

Date:

Wednesday 22 July 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 - 28)

To approve the minutes of the last meetings held on 20 May 2026 and 24 June 2026.

6. Public Question Time (Pages 29 - 30)

7. Appointments to Committees and Outside Bodies 2026/27 (Pages 31 - 32)

8. Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council Licensing Act 2003 - Statement of Licensing Policy Review 2026 (Pages 33 - 38)

9. Motions to Council (Pages 39 - 42)

10. Members' Question Time (Pages 43 - 44)

11. Forward Plan and Leader's Statement



Ged Morton
Director of Corporate Services
Tuesday 14 July 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

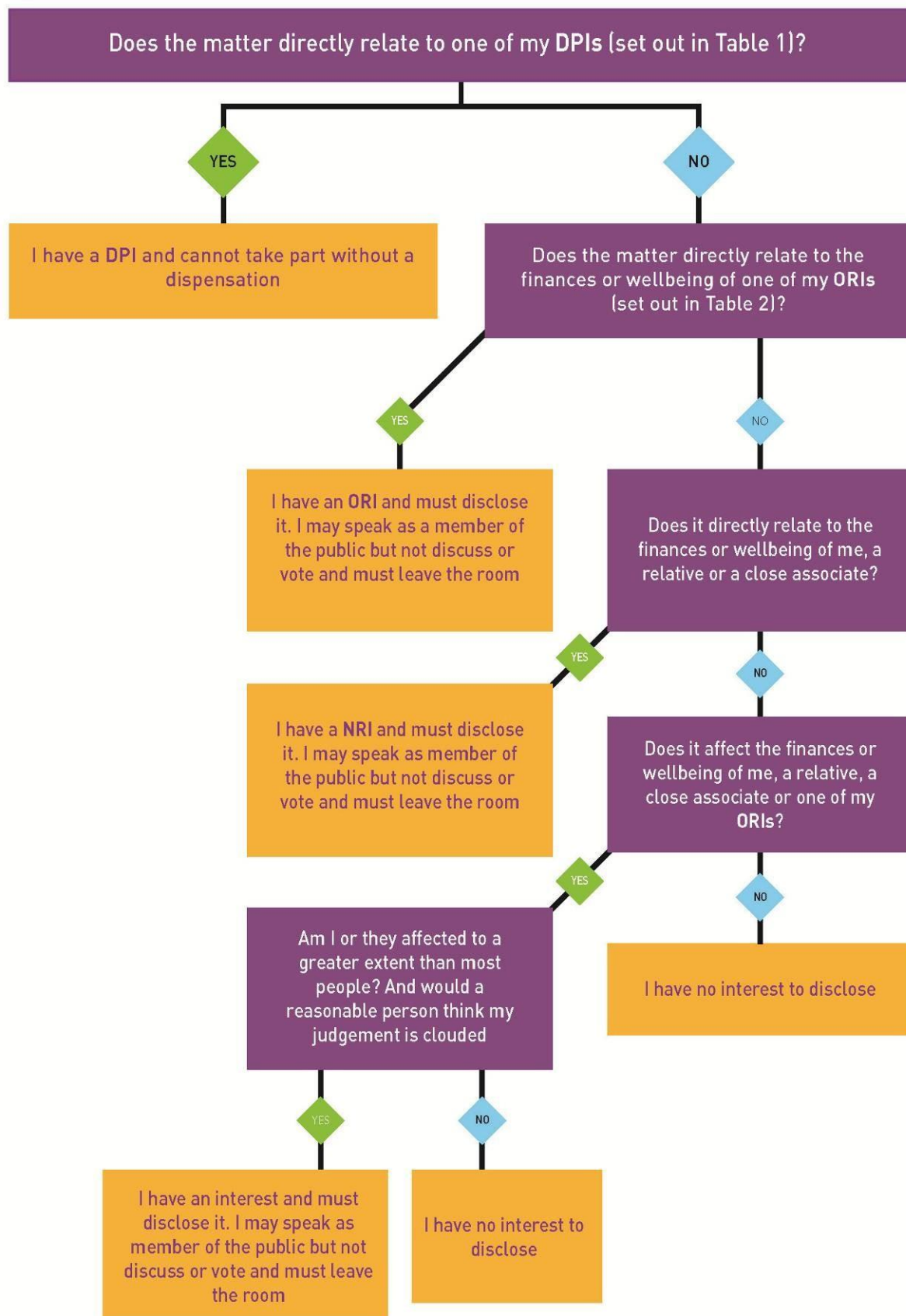


Table 1 - Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

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 Registrable 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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Council

A meeting of Council was held on Wednesday 20th May 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 Stephen Dodds, Cllr Richard Eglington, Cllr Lisa Evans, Cllr Kevin Faulks, Cllr Jason French, Cllr Nathan Gale, Cllr John Gardner, Cllr Ray Godwin, Cllr Lynn Hall, 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 Steve Nelson, Cllr Ross Patterson, Cllr David Reynard, Cllr Stephen Richardson, 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 Sylvia Walmsley, Cllr Alan Watson, Cllr Sally Ann Watson, Cllr Katie Weston, Cllr Paul Weston and Cllr Barry Woodhouse

Officers: Ged Morton, Julie Butcher, Judy Trainer, Michael Henderson, Peter Bell, Sarah Whaley, John Devine, Junita Agyapong, Clare Harper, Marc Stephenson, Simon Grundy and Neil Mitchell

Also in attendance: Press and public.

Apologies: Cllr Ian Dalgarno, Cllr Dan Fagan, Cllr Elsi Hampton, Cllr Stefan Houghton and Cllr Marcus Vickers

COU/21/26 Welcome and Evacuation Procedure

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

COU/22/26 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

COU/23/26 Minutes

Consideration was given to the minutes of the meetings held on 18 March 2026 and 1 April 2026.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meetings held on 18 March 2026 and 1 April 2026 be confirmed and signed by the Worshipful the Mayor as a correct record.

Question 1

The following question was 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?”

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

“Thank you for your enquiry. I am very sorry to hear about the tragic loss of your friend. The Council is continuing to work with partners including the NHS and the Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise Sector on this important issue, to promote mental health and wellbeing and access to the support available. I am aware that you had a telephone conversation with one of our managers in the Public Health team to help ensure you are connected with the appropriate support, and it is great that you intend to undertake trainer training in both Safe Talk and ASIST (applied suicide intervention skills training). We are aware that you are also pursuing Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) status with support from Catalyst.

The role of VCSE organisations is key in raising awareness, providing support and promoting the voice of people with lived experience in prevention and response around mental wellbeing. The Council actively participates in suicide prevention and the Public Health team will facilitate a link to the Tees Suicide Prevention Co-ordinator and the many suicide prevention partners within their network who contribute to the delivery of the Tees Suicide Prevention Strategy. We also commission services: Cruse to provide a post-vention offer to people and communities affected by suicide; and the Tees Mental Health Training Hub which provides applied suicide intervention skills training and many other courses related to mental health. Both of these services are part of the afore mentioned network. We will also connect you to the Council's community engagement team to support you further and we would like to wish you well in your endeavours.”

Question 2

The following question was 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?”

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

“Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council adopted an Environmental Sustainability and Carbon Reduction Strategy (ESCRS) in 2022. The strategy states that Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council should act as a catalyst to encourage and inspire residents,

businesses, and other organisations to adopt practices and take positive action which will contribute to an environmentally sustainable borough.

The UK government's Net Zero Strategy aims to achieve net zero emissions by 2050 through a comprehensive legal framework established by the Climate Change Act (2008). Stockton-on-Tees ESCRS strategy is aligned to the UK government's Net Zero Strategy; however, Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council has not conducted a financial impact assessment in relation to achieving the Governments ambitions."

John McDermottroe asked the asked the following supplementary question:

"Given growing concerns, will the Council publish how the Strategy will impact financially on business and residents?"

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

"Financial spending is monitoring closely by the Council and there are regular reports presented to Cabinet. We need to comply with the legislation but will continue to monitor the impact on our residents."

Question 3

The following question was 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?"

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

"The Council's Housing Service uses both national datasets and locally collated information to understand the number of refugees and asylum seekers residing within the borough. The Council's Integration and Support Service works collaboratively across internal service teams and with wider statutory partners to assess and respond to any implications this may have on council services.

As with all local authorities supporting an asylum seeker population, the Council receives Home Office Asylum Grant funding. In line with the funding instructions, these monies can be used to support both statutory and non-statutory services.

It is also important to note that the Council has been designated by the Home Office as a 'maintain and replace' local authority. This means that the Home Office is not actively increasing the number of asylum seekers placed within the Borough."

John McDermottroe asked the asked the following supplementary question:

"Will the Council commit to publish clear local figures?"

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

“This is not a problem as all figures are already published on the Government website.”

Question 4

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

COU/25/26 Appointments to Committees and Outside Bodies 2026/27

Consideration was given to a report asking Council to consider a nomination to the Standing Conference on Religious Education (SACRE).

RESOLVED that Councillor Marc Besford be appointed to SACRE.

COU/26/26 Stockton on Tees Local Plan

Consideration was given to a report seeking the Council’s agreement to commence a new Local Plan in accordance with Regulations and the establishment of a cross party consultative advisory steering group.

A number of detailed questions were raised at the meeting in relation to the process and following discussion it was proposed by Councillor Richard Eglington, seconded by Councillor Niall Innes and

RESOLVED that the item be deferred to a future meeting to allow consideration of the questions raised.

COU/27/26 Houses in Multiple Occupation Supplementary Planning Document and Article 4 Direction

Consideration was given to a report seeking adoption of the Houses in Multiple Occupation Supplementary Planning Document. The report also outlined next steps in relation to confirmation of the Article 4 Direction.

RESOLVED that Council:

- 1) Notes and consider comments of Planning Committee in relation to the Houses in Multiple Occupation Supplementary Planning Document.
- 2) Adopts the Houses in Multiple Occupation Supplementary Planning Document (Appendix A) and its accompanying technical appendices (Appendices B to D).
- 3) Delegates 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.

COU/28/26 Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council Consent Street Trading Policy Review 2026

Consideration was given to the revised Consent Street Trading Policy, following receipt of a valid petition, a public consultation and comments received from General Licensing Committee.

RESOLVED that the proposed consent street trading policy be approved.

COU/29/26 Motions to Council

Motion 1

It was moved by Cllr Niall Innes, seconded by Cllr Tony Riordan and unanimously:

RESOLVED

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, annual publication of performance, income and compliance data.

Motion 2

It was moved by Cllr David Reynard and 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.

RESOLVED that as action requested in the motion is an executive function, the motion be referred to Cabinet under rule 3.42 of Council Procedure Rules.

COU/30/26 Members' Question Time

Question 1

The following question was 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?”

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

“Since adopting the Home Office Clear, Hold, Build framework in 2023, the Council and partners have delivered Project Harmony and Operation Nightfall in Stockton Town Centre and Ropner Ward with clear success. The initial Clear phase focused on disrupting organised crime through arrests, enforcement activity and high visibility patrols, led by Cleveland Police with strong Council support. This moved into the Hold phase, maintaining a sustained multi-agency presence, challenging inappropriate HMOs and licensing applications, and embedding community engagement. The Build phase then strengthened community resilience through residents’ groups, Family Hub drop ins, environmental improvements and targeted community investment. These initiatives have resulted in significant and sustained reductions in crime and anti-social behaviour, and by late 2025 the programme transitioned from an intensive project into business as usual, with key elements such as Operation Nightfall patrols, Family Hub engagement and councillor walkabouts continuing into 2026.”

Cllr Sufi Mubeen asked the following supplementary question:

“Would the Cabinet Member agree that in reality incidents of anti-social behaviour, including rape and violence are on the increase in Ropner and other town centre wards despite promises by the Council to make these areas safer and that the Council is giving tax payers’ money to street workers?”

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

“The answer to the first part of the question is no and the Council is not providing money to street workers; refreshments are being provided by A Way Out and Change Grow Live.”

Question 2

The following question was 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?”

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

“Thank you Mr Mayor and Cllr Gale.

I am proud to speak about the ambitious work we are delivering to create a more inclusive future and expand opportunities for young people across Stockton-on-Tees—particularly for those with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities.

At the heart of our approach is a simple but powerful belief: every young person, regardless of their background or needs, deserves the chance to thrive, to contribute, and to build a meaningful future. Inclusion is not an add-on—it is a foundation for stronger communities and a healthier local economy.

That is why we are delivering a bold programme to expand and improve Supported Internships across the borough. These internships provide young people with SEND the invaluable opportunity to gain real-world experience, build confidence, and move towards sustainable employment.

To accelerate this work, we have appointed a dedicated Supported Internship Coordinator within our SEND Service for the next 18 months. This role is already playing a vital part in strengthening partnerships, increasing capacity, and ensuring that our offer is both inclusive and impactful.

But we know that real change requires planning ahead. That is why we are now identifying and supporting young people from as early as Year 9—gathering data, understanding their aspirations, and forecasting future demand. By doing this, we can better design clear, structured pathways into Supported Internships and beyond, ensuring no young person is left behind or overlooked.

Crucially, we are also working to grow opportunities across our local economy. We are collaborating with employers within our own organisation and with major partners such as Amazon, Asda, and our local primary schools. Alongside this, we are strengthening ties with the Employment Hub, the Tees Valley Combined Authority, and our voluntary sector partners. Together, we are opening up a wider, more diverse range of job roles—reflecting the talents and ambitions of the young people we support.

This work is not just about creating opportunities—it is about ensuring they are meaningful and of high quality. We are improving consistency across our Supported Internship programmes through regular review meetings with employers, education providers, careers services, and social care partners. This joined-up approach ensures that every young person receives the support they need to succeed.

We are also enhancing how we communicate these opportunities. We are finalising a strengthened Local Offer and refreshing the marketing and branding of Supported Internships, making it clearer, more accessible, and easier for families and young people to navigate.

And importantly, we are celebrating success. We have already held a Supported Internship Marketplace and a regional celebration event. I'm looking forward to the graduation event in June which is one of my favourite events. It's a great opportunity to shine a spotlight on the achievements of our young people and the commitment of our partners.

All of this work is driving towards a shared goal: widening employer choice, improving programme quality, and providing clear, joined-up information. Most importantly, it ensures that more young people with SEND can access Supported Internships and progress into paid employment or other positive next steps.

Because inclusion is not just about access—it is about opportunity, dignity, and aspiration.

If we get this right, we are not only transforming individual lives—we are strengthening our communities, enriching our workforce, and building a borough where everyone has the chance to reach their full potential.”

Question 3

The following question was submitted by Councillor 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?”

The Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Resources and Regeneration (Cllr Paul Rowling) responded with:

“Thank you, Councillor Riordan.

I am very happy to join you in recognising the excellent work of our People and OD team in delivering the recent recruitment process for the Director of Neighbourhoods.

Having been directly involved, I saw first-hand the professionalism, organisation and attention to detail that underpinned the exercise from start to finish. A great deal of work went into ensuring that the process was not only robust and well managed, but also gave Members the confidence to make such an important senior appointment.

It is fair to say that Members involved were impressed with both the quality of the arrangements and the way the process was conducted.

What this demonstrates very clearly is that we have strong capability within our own organisation. The People and OD team have shown that we do not need to rely on costly external support to deliver complex senior recruitment. We can do it ourselves, and we can do it well.

The campaign attracted a strong and credible field of candidates, which speaks to both the quality of the role and the reputation of the Council as an employer. That is important, because attracting high calibre leadership is critical to delivering the services and outcomes our residents expect.

Just as importantly, this approach delivered a significant saving when compared to the use of an external executive recruitment agency. At a time when every pound of public money must be spent wisely, this is exactly the approach we should be taking, driving value for money while maintaining high standards.

This is not just about one appointment. Building and retaining this expertise within our People and OD team strengthens the Council as a whole. It puts us in a better position to respond to a challenging and competitive labour market, and to ensure we can recruit the skilled and committed workforce we need across all of our services.

As a Council, we are ambitious for our communities, and that ambition depends on the people we employ. It is therefore vital that we continue to present ourselves as a modern, inclusive and forward-looking organisation, and one that offers real opportunities to build a meaningful career in public service.

I would encourage anyone who wants to make a genuine difference in their community to consider Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council as an employer of choice.

Finally, I would like to place on record my thanks to everyone involved for their hard work, their professionalism, and the positive and determined way in which they represented the Council throughout this process.”

Cllr Tony Riordan asked the following supplementary question:

“Thank you for your response.

Moving forward, will the Cabinet Member agree with me, and the long-standing position of the Conservative Group, that the recent in-house recruitment exercise highlighted the many opportunities that are available within Stockton Borough Council to trade our services, such as recruitment, HR, etc, to other local authorities and

businesses in the local and regional areas, and as such will they now commit to joining the Conservative Group position in exploring those openings as part of the transformation programme going forward?”

The Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Resources and Regeneration (Cllr Paul Rowling) responded with:

“Although recruitment is a fluid area, I agree that this is something that could be explored provided that there is capacity to do this and it would not impact on what the team was employed to do.”

Question 4

The following question was submitted by Councillor Niall Innes:

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

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

“The Council has launched the most significant changes to waste collection services in over 20 years which has seen the launch of the nationally mandated weekly food waste collections, as well as a shift to fortnightly refuse collections alongside a move to weekly dry recycling collections. This service has already seen a significant improvement in recycling rates and we expect Stockton will move swiftly up both regional and national league tables in relation to the redirection of waste from traditional disposal methods.

As expected, the first month has not been without challenge, although collection rounds have largely been delivered as scheduled, with the majority of properties receiving their collections on the correct day. Some initial disruption was experienced during the first week as crews adapted to the new collections and tipping arrangements at our new waste transfer station and our residents have also needed to get used to a change in collection arrangements although this has bedded down in recent weeks.

As a direct consequence of all the national changes for food waste and the impact on vehicle manufactures to supply all English councils with new vehicle at around the same time, we have not yet received our full allocation of new recycling vehicles which has resulted in us needed to use some of our existing recycling and flatbed vehicle to supplement the new fleet – it anticipated that all of our new fleet will be delivered by early June.

The biggest positive is the level of participation by the residents and how well they have responded to the new collection arrangements, with resident participation being monitored at around 80% in the first 6 weeks after the new services launched – this is based on resident engagement participation modelling over a 3 day period although more statistically meaningful data will follow over the next 6 month period. .

As a result of the overwhelming levels of participation by residents, we have seen a reduction in general waste which would have ordinarily been disposed of at the Energy from Waste facility (EFW) of over 30%.

Overall, while there were the expected teething problems associated with a significant service change in week one, collections since then across both waste and recycling services has been excellent and staff across Community Services have delivered an outstanding service in a very short space of time.”

Cllr Niall Innes asked the following supplementary question:

“All Councillors have a heavy casework, but we have seen this increase with complaints about missed collections and rats. Would you agree that the changes have caused inconvenience to residents and have caused more problems than they have solved?”

The Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Resources and Regeneration (Cllr Paul Rowling) responded with:

“We recognise that issues such as rats are not new and are experienced widely, although this is something we take seriously. We are approaching the introduction of food waste collections in a measured and considered way, as many other councils have done successfully over a number of years.

Some of the challenges experienced to date have been linked to the availability of a full fleet, and it is worth noting that other Local Authorities have encountered similar issues during implementation. As an interim solution, certain collections have been co-mingled and then separated at a later stage. Once the full fleet is in place, we will return to the original operating model.

We would like to commend both Community Services and the engagement team for their work throughout this process. We also recognise and thank residents across the Borough, as this has required a significant change in behaviour, and they have risen to it.

We will have a clearer indication of the long-term success of these changes over time.”

COU/31/26 Forward Plan and Leader’s Statement

“Mr Mayor, since our last meeting Cabinet has continued to meet regularly and progress a wide range of work across the Borough, with decision records circulated to Members in the usual way.

At our next Cabinet meeting we are due to consider a number of reports covering adult services, children’s services, housing, environmental delivery and regeneration activity.

This includes reports relating to supported and temporary accommodation, reablement services, learning disability care provision and wider environmental and green infrastructure proposals linked to the Powering Our Future programme. Cabinet will also receive a report arising from scrutiny work relating to children not in school.

As always, these reports reflect both the increasing complexity of demand facing local government services and the continuing importance of investing in our communities,

neighbourhoods and public spaces despite the ongoing financial pressures councils continue to face nationally.

Alongside that work, activity continues across the Borough on regeneration, economic development and service transformation as we move further into the new financial year. I know Members across the chamber will recognise the scale of work being undertaken by staff across all service areas to continue delivering services for residents day in and day out.

Before I finish, I also want to highlight what promises to be a fantastic community event for the Borough next month as Stockton hosts Armed Forces Day celebrations within the new Stockton Waterfront urban park.

It will be the first major public event held within the new park and is a fitting way to recognise the contribution of serving personnel, veterans and armed forces families from across our communities. The programme will include community activities, live performances and a ceremonial flypast by the RAF Battle of Britain Memorial Flight, which I know will attract considerable interest across the Borough.

Events such as this are an important reminder not only of the contribution made by our armed forces, but also of the role that community events and public spaces play in bringing people together.

And finally, Mr Mayor, as fellow Boro supporters, recent events have at least reminded us both that if you cannot quite get the job done on the pitch, a strong legal strategy can still apparently get you to Wembley.

I am sure our Monitoring Officer and legal team will be pleased to see the legal profession finally receiving some overdue public recognition.

Thank you, Mr Mayor.”

Council

A meeting of Council was held on Wednesday 24th June 2026.

Present: The Worshipful the Mayor (Cllr Robert Cook)
Cllr Jim Beall, Cllr Pauline Beall, Cllr Michelle Bendelow, Cllr Clare Besford, Cllr Marc Besford, Cllr Carol Clark, Cllr Diane Clarke OBE, Cllr John Coulson, Cllr Stephen Dodds, Cllr Richard Eglington, Cllr Lisa Evans, 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 Steve Nelson, Cllr Ross Patterson, Cllr David Reynard, Cllr Stephen Richardson, Cllr Tony Riordan, Cllr Paul Rowling, Cllr Vanessa Sewell, Cllr Norma Stephenson OBE, Cllr Mick Stoker, Cllr Hugo Stratton, Cllr Ted Strike, Cllr Marilyn Surtees, Cllr Emily Tate, Cllr Hilary Vickers, Cllr Marcus Vickers, Cllr Paul Weston, Cllr Barry Woodhouse and Cllr Katie Zagoria

Officers: Mike Greene, Ged Morton, Chris Renahan, Simon Grundy, David Bage, Judy Trainer, Peter Bell, John Devine and Junita Agyapong

Also in attendance: Press and public

Apologies: Cllr Stefan Barnes, Cllr Nigel Cooke, Cllr Ian Dalgarno, Cllr Kevin Faulks, Cllr Jason French, Cllr Ray Godwin, Cllr Andrew Sherris, Cllr Jim Taylor, Cllr Sylvia Walmsley, Cllr Alan Watson and Cllr Sally Ann Watson

COU/32/26 Livestreaming

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

COU/33/26 Welcome and Evacuation Procedure

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

COU/34/26 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

COU/35/26 Stockton-on-Tees Local Plan

Consideration was given to a report seeking the Council's agreement to commence a new Local Plan in accordance with Regulations and the establishment of a cross party consultative advisory steering group.

The report had been deferred from the Council meeting in May to allow responses to a number of questions. The responses were set out in Appendix 3 to the report.

It was moved by Councillor Richard Eglington, seconded by Councillor Paul Rowling and

RESOLVED That:

- 1) 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) 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 Housing and Transport and that this will be made available in accordance with the Local Plan Timetable and no later than September 2026.
- 3) 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) Council delegates authority to the Director of Regeneration & Inclusive Growth in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Housing and Transport 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) 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 Regeneration & Inclusive Growth in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Housing and Transport to produce a draft document for consultation.
- 6) 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 Housing and Transport, 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) Council delegates authority to the Director of Regeneration & Inclusive Growth in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Housing and Transport, 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) Council delegates authority to the Director of Regeneration & Inclusive Growth in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Housing and Transport, 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) 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.

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COUNCIL – 22 JULY 2026
PUBLIC QUESTIONS

QUESTION 1
Public Question submitted by Brian Wragg: “Whose idea was it to buy or lease the new recycling vehicles? Is he being held to account for this? Who is paying for the extra vehicles that are collecting food waste (open back truck) what are the extra costs and how long will this continue? Why were vehicles with 5 compartments chosen? Surely when one compartment full the vehicle must go to unload?” Received 11 June 2026 10:06

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REPORT TO COUNCIL

22 JULY 2026

REPORT OF CORPORATE
MANAGEMENT TEAM

Appointments to Committees and Outside Bodies 2026/27

Summary

This report relates to:

- Two appointments to Tees Valley Combined Authority's Investment Committee.
- A notification to amend representation on the Tees Valley Combined Authority's Audit and Governance Committee.

Recommended

That Council considers nominations to the TVCA Investment Board and notes the change to the TVCA Audit and Governance Committee.

Details

TVCA Investment Committee

1. The Investment Committee requires **two** appointments from Stockton on Tees Borough Council. There is no requirement for the committee to be politically balanced.
2. To date, nominations have been received, as follows:-

TVCA Investment Committee	Councillor Paul Weston
TVCA Investment Committee	Vacancy

TVCA Audit and Governance Committee

3. Notified changes, are detailed below. This position is currently allocated to the Conservative Group

Member	Substitute Member
Remove Cllr Mohammed Mazi Replace with Cllr Niall Innes	Remove Cllr Niall Innes Replace with Cllr Hugo Stratton

Legal Implications

The Investment Committee was established by Tees Valley Combined Authority under the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009

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
22 JULY 2026

REPORT OF CORPORATE
MANAGEMENT TEAM

Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council

Licensing Act 2003 - Statement of Licensing Policy Review 2026

Summary

Under the Licensing Act 2003 local authorities must develop and review their Statement of Licensing Policy at least every five years. The revised policy provides a pragmatic and fair approach to all those working within the licensable activity sector, whilst continuing to meet the statutory obligations under the Licensing Act 2003. Cabinet will be considering this report at its meeting on 16 July 2026 and is being asked to make the following recommendation to Council.

Recommendations

That Council agree the proposed Statement of Licensing Policy.

Detail

1. A copy of the proposed Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council Statement of Licensing Policy can be found at: [Stockton Statement of Licensing Act Policy 2026](#)
2. The proposed policy reflects legislation, best practice and integrates the recently published [National Licensing Policy Framework](#) which is a strategic vision for a modern, permissive licensing system that safeguards communities while enabling hospitality and leisure to thrive, and is aligned with the licensing objectives which are:
 - the prevention of crime and disorder
 - public safety
 - the prevention of public nuisance
 - the protection of children from harm
3. The proposed policy supports the Councils vision and priorities and includes information on:
 - Martyn's Law (Protect Duty)
 - Illegal employment practices
 - Local alcohol related harm
4. The proposed policy reinforces our commitment to:
 - Partnership working including Pubwatch
 - Proactive enforcement around alcohol harm including underage sales and early morning sales

- Engagement and compliance with the trade including the Reducing the Strength scheme
 - Developing a responsible retailer guide that can be updated and remain current outside of the 5 year policy cycle
5. For statutory consultation the proposed policy was circulated for response to:
 - Responsible authorities under the Licensing Act 2003 including the Police
 - All members
 - Internal and external stakeholders
 - All current licence holders in the hospitality trade
 6. The proposed policy was advertised to the public on the licensing website and social media pages. Comments were to be received by 31 May 2026.
 7. No comments objecting to the proposed policy were received.
 8. Supportive comments were received from the Office of the Police & Crime Commissioner (OPCC) via the Cleveland Unit for the Reduction of Violence (CURV). The comments and proposed additional policy wording are attached as Appendix 1.
 9. The matter was referred to the General Licensing Committee on the 9 June 2026. The committee agreed unanimously on the revised Statement of Licensing Policy and the positive impact of the Reducing the Strength Scheme was acknowledged.

History and Background

10. The [Licensing Act 2003](#) places a statutory requirement on all Local Authorities to develop a Statement of Licensing Policy, and policies are to be reviewed at least every five years.
11. The Statement of Licensing Policy guides how the Council exercises its responsibilities when issuing licences for the sale of alcohol, regulated entertainment, and late-night refreshment.
12. The table below shows the current number of licensed premises under the Licensing Act 2003:

Licensed Premises (Licensing Act 2003)	24-25	25-26	Difference
Total alcohol licensed premises	470	462	-8
Alcohol - authorised for on and off sales	221	217	-4
Alcohol - authorised on sales only	83	81	-2
Alcohol - authorised off sales only	166	164	-2
Late night refreshment only	65	64	-1
Regulated entertainment only	46	46	-
Total Number of Licensed Premises	581	572	-9

13. All decisions must support the four equal-weight licensing objectives, as advised by the Section 182 [guidance which accompanies the Act](#), these objectives underpin every part of the policy to ensure that Stockton-on-Tees continues to promote safe, responsible, and well-managed licensed activities.
14. The current Statement of Licensing Policy can be found at:

www.stockton.gov.uk/alcohol-and-entertainment-licences

Additional Information

15. During the consultation [The Crime and Policing Act 2026](#) received Royal Assent, the Act is wide ranging and primarily police focused, but it does have several direct and indirect implications for local authorities, particularly across community and licensing related functions.
16. To ensure the policy document is relevant and up to date, officers may implement amendments or additions, in consultation with and subject to the agreement of the Chair of the Statutory Licensing Committee, provided such changes do not result in any material alteration to the overall intent or scope.
17. The policy review has been undertaken with full consideration given to the follows the Councils design principals:
 - **Put communities at the heart of everything we do**
The policy prioritises the needs and concerns of residents by promoting the licensing objectives and ensuring community impact and feedback are central to decision making.
 - **Has a 'place-based' approach**
The policy reflects local characteristics by using tools such as area-specific evidence to respond to the distinct needs and risks within different parts of the borough.
 - **Has efficient processes and be digital by design**
The policy supports streamlined, transparent and accessible licensing processes, including the use of digital systems to submit, manage and determine applications efficiently.
 - **Uses data and intelligence to inform our decision**
Decisions under the policy are informed by robust data and intelligence from responsible authorities, ensuring an evidence based approach.

Community Impact and Equality and Poverty Impact Assessment

18. The Licensing Act 2004 has been a statutory duty for local authorities since 2003, and effects the whole Borough. The proposed changes will bring benefits for the community, licensing service, the existing licensed trade and future licensed trade.
19. An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed and signed, [reference: 0334](#). No major change is required because of the EPIA.

Corporate Parenting Implications

20. The report does not contain corporate parenting implications.

Financial Implications

21. The fees associated with the Licensing Act 2003 are statutory set and have not been review since 2003, the fees do not form part of the Councils approved Budget and Medium-Term Financial Plan.

Legal Implications

22. The implementation and operation of the Statement of Licensing Policy will be done in accordance with the Licensing Act 2003 and associated guidance.

Risk Assessment

23. The risks associated with the Statement of Licensing Policy are mitigated by the administration and enforcement provisions of The Licensing Act 2003 and associated guidance.

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

24. All members including the Cabinet Member for Access, Communities and Community Safety have been consulted.

Background Papers

Consultation response and proposed additional wording

[Appendix 1 consultation responses and proposed policy wording.docx](#)

The Licensing Act 2003

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2003/17/contents>

Section 182 Guidance (February 2025)

Statutory guidance issued by the Home Office provides comprehensive direction on promoting the licensing objectives, handling applications, reviews, and enforcement.

www.gov.uk/government/publications/explanatory-memorandum-revised-guidance-issued-under-s-182-of-licensing-act-2003

National Licensing Policy Framework for the hospitality and leisure sectors

Strategic vision for a modern, permissive licensing system that safeguards communities while enabling hospitality and leisure to thrive.

www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-licensing-policy-framework-for-the-hospitality-and-leisure-sectors

The Crime & Policing Act 2026

Introduces a wide range of measures to strengthen the response to antisocial behaviour, retail crime, and serious violence. Increases expectations around partnership working, data sharing, and proactive enforcement, while providing stronger legal mechanisms to support community safety and protect town centres.

www.gov.uk/government/collections/crime-and-policing-act-2026

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COUNCIL – 22 JULY 2026 MOTIONS TO COUNCIL

MOTION 1

Motion submitted by Cllr Barbara Inman, to be seconded by Cllr Nathan Gale:-

“This Council notes:

- The increasing use of artificial intelligence to create realistic but false images of real individuals.
- Recent national concerns regarding the creation and circulation of AI generated imagery depicting women and girls in degrading, sexualised or otherwise inappropriate ways.
- That AI generated imagery can also be used to ridicule, humiliate or misrepresent individuals through the manipulation of their appearance, body shape, personal relationships or conduct.
- The growing concern that such behaviour may deter people from participating in public life, standing for election, or engaging in democratic debate.

This Council believes:

- Robust political debate is an essential part of democracy.
- Political disagreement should focus on policies, decisions and ideas rather than personal attacks on an individual’s appearance or private life.
- Women and girls are disproportionately affected by online abuse, intimidation, misogyny and degrading portrayals.
- Those serving in public life should be able to do so without being subjected to manipulated imagery intended to humiliate, denigrate or undermine them.

This Council therefore:

- Condemns the use of AI generated imagery which seeks to degrade, intimidate, harass or misrepresent individuals.
- Reaffirms its commitment to respectful political discourse and democratic engagement.
- Encourages all elected representatives, political parties, campaigners and members of the public to engage in political debate responsibly and respectfully.
- Recognises the importance of creating an environment in which women, young people and people from all backgrounds feel able to participate in public life and consider standing for elected office.
- Resolves to support initiatives which promote civility, respect and participation in local democracy.”

Received 23 June 2026 17:53

MOTION 2

Motion submitted by Cllr Marcus Vickers, to be seconded by Cllr Niall Innes:-

“The Council notes:

- The courageous and profound contribution made by members of the Armed Forces community to the safety and security of the United Kingdom.
- The physical and mental health benefits of regular exercise, which is vital for veterans transitioning to civilian life or managing service-related injuries and PTSD.
- That there are approximately 8,200 veterans living within the borough of Stockton-on-Tees (UK armed forces veterans, England and Wales - Office for National Statistics)

The Council further notes:

- That Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council is a signatory of the Armed Forces Covenant, a pledge that those who serve or have served, and their families, should be treated with fairness and respect.
- That several other local authorities, including Manchester, Bolton, and Wigan, have already successfully implemented free leisure access schemes for veterans.
- That while concessions currently exist for those on War Disablement Pensions, many veterans fall outside these specific criteria but still face financial barriers to accessing leisure facilities.

The Council believes:

- That cost should not be a barrier to physical activity for those who have courageously served their country.
- That providing free access to council-operated gyms, swimming pools, and fitness classes is a tangible way to demonstrate our commitment to the Armed Forces Covenant.
- That such an initiative has the potential to reduce the long-term burden on local social care and health services by improving the overall wellbeing of our veteran population.

The Council resolves to:

1. Request the Cabinet to undertake a feasibility study into providing free gym, swim, and fitness class memberships for all veterans residing in the borough in line with current provider Tees Active.
2. Request that the feasibility study consider:
 - a) eligibility criteria;
 - b) the financial implications, sustainability and funding options;
 - c) operational and administrative arrangements;
 - d) potential partnership arrangements with Tees Active and other providers;
 - e) equality and legal implications; and

f) any other matters Cabinet considers relevant.

3. Request Cabinet, as part of the feasibility study, to engage with Group Leaders; Shadow Portfolio Holders; Tees Active and any other relevant partners to explore how such a scheme could be integrated into existing leisure provision, having regard to affordability, contractual arrangements and the continued sustainability of existing services.
4. Cabinet to consider the outcome of the feasibility study and report back to Council on its findings and any recommendations within six months. Ensure that any such scheme is accessible via the HM Armed Forces Veteran Card or other recognised service ID.
5. Should Cabinet resolve to introduce a scheme, it be requested to work with Tees Active, local leisure providers, veterans' organisations and community groups to promote the scheme and maximise awareness and uptake.
6. Should Cabinet determine that a scheme is appropriate following the feasibility study, Cabinet be requested, where practicable, to seek implementation in time for Armed Forces Day on 26 June 2027."

Received 10 July 2026 9:38

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COUNCIL – 22 JULY 2026
MEMBER QUESTIONS

QUESTION 1
Member Question submitted by Cllr Ted Strike: “On Saturday 20th June I attended the opening of the Riverside Urban Park. I would like to congratulate everyone involved from the Funding Grants to the team working on the design and the contractors as well as SBC Officers. This is a wonderful area and hopefully it will be well used and increase footfall into Stockton High St and lead to new businesses opening in the empty shops. I would like to encourage the cabinet members to go even further. My question to the cabinet member for regeneration is: Will Cabinet look into the feasibility and costings of relocating the Police Station onto the High Street on the SBC owned land where The Post Office and The Mall were located? I believe this will encourage more people to come to the High Street as the Police presence will remove the fear many currently have of coming to the High Street, especially on an evening. If they will not relocate the Police station here can you please advise me what the cabinet intend to do with this large piece of land?” Received 1 July 2026 10.03

QUESTION 2

Member Question submitted by Cllr Marcus Vickers:

“How many tree-related issues or service requests were reported to the council during the last financial year 2025/26 and what is the exact number of outstanding or backlogged tree maintenance requests currently on file?”

Received 10 July 2026 9:38