockton.gov.uk/current-consultations, in writing to Planning Policy, Stockton on Tees Borough Council, Dunedin House, Columbia Drive, Thornaby, Stockton-on-Tees, TS17 6BJ or alternatively by email to planningpolicy@stockton.gov.uk.

Dated: 18th March 2026

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Consultation Representations

Article 4 Direction

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Overview and Representations

Consultation undertaken in the preparation of the Article 4 direction

Introduction

Notice has been given on the 18th March 2026 that the Council has made a Direction under Article 4(1) of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended). A period of consultation was undertaken from 19th March and the 17th April 2026 inviting representations with consultation activities aligned with those of the Houses in Multiple Occupation Supplementary Planning Document and requirements within the Schedule 3 of The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended).

Confirmation of the direction would require planning consent for the change of use of a building within Class C3 (dwelling houses) to a use falling within Class C4 (houses in multiple occupation) through the removal of permitted development rights for this type of development. The Direction would apply to the entire area of the Borough of Stockton-on-Tees.

Representations Received / Council Consideration

During the consultation period 18 representations were received. These representations can be summarised as falling into 2 categories:

- **Organisations-** Natural England, Coal Authority, Home Office, Prism Planning, National Residential Landlords Association, Stockton Liberal Democrats, The Canal & River Trust, North Yorkshire Council, Historic England.
- **Local Resident-** 9 local residents

In deciding whether to confirm a direction made under Article 4(1), the local planning authority must take into account any representations received during the period. Responses received are detailed below alongside consideration given the Council

Representations by Organisations

Respondee	Comment / main issue(s) raised	Council response / consideration
Home Office (Asylum Support)	<p>Thank you for your correspondence of 19 March 2026 to the Home Office regarding the draft Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO) Supplementary Planning Document and the proposed Article 4 designation.</p> <p>We acknowledge receipt of your letter confirming that Article 4 Direction for the Stockton-on-Tees area is scheduled to come into effect on 22 March 2027.</p> <p>We have noted the contents of your correspondence. Thank you once again for taking the time to write to the Home Office.</p>	Comments noted
Rod Hepplewhite, Prism Planning	A very sensible move, IMHO, as I fail to understand why CoU from Class C3 to C4 was ever made permitted development in the first place. Class C3© should be enough (e.g. your typical student house) without needing planning permission.	Comments noted and support welcomed

	<p>Good luck with bringing the SPD into force.</p>	
The Coal Authority	<p>Thank you for your recent consultation on the draft houses in multiple occupation consultation</p> <p>The Coal Authority are a Statutory Consultee in the planning process in coalfield areas across England, Scotland and Wales.</p> <p>Is it noted that your Authority's boundary falls outside of the coalfield area. On this basis we have no interest in your plan area and no comments to make on the above consultation or on any future emerging planning policy documents.</p>	Comments noted
Natural England	<p>Thank you for your consultation request on the above dated and received by Natural England on 18th March 2026.</p> <p>Natural England is a non-departmental public body. Our statutory purpose is to ensure that the natural environment is conserved, enhanced, and managed for the benefit of present and future generations, thereby contributing to sustainable development.</p> <p>Our remit includes protected sites and landscapes, biodiversity, geodiversity, soils, protected species, landscape character, green infrastructure and access to and enjoyment of nature.</p> <p>Whilst we welcome this opportunity to give our views, the topic of the Supplementary Planning Document does not appear to relate to our interests to any significant extent. We therefore do not wish to comment.</p> <p>Should the plan be amended in a way which significantly affects its impact on the natural environment, then, please consult Natural England again.</p>	Comments noted
North Yorkshire Council	<p>Thank you for your email of 8th April 2026 providing us with the opportunity to comment on your current consultation on the above Supplementary Planning Document and Article 4 designation.</p> <p>We have reviewed your document and conclude that there are no cross-boundary impacts or strategic matters which require cooperation and therefore have no comments to make.</p> <p>We look forward to continued engagement between ourselves as we progress with planning documents.</p>	Comments noted
National Residential Landlords Association	<p>The NRLA is an association following the merger of the National Landlords Association and the Residential Landlords Association. Our membership represents over 110,000 landlords and agents, the largest 2enalizes2on in the sector.</p> <p>We appreciate the opportunity to provide our input on the consultation concerning the introduction of a borough wide Article 4 Direction in Stockton-on-Tees.</p> <p>The NRLA strives for a just legislative and regulatory framework for the private rented sector, ensuring that landlords are aware of their legal rights and obligations.</p>	Both the Stockton-on-Tees Plan and the Powering Our Future programme affirm the Councils commitment to driving economic growth to support community prosperity and well-being. The delivery of good quality, affordable housing in well-connected neighbourhoods is integral to this. Alongside this 'housing and the physical environment' is a focus area within A Fairer Stockton-on-Tees. HMOs form part of the

	<p><u>Main Objections</u></p> <p>The need for HMOs in specific communities</p> <p>Certain segments of the community necessitate HMO accommodation, especially in student neighbourhoods and rural regions, for instance. It is exclusively the private rented sector that provides such housing alternatives.</p> <p>The council's proposal for an Article 4 Direction of this nature in a rural setting poses challenges. Rural areas usually have lower demand for HMOs; plus, rural areas often face housing shortages especially for young adults or low-income individuals or people seeking affordable shared living arrangements for example.</p> <p>Furthermore, in some rural areas, small scale HMOs support local economies by housing seasonal workers, apprentices or tourism employees. Restricting this option can undermine business needs and local vitality.</p> <p>Limiting C3 to C4 conversions removes a flexible, low-cost housing option in places that may already be struggling provide that type of property in the first place.</p> <p>Rent increases and costs</p> <p>As previously mentioned, an Article 4 Direction will diminish the availability of small HMOs in areas where there is both demand and necessity for such accommodation. Consistent with the principles of supply and demand, this will result in higher rental prices in those areas, particularly if they are in proximity to such things like major work places, infrastructure and services like hospitals. Pushing up rental levels will not help those who are seeking this type of housing.</p> <p>There is also added planning for what was previously a permitted change for a landlord, which includes planning fees, potential consultant costs and time delays. There is no guarantee of approval, even if the HMO meets safety and amenity standards.</p> <p>Enforcement activity</p> <p>Local authorities have many existing and robust enforcement powers which can be used to rectify problems in HMOs, such as-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Criminal Behaviour Orders • Crime Prevention Injunctions • Interim Management Orders • Improvement Notices • Litter Abatement Notices (Section 92 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990) • Fixed Penalty Notices or Confiscation of equipment (Sections 8 and 10 of the Noise Act 1996) • Directions regarding the disposal of waste (for example, Section 46 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990) 	<p>borough's housing supply and contribute to residents housing choice by providing low-cost and flexible housing for residents whose housing options may be limited.</p> <p>Whilst the Article 4 direction proposed would cover the entirety of the Borough we would not consider the entirety of the borough to constitute a 'rural area' as indicated within the response.</p> <p>The Article 4 Direction does not restrict HMOs but requires an application for the change of use from C3 to C4 via the removal of permitted development rights. A Supplementary Planning Document is being prepared alongside the Article 4 direction which seeks to ensure proposals for HMOs contribute positively to making places better for people, improving standards of accommodation, and reducing detrimental impacts on neighbours. Within the SPD guidance are a series of measures which seek to avoid over-concentrations of HMOs which could lead to a community becoming unsustainably balanced and at risk of associated effects. Therefore, these measures are considered to be a pragmatic approach to achieving balanced communities and does not constitute a blanket ban.</p> <p>Enforcement powers will be used as and when appropriate. However, the approach of implementing and Article 4 direction alongside SPD is considered appropriate and pragmatic.</p>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notices to remove rubbish from land (Section 2-3 of the Prevention of Damage by Pests Act 1949) • Civil Penalties under the Housing and Planning Act 2016 • Prohibition Orders <p>These powers do not require consultation to implement. The local authority can work with private landlords to deal with these concerns wherever they arise.</p> <p><u>Conclusions</u></p> <p>The NRLA's position on Article 4 Directions is that they distort the housing market and that local authorities should use already existing enforcement powers rather than planning permissions to address the condition, quality and environmental issues that affect HMOs.</p> <p>We believe that landlords should retain permitted development rights as determined by demand in the market. Article 4 Directions fail to address criminal landlords and poor management as they can still operate outside of the law and acceptable standards.</p> <p>It is important that elected councillors and officials consider the overall impact on their area. There is no guarantee that planning powers will have any impact overall.</p>	
<p>The Canal & River Trust</p>	<p>We are the charity who look after and bring to life 2000 miles of canals & rivers. Our waterways contribute to the health and wellbeing of local communities and economies, creating attractive and connected places to live, work, volunteer and spend leisure time. These historic, natural and cultural assets form part of the strategic and local green-blue infrastructure network, linking urban and rural communities as well as habitats. By caring for our waterways and promoting their use we believe we can improve the wellbeing of our nation. The Canal & River Trust (the Trust) is a statutory consultee in the Development Management process, and as such we welcome the opportunity to input into planning policy related matters to ensure that our waterways are protected, safeguarded and enhanced within an appropriate policy framework.</p> <p>The Trust have reviewed the document/policies contained within the document and based on the information available we have no comment to make.</p>	<p>Comments noted</p>
<p>Stockton Liberal Democrats</p>	<p>The introduction of an Article 4 Direction on HMOs is a significant step, and it's vital that it strikes the right balance between protecting communities and maintaining access to affordable housing.</p> <p>While there are legitimate concerns about the concentration of HMOs in certain areas, particularly around issues like anti-social behaviour, pressure on local services, and changes to neighbourhood character, this policy must not become a blunt instrument that limits housing supply or unfairly penalises responsible landlords.</p> <p>Stockton already faces real challenges in housing availability and affordability. HMOs, when well-managed,</p>	<p>Both the Stockton-on-Tees Plan and the Powering Our Future programme affirm the Councils commitment to driving economic growth to support community prosperity and well-being. The delivery of good quality, affordable housing in well-connected neighbourhoods is integral to this. Alongside this 'housing and the physical environment' is a focus area within A Fairer Stockton-on-Tees. HMOs form part of the borough's housing supply and</p>

	<p>play an important role in providing flexible, lower-cost accommodation for working people, young residents, and those in transition. Restricting them without a clear, evidence-led approach risks pushing people into more precarious or unsuitable housing situations.</p> <p>The key here is enforcement and standards, not just restriction. Poorly managed properties and rogue landlords should be the priority for action, rather than imposing blanket controls that impact everyone.</p> <p>The Council must ensure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decisions are based on robust local data, not perception • There is clear engagement with residents, landlords, and tenants • The policy is regularly reviewed for unintended consequences • Resources are in place to enforce existing regulations effectively <p>If this directive is to work, it must be part of a wider housing strategy, one that increases supply, improves standards, and supports sustainable communities across Stockton.</p> <p>Without that, there is a real risk this becomes more about optics than outcomes.</p>	<p>contribute to residents housing choice by providing low-cost and flexible housing for residents whose housing options may be limited.</p> <p>A Supplementary Planning Document is being prepared alongside the Article 4 direction which seeks to ensure proposals for HMOs contribute positively to making places better for people, improving standards of accommodation, and reducing detrimental impacts on neighbours. Within the SPD guidance are a series of measures which seek to avoid over-concentrations of HMOs which could lead to a community becoming unsustainably balanced and at risk of associated effects. Therefore, these measures are considered to be a pragmatic approach to achieving balanced communities and does not constitute a blanket ban.</p> <p>The LA has two regulatory controls which can be applied that require landlords to effectively manage HMOs. These are mandatory HMO licensing and selective licensing.</p> <p>Once adopted the SPD will be a material consideration in the determination of planning application. Once a new local plan is adopted, existing Local Plan policies and SPDs would be considered out-of-date. Therefore, the appropriate place to consider policy review will be through the preparation of the Local Plan for the borough.</p>
<p>Historic England</p>	<p>Thank you for consulting Historic England on the above. Historic England is the Government’s statutory adviser on all matters relating to the historic environment in England. We are a non departmental public body established under the National Heritage Act 1983 and sponsored by the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS). We champion and protect England’s historic places, providing expert advice to local planning authorities, developers, owners and communities to help ensure our historic environment is properly understood, enjoyed and cared for.</p> <p>We note how HMOs form part of the boroughs housing supply, contribute towards meeting housing needs, and support the continued viable use or re-use of vacant</p>	<p>Comments noted. Matters relating to the draft SPD have been considered within the consultation statement associated with the SPD.</p>

	<p>buildings as set out in Section 4: (Guidance / Overview). They also intensify use of properties and hence concentrations of HMOs can impact on the amenity of neighbouring properties and the character of the local area. The Council are proposing to put in place an Article 4 Direction, and associated SPD, to support mixed and balanced communities and ensure new HMOs do not result in adverse impacts on local amenity and quality of life.</p> <p>Article 4 Direction</p> <p>We note the intention is for the Article 4 to apply to all land within the administrative area of the Council including all conservation areas. Stockton Borough Council has 11 in total. We have no comments on the Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO) Article 4 Direction itself but refer you to our comments below.</p> <p>Draft SPD</p> <p><u>Section 3</u> The adopted heritage policy is included in Section 3 / Policy Context / Local Plan 2019. We support the reference to Policy HE2 – Conserving and Enhancing Stockton’s Heritage Assets. We support the inclusion of this policy.</p> <p><u>Section 4</u> Three measures (or tests) are set out in the SPD. These would be material in the assessment of planning applications for HMOs across the borough including in all conservation areas. These aim to 1) avoid concentrations of HMOs 2) avoid grouping of HMOs and 3) avoid a C3 use being sandwiched between HMOs.</p> <p>We support the positive statement that HMOs support ‘continued viable use or re-use of vacant buildings’ in Section 4, but question why the SPD does not give any weight to a proposal which brings a vacant building back into active use. For example, where an HMO is proposed within a vacant designated heritage asset, or non-designated heritage asset - including those on a Local List put in place by the Council in the future - this could be included as an additional test.</p> <p>We refer you to our publication and research on how repurposing built heritage can help create dynamic, comforting, and sustainable living places Heritage Works for Housing Historic England. Historic England research provides evidence on how empty traditional properties can contribute to housing delivery. Figures from 2025 indicated 670,000 new homes could be provided in vacant floor space within historic buildings across England.</p> <p><u>Section 5</u> There is little reference to the historic environment other than in the Section 5 (Achieving good accommodation standards / External Alterations). The text in this section does not reference works to listed buildings being subject to additional controls. We suggest the following amendments and additions to this paragraph.</p>	
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	<p>Care and attention are required where a proposal is located within a conservation area or is a listed building. Applicants will be required to ensure that proposals accord with policies on conserving and enhancing the historic environment.</p> <p>If a building is located within one of the Borough's 11 conservation areas, we encourage review of the Conservation Area Management Plan and the associated Character Appraisal Supplementary Planning Document - Conservation and Historic Environment Folder and management plan. As an example, there may be a requirement for features such as original timber windows to be incorporated into conversion schemes for guidance on appropriate external alterations.</p> <p>Where a building is listed, external and internal alterations require listed building consent. Such alterations are required to preserve the special architectural and historic interest of the building. It is important to consider this requirement when designing internal layouts (Figure 10), formulating energy efficiency measures and when considering any alterations to improve natural light, introduce entrance points and provide external storage.</p> <p>If you have any queries about any of the matters raised above or would like to discuss anything further, please do not hesitate to contact me.</p>	
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Representations by Local Residents

Respondee	Comment / main issue(s) raised	Council response / how this has been addressed within the SPD
Response 1	I agree that the change proposed will be of benefit to local communities within Stockton, and i commend officers for working to deliver this change.	Comments noted and support welcomed
Response 1	<p>I wish to be consulted on Article 4 notification. Around 3/4 years ago a property developer purchased the property next door to ours.</p> <p>We were told at the time it was for student accommodation. When occupants were put into the property we found out it was actually an HMO. Since this point we have had to endure the slamming of the front door of the property and loud banging noises from within the property through the night.</p> <p>The exterior of the property is poorly maintained and falling into disrepair. We have approached the 'owner / operator' <i>#response moderated to remove identifiable information#</i> on numerous occasions to voice our concerns though nothing seems to be done about it. We are not happy that nothing is being done to improve matters.</p>	<p>The article 4 notice was served in accordance with Schedule 3 of The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended). Should the Article 4 direction be confirmed it will also be undertaken in accordance with the same legislation.</p> <p>Respondee has been contacted in relation to remaining elements of the response.</p>
Response 3	I fully support this proposal as described on this website.	Comments noted and support welcomed
Response 4	You should also include change of use from C3 to C2 as well as C3 to C4 to create the need for a planning application instead of just an application for lawful permission. This would allow local people to have a	Change of use from C3 to C2 does not constitute permitted development and as such planning consent is normally required. It should be noted that there

	say in their local area, which at present, on this matter, we do not.	is case law that indicates exceptions where a material change of use has not occurred. However, this would be on a case-by-case basis, and would not be resolved through the introduction of an Article 4 direction.
Response 5	I don't know what this means.	Comments noted
Response 6	Anybody who wants to turn a house into a HMO should require planning permission. Irrelevant of the size of the property.	Comments noted
Response 7	We dont want it	Comments noted
Response 8	Self	Comments noted
Response 9	Restricting the HMO business in anyway takes away the chance for creating new business, revenue, jobs and economic advantages. There are many abandoned buildings available for new business. The landlords have already sold their cheaper stock and are hanging on the open market. Making more barriers for business does provide growth,, which is what the country needs to present.	<p>HMOs form part of the borough's housing supply and contribute to residents housing choice by providing low-cost and flexible housing for residents whose housing options may be limited. The Article 4 Direction does not restrict HMOs but requires an application for the change of use from C3 to C4 via the removal of permitted development rights.</p> <p>The associated SPD seeks to ensure proposals for HMOs contribute positively to making places better for people, improving standards of accommodation, and reducing detrimental impacts on neighbours. Within the SPD guidance are a series of measures which seek to avoid over-concentrations of HMOs which could lead to a community becoming unsustainably balanced and at risk of associated effects. Therefore, these measures are considered to be a pragmatic approach to achieving balanced communities and does not constitute a blanket ban.</p>

Outcome

Having considered and taken into account the representations received, the local planning authority intends to confirm the Article 4 Direction. Necessary processes will be undertaken, in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended) to confirm the Direction which will come into force on Monday 22nd March 2027.

REPORT TO COUNCIL

20 MAY 2026

REPORT OF CORPORATE
MANAGEMENT TEAM

Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council

Consent Street Trading Policy Review

2026

Summary

The whole Borough has been designated as a consent area for the purposes of street trading. The Consent Street Trading (CST) policy details how the regime is managed. The policy document has been reviewed following a valid petition, a public consultation and comments received from the general licensing committee.

Cabinet will be considering this report at its meeting on 14 May 2026 and are being asked to make the following recommendation to Council.

Recommendation

1. That Council agree the proposed consent street trading policy document.

Detail

1. The CST regime has been in place since 1 March 2024. Over 60 consents have been considered and granted across Stockton-on-Tees since the beginning of the scheme.
2. The CST policy guides the Council when it considers applications for street trading consents. It also serves to inform applicants of the criteria against which applications will be considered as well as setting out the Councils framework and approach for the management of street trading in the Borough of Stockton-on-Tees.
3. A petition asking for certain events to be excluded from the regime was received and duly considered at full council on 19th November 2026. It was moved by Councillor Norma Stephenson, seconded by Councillor Nail Innes that the petition be referred to the General Licensing Committee for further consideration.
4. The CST policy was subsequently reviewed and includes several changes in response to the valid petition, operational procedures and comments received from General Licensing Committee including recommendations.
5. As part of this review, a public consultation was also undertaken to help inform the changes. The responses received to the public consultation are available via the link below.

6. The review also considered the design principals:
 - Put communities at the heart of everything we do - sensitive to the needs of residents, provides diversity and consumer choice.
 - Has a 'place-based' approach - compliments regeneration and business growth.
 - Has efficient processes and be digital by design - process reviews and feedback provide efficiencies.
 - Uses data and intelligence to inform our decision - consultation drives the policy framework.
7. The matter was referred to the General Licensing Committee on the 24th March 2026. The committee agreed unanimously on the revised CST policy. The simplification of the CST process was acknowledged along with a new fairer criterion for commercial, charity and hobbyists trading at events within the borough.

Community Impact and Equality and Poverty Impact Assessment

8. The CST policy is borough wide and has been operational since 2024 and the proposed changes will bring benefits for the community, licensing service, existing traders/event organisers and potential traders/event organisers.
9. An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed, reviewed and signed.

Corporate Parenting Implications

10. The report does not contain corporate parenting implications.

Financial Implications

11. The fees associated with consent street trading are set to cover the costs incurred by the Council in administering the licensing scheme. The fees are reviewed annually and do not form part of the Councils approved Budget and Medium-Term Financial Plan. Locally set fees are a vital means of ensuring both that costs can be recovered, reducing the risk of a subsidy or overpayment.

Legal Implications

12. Street trading is covered by the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1982 Schedule 4. [Local Government \(Miscellaneous Provisions\) Act 1982 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://legislation.gov.uk)
13. On the 21 January 2024 the Council agreed the resolution in accordance with Paragraph 2(1) of Schedule 4 to the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1982 following full public consultation to designate the whole Borough as a consent area for the purposes of street trading.
14. The Local Authorities (Functions and Responsibilities) (England) Regulations 2000, Schedule 1 lists licensing functions under the Local Government Miscellaneous Provisions Act such as Consent Street Trading as a non-executive function.

Risk Assessment

15. The consent street trading policy 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)

16. The Council agreed the resolution in accordance with Paragraph 2(1) of Schedule 4 to the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1982 following full public consultation to designate the whole Borough as a consent area for the purposes of street trading.

Background Papers

- Copy of consultation responses received. [Consultation responses 2026.docx](#)
- A full list of temporary event street trading consents which have been granted since the beginning of the regime can be found at: www.stockton.gov.uk/licensing-registers
- Street trading is covered by the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1982 Schedule 4. [Local Government \(Miscellaneous Provisions\) Act 1982 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](http://legislation.gov.uk)
- [Agenda for Council on Wednesday 19th November 2025, 6.00 pm - Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council](#)
- General Licensing Committee Minutes [Browse meetings - Council - Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council](#)
- A copy of the revised CST policy including changes/additions marked in yellow can be found at: www.stockton.gov.uk/street-trading-consent

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**COUNCIL – 20 MAY 2026
MOTIONS TO COUNCIL**

MOTION 1

Motion submitted by Cllr Niall Innes, to be seconded by Cllr Tony Riordan:-

“This Council notes the increasing concerns raised by residents across the Borough regarding unsafe, inconsiderate and obstructive parking, particularly around school entrances, bus stops and residential streets. Residents regularly report issues including blocked pavements preventing access for those with disabilities or pushchairs, vehicles stopping in restricted zones outside schools creating dangerous conditions for children and parents, and persistent parking in locations where enforcement is difficult to maintain. These issues not only cause daily frustration but pose genuine risks to safety and accessibility within our communities.

This Council further notes that a number of local authorities, including Middlesbrough Council, utilise mobile CCTV enforcement vehicles to support parking enforcement, particularly in locations where on-foot enforcement is difficult or impractical.

This Council further notes that:

- Evidence from Middlesbrough shows such vehicles have issued hundreds of Penalty Charge Notices annually, historically generating around £18,000 per year, with more recent figures indicating ongoing income in the region of £5,000–£10,000 per year;
- These vehicles are primarily deployed at school entrances, bus stops and high-risk locations, where they improve compliance and reduce dangerous parking behaviour;
- Over time, the number of contraventions typically falls, demonstrating a clear deterrent effect and improved driver behaviour;

This Council recognises the ongoing concerns raised by residents regarding unsafe and inconsiderate parking, particularly around schools, and the pressure this places on existing enforcement resources.

This Council further recognises that a mobile CCTV enforcement vehicle has the potential to:

- Support enforcement teams by covering multiple locations efficiently;
- Improve road safety and accessibility in high-risk areas;
- Generate income that can contribute towards offsetting its cost over time;

Therefore, this Council resolves to request that the Cabinet:

1. Undertake a full options appraisal on the introduction of a mobile CCTV enforcement vehicle within Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council;
2. Report on:
 - The full capital and revenue costs, and the expected payback period;
 - The anticipated impact on parking compliance and road safety, particularly around schools;
 - The potential level of income generation and cost recovery;

- Comparative data and outcomes from neighbouring authorities, including Middlesbrough;
3. Identify how any proposal could be funded within existing resources, including opportunities for reprioritisation within current enforcement, highways or transport budgets;
 4. Set out clear arrangements for transparency and reporting, including annual publication of performance, income and compliance data.”

Received 23 April 2026 22:58

MOTION 2

Motion submitted by Cllr David Reynard, to be seconded by Cllr Tony Riordan:-

“This Council notes that:

Despite receiving over £4.4 million per year in Central Government funding for highways maintenance, many roads across the Borough remain in a visibly deteriorating condition, with residents frequently raising concerns about poor surfaces, recurring defects, and roads worn down to their base layers.

Council further notes that:

- Only 1.05% of the total road network has been treated through planned works in the last year
- No Central Government funding has been used directly for reactive pothole repairs, despite these being one of the most common issues raised by residents
- The cost of repairing a single pothole averages £75–£80, while resurfacing larger areas can deliver longer-term value at significantly lower cost per square metre
- The Council does not hold key data on:
 - Repeat repairs within 12 months
 - Defects not meeting intervention thresholds
 - Outstanding repairs or response times
- The proportion of unclassified roads in “poor” condition has increased to 22%, highlighting deterioration in the roads most used by residents

Council recognises that:

Whilst asset management principles and lifecycle modelling are important, residents judge the effectiveness of highways maintenance by the visible condition of roads in their communities, and there is growing concern that the current approach is not delivering the standard expected.

This Council believes that:

- The current balance between reactive repairs and preventative maintenance is not delivering the improvements residents expect
- A lack of transparency in key performance data makes it difficult to properly assess value for money
- Too many roads are falling below acceptable standards but are not being addressed due to intervention thresholds
- A more targeted, transparent and outcomes-focused approach is required

Council resolves to:

1. Improve Transparency and Accountability
 - Publish an annual Highways Maintenance Report detailing:
 - Roads treated (by type and location)
 - Spend by category
 - Network condition trends
 - Backlog estimates
 - Introduce clear reporting on:
 - Average repair times

- Number of outstanding repairs
- Repeat repairs within 12 months
- 2. Review Intervention Criteria
 - Undertake a formal review of current defect thresholds to ensure that roads with widespread deterioration are not excluded from repair due to technical criteria
 - Report back to Cabinet with recommendations within 6 months
- 3. Prioritise Residential and Unclassified Roads
 - Develop a targeted programme focused on unclassified roads, where condition is deteriorating most significantly
 - Ensure future funding allocations better reflect the roads most used by residents
- 4. Strengthen Value for Money
 - Expand the use of preventative and planned resurfacing programmes where this reduces long-term costs
 - Review the balance between reactive and planned maintenance spending, with a view to reducing repeated short-term repairs
- 5. Introduce a “Worst First” Programme
 - Identify and publish a rolling list of the worst affected roads in each ward
 - Commit to a clear timetable for intervention
- 6. Enhance Local Member Involvement
 - Provide Ward Councillors with greater input into prioritisation of local highways works
 - Introduce a mechanism for Members to formally raise roads for review
- 7. Ensure Effective Use of Funding
 - Require a report to Cabinet within 12 months assessing:
 - The impact of Government funding on road condition
 - Whether current delivery models represent best value for money”

Received 9 May 2026 18:09

COUNCIL – 20 MAY 2026 MEMBER QUESTIONS

QUESTION 1

Member Question submitted by Cllr Sufi Mubeen:-

“The Home Office developed Clear, Hold, Build, as a framework for tackling serious and organised crime at a neighbourhood level, involving partners and the community in delivering and sustaining reductions in serious organised crime, related crime, and Anti-Social Behaviour.

In 2023 this Labour led council adopted this strategy in the Stockton Town Centre and Ropner Ward’s. Moving forward the strategy was headlined under the Project Harmony and Operation Nightfall banners.

Can the Cabinet Member please update members as to the progression of these initiatives?”

Received 8 March 2026 17:22 Deferred from 18 March 2026 Council Meeting

QUESTION 2

Member Question submitted by Cllr Nathan Gale:-

“Could the Cabinet Member outline what actions Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council is currently taking—and plans to take—to increase the uptake of Supported Internships for young people with special educational needs and disabilities, including how the Council is working with local employers, education providers and support organisations to expand opportunities and improve outcomes?”

Received 1 May 2026 18:53

QUESTION 3

Member Question submitted by Cllr Tony Riordan:

“Will the Cabinet Member join me in recognising the excellent work of our HR Team, particularly the People and Talent Acquisition Manager, who recently led the successful in-house recruitment process for the Director of Neighbourhoods role with professionalism, energy and positivity, delivering a service that not only surpassed previous external agency exercises, but also secured a significant saving to taxpayers at a time of tight financial pressures?”

Received 9 May 2026 18:09

QUESTION 4

Member Question submitted by Cllr Niall Innes:

“Can the Cabinet Member provide an update on the 1st Month of the new bin collection regime?”

Received 9 May 2026 18:09