

AGENDA ITEM

REPORT TO CABINET

17 JULY 2025

**REPORT OF SENIOR
MANAGEMENT TEAM**

KEY DECISION

**Regeneration and Housing - Lead Cabinet Member – Councillor Richard Eglington
Resources & Transport – Lead Cabinet Member – Councillor Paul Rowling**

Powering Our Future – Regeneration Mission Update

SUMMARY

This report provides an update on activity across the Powering Our Futures Regeneration mission with updates on the delivery of the Central Stockton and North Thornaby Blueprint, namely progression of key work strands linked to Care Health Innovation Zone and steps to bring about increased residential development across key sites and initial work to bring about the long term redevelopment of Tees Marshalling Yards under the new term for the area, Tees Central. The report includes updates across the existing committed wide ranging regeneration programme and seeks decisions to enable the demolition of Golden Eagle in Thornaby, future opportunities for use of existing assets in Stockton town centre and progress on agreements to bring about redevelopment of Billingham town centre.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION(S)/DECISION(S)

To enable delivery of the projects and programmes within the Regeneration Powering Our Futures Mission.

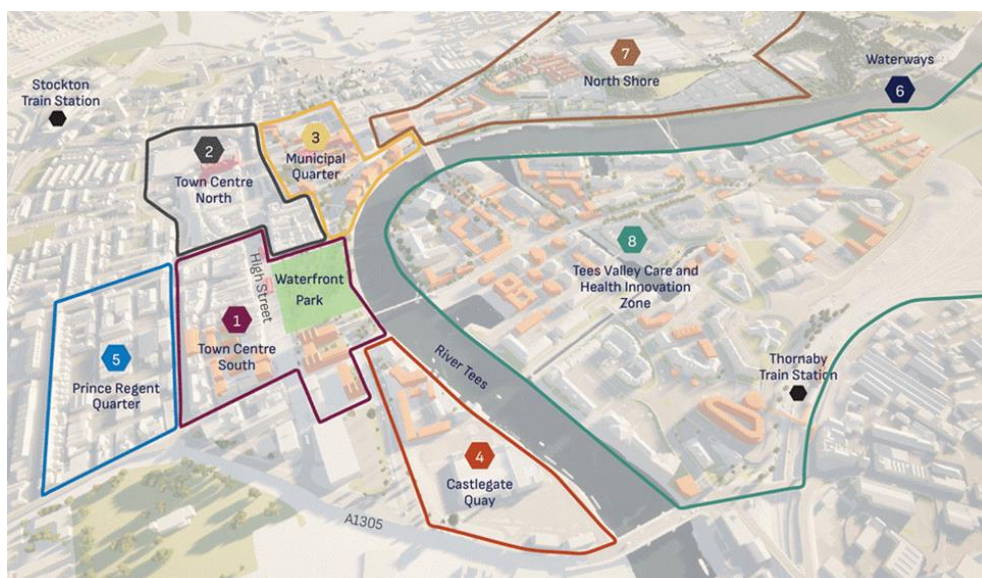
RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Cabinet approve the initiation of the Tees Central project as part of the Powering our Future Placemaking mission and approve use of previously approved funds of £450,000 allocated to Municipal Quarter to support works to develop proposals within Tees Central project and the delivery of the Central Stockton and North Thornaby Blueprint and note the reciprocal reallocation of previously approved £450,000 by Tees Valley Combined Authority for the same purpose.
2. Cabinet approve the use of £550,000 of previously approved funding to support delivery of Stockton and North Thornaby Blueprint to support development of proposals within Tees Central.
3. That authority be delegated to the Director of Regeneration and Inclusive Growth in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Housing to approve the allocation of the budget of £1.45m set out in recommendation 1&2 to deliver the Central Stockton and North Thornaby Blueprint and Tees Central.

4. Delegate the allocation of the previously approved £6.5m to the Director of Regeneration and Inclusive Growth in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Resources and Transport to:
 - a. Undertake works associated with Stockton Town Hall to bring it back into active use
 - b. Any costs associated with a food & Beverage operator to taking a lease of The Shambles
 - c. Create an enabling budget to develop options and engage the market in opportunities to bring the former Debenhams building back into occupation
5. Cabinet approve use of up to £1.34m Indigenous Growth Fund (IGF) for the demolition of the Golden Eagle and delegate authority to negotiate, agree the terms of and enter, all necessary contracts to enable the demolition of the Golden Eagle to Director of Regeneration and Inclusive Growth in consultation with Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Housing.
6. Cabinet note the detail of Yarm public realm scheme and programme as set out in paragraphs 74-80.
7. Note the change in commercial approach to the acquisition and demolition of Queensway South in Billingham town centre as set out in para 51-52.

DETAIL

1. In July 2024, Cabinet approved a Blueprint which sets out an exciting and innovative vision for the future development of Central Stockton and North Thornaby Areas. The blueprint outlines transformational change over the next 25 years by creating prosperous, vibrant places, fit for future generations by delivering modern, mixed-use neighbourhoods and a thriving town centre, helping to make sure it is a safe and welcoming place where people want to work, live and visit. It focuses on eight key intervention areas in Central Stockton and North Thornaby (illustrated below):



2. This report provides an update on interventions across the blueprint area and sets out next steps to progress specific sites and opportunities in relation to the redevelopment of the Tees Marshalling Yards, the delivery of Tees Valley Care and Health Innovation Zone and the delivery of town centre living and commercial opportunities for existing council land and assets.

3. Given the scale and significance of this regeneration opportunity, and to raise its profile at both a regional and national level, it is proposed that all future work will be delivered under the name 'Tees Central', which reflects both its geographic location and the scale of inclusive growth opportunity in the heart of the Tees Valley.

Tees Marshalling Yards

4. The Marshalling Yards is 67 Ha former railway sidings, straddling the boundary of two local authorities, in both Thornaby and Middlesbrough, is one of the largest and most significant rail-connected, brownfield regeneration opportunities in the country. The site remains in active rail use and is circumnavigated by both freight and passenger lines. To develop the site, rationalisation of rail use must take place and vehicular and pedestrian access secured for residential and commercial redevelopment.
5. Work has focussed on the rationalisation and improvement of rail connectivity and the development of a high-level master plan to establish the quantum of development that could take place. The site is large enough to accommodate 2-3,000 homes and a large quantum of commercial space, but no fixed uses have yet been established. The site provides a huge opportunity for the expansion of the economic growth aspirations for Stockton on Tees and would greatly increase the GVA of the Tees Valley economy and create large number of new jobs. It also supports the development of the Care and Health Innovation Zone, through enhanced linkages to existing developments on Teesdale and provides a potential platform for significant investment in new clinical facilities at the heart of the Tees Valley.
6. Early engagement with stakeholders is underway to understand the future of rail on this site with large parts of the site being under-utilised or disused. Whilst it is acknowledged that some of the site will remain in use and continue to support the future needs of rail stock, there is an opportunity to redevelop an underutilised site into a new community at the centre of the Tees Valley.
7. Partnership working with the Tees Valley Combined Authority (TVCA) continues to explore funding opportunities to facilitate the next stages of work. The recent announcement of the Transport for City Regions (TCR, formerly referred to as City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement 2 CRSTS2) funding from TVCA which will see £140m of funding commitment to strategic transport interventions to open up the site. This demonstrates the level of ambition for the project. In addition to this, the TCR programme also commits £10m to deliver smaller-scale improvements to Thornaby Station, to create a multi-modal hub and better connect the station with the surrounding area.
8. Further detailed discussions will take place with landowners and key stakeholders to set out the next stages of collaborative work to develop a more detailed case of investment in the site. This process will include the establishment of a strategic project board which will engage all land-owning parties as well as SBC, Homes England and TVCA.

Tees Valley Care and Health Innovation Zone (TVCHIZ)

9. Alongside the work associated with Tees Central, there has been an evolution of work on the Tees Valley Care & Health Innovation Zone (TVCHIZ). The Council, working with colleagues from the Tees Valley Combined Authority (TVCA), has engaged with partners across the health, care and education to explore opportunities to support the care and health sector. Whilst there will remain a strong focus on the spatial area of the original TVCHIZ, there is a recognition that a broadening of that geography will lead to increased opportunities and better alignment with the move towards community based and neighbourhood health.
10. Work to date has focussed on exploring opportunities to provide opportunities to increase research, development and innovation activity across the sector, as well as workforce

development, skills development, and particularly developing career pathways. This has led to the creation of a dedicated Care and Health Coordinator officer to support recruitment and retention in the sector. In addition, the Council and TVCA have jointly commissioned CPI, a leading independent technology innovation centre, to undertake a feasibility study to explore opportunities for health and care-based innovation across the zone.

11. The delivery of a Medical School is a key component of TVCHIZ and a major commitment within the MOU between the Council and Teesside University. Work will begin on a detailed feasibility study in partnership with Teesside University to establish the basic principles and requirements spatially and functionally for a Medical School and associated servicing and residential requirements which can be considered in the context of wider residential provision set out in following sections of this report.

Stockton Waterfront

12. Work is progressing at pace across the entirety of the Waterfront development site following the smooth transition to a full working site after the closure of Riverside Road in May. Notable works in recent weeks have seen the removal of the old Riverside Road, installation of the first beams to form the land bridge deck and further installation of paving across the northern section of the park. Work is on track to complete on this transformational development in Spring 2026.
13. In March, the Community Diagnostic Centre (CDC) became operational and has continued to increase patient capacity month by month since opening. The scheme is an outstanding example of strong partnership working between public sector bodies to bring about completion of the largest new build CDC in England.
14. There were some unresolved issues between the NHS and contractor on site that had prevented completion of the Car Park to the rear of the building. In recent weeks the Council has taken steps to complete the works, minimising disruption and ensuring that the new car park and roundabout were complete and open (30th June) as soon as possible.

Town Centre Living

15. The Blueprint identifies opportunities to develop a series of residential led developments across the waterfront and former post office site between the High Street and West Row, Municipal Buildings and adjacent sites including Riverside Car Park.
16. It is proposed that these sites, along with the Dairy Car Park site, form part of a portfolio of development sites in the Stockton town centre area and that the council procures a development partner to bring forward residential led redevelopment on these sites. This will include an assessment of commercial use types including, mixed tenure housing including affordable housing, student residential and residential needs linked to growth in the Care and Health sector, build to rent and hotel and aparthotel beds. All these use types will contribute to increased town centre vibrancy, support economic growth and assist with scheme viability.
17. The anticipated outcome of this exercise will be the selection of a preferred partner and the development of detailed site proposals, a delivery structure and detailed business case(s), working closely with stakeholders to maximise use of publicly owned land and assets. A future report will be brought to Cabinet before any development is then agreed.
18. A variety of detailed development briefs, feasibility studies, site investigation and professional advice and support is required to develop detail and understand the financial and commercial structures required to bring development forward.
19. The council and TVCA have already agreed a delivery partnership approach to the development of the Municipal Quarter, with TVCA and SBC contributing £450,000 each to develop a delivery

proposition. Taking the inter-relationship between residential sites in the town centre into account and the redefining of the blueprint area into Tees Central, it is proposed that the previously approved funding for the Municipal Quarter area is used to support work across the Central Stockton and Tees Central area. The commitment from TVCA to enable broadening of the scope for their match funding sum has already been confirmed.

20. Given the scale and breadth of further work required, it is also recommended that £550,000 from the previously approved budget to support delivery of the Central Stockton and North Thornaby blueprint allocated in September 2024 be allocated to fund the development of masterplans, business cases and delivery proposals as described above.
21. On the basis of the multi-faceted approach to direct housing delivery agreed at June Cabinet, SBC have been selected to be one of 5 councils contributing to an LGA programme to develop best practice advice and support for Councils undertaking their own house building. It is hoped that this programme will both provide useful support and advice for our own delivery programme as well as showcasing the innovative approach SBC is taking.

Stockton Town Centre Commercial opportunities

22. The Blueprint identifies several opportunities for reuse of existing Council assets to drive growth, create investment opportunities and add to the vibrancy and attractiveness of Stockton town centre.

The Shambles

23. The Shambles is a Grade II listed building situated on Stockton High Street. The building currently operates as a market hall setting with eleven self-contained lock-up retail units, seven of which are currently occupied under a licence to occupy. The council-provided public toilet facilities are also located within the building. The public toilets, offering facilities for male, female and disabled users, are open to the public daily and are staffed by SBC attendants. The facilities were installed some years ago and do not meet modern standards.
24. The market hall is currently designed to provide small retail units on the High Street, enabling businesses to test their model, grow and eventually move to their own larger town centre units. In practice, this model has not worked well for several years with several retailers remaining in the Shambles for prolonged periods, some over ten years. Other retailers have occupied the remaining units for varying periods; however, they have not relocated to High Street units, and the building is no longer serving its purpose of supporting business growth and Town Centre viability.
25. The occupiers of the retail units are generally small, independent local businesses. They hold a licence to occupy as opposed to a lease, and the rent payable includes utility costs. The total operational costs associated with the running of the entire building are approximately £165,000. The figure comprises utilities, repairs and maintenance, materials, council staff, and external property management costs. The building generates minimal business rates income as the retail units are assessed individually and all fall below the Small Business Rate Relief threshold. The current passing rent is c£45,000 per annum; therefore, the asset currently runs at a significant loss.
26. The council is also responsible for all repairs and maintenance to the building. A recent condition survey highlighted several condition issues with the building that will need to be addressed within the next five years.
27. The environment around the Shambles has changed since it was first established as a market hall. Following the acquisition and demolition of the Castlegate Shopping Centre, the

environment around the building is no longer retail-focused and the blueprint identified the Shambles as an ideal location to establish a new food and beverage offer in the town centre given its proximity to Waterfront Park and prominent location on the High Street. The building is therefore a key town centre asset that can complement the new park facility and the town centre.

28. It is therefore proposed to market the Shambles as a food and beverage opportunity and to lease the entire building on a full repairing basis.
29. To facilitate a food and beverage operator, the existing retailers will need to relocate, and the public toilet facilities will no longer be provided from the building. A new modern public toilet building is to be constructed within the Waterfront Park, approximately 50 metres from the Shambles building. The existing toilet provision within the Shambles will remain open until the new toilets are operational. Public toilet provision remains available at Wellington Square and Stockton Central Library, along with a Changing Places facility at The Arc.
30. The vacant possession strategy and programme will need to be agreed to ensure timelines align with the Waterfront Park opening and a food and beverage operator target opening dates. The Council will work closely with existing retailers within the Shambles to provide business support and advice and support the sourcing of alternative accommodation options.
31. There is an expectation that the council will be required to carry out a schedule of landlords works to the building if satisfactory lease terms can be agreed upon with a food and beverage operator. Some of these works would need to be undertaken in any event, which would involve business interruption.
32. The extent of the landlords works required will be confirmed following further discussions with a prospective tenant. The council intends to appoint specialist external advisors to guide any relocation and vacant possession, whilst giving consideration, and being sensitive to, the existing businesses and their operations as well as the 'Landlord Works' element to ensure value for money is achieved.
33. Subject to Cabinet approval, council officers will market the building for a food and beverage use, with such terms to be delegated to the Director of Regeneration and Inclusive Growth in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Resources and Transport.

Stockton Town Hall

34. In July 2023 Cabinet approved the appointment of architects to develop outline design proposals to relocate the Registrars service within Stockton Town Hall. Space Architects were commissioned to produce plans to the end of RIBA Stage 2 and in July 2024, Cabinet approved detail design works to the end of RIBA Stage 4 with an indicative final scheme cost of £6.5m.
35. During the early stages of the detailed design phase of works, it became apparent that due to the constraints of delivering a scheme within a Grade II* listed building, alongside the accessibility and statutory needs of the Registrars service, the Town Hall could not be adapted to fully meet all of the functions of the registrar's service.
36. It is however essential that this Grade II* listed building which is a key focal point in the heart of the town is brought back into use and that any future use will celebrate its history and attractive civic setting. It is therefore recommended that options to restore the building for its original civic use should be explored alongside other ground floor use opportunities which better compliment the wider retail, leisure and cultural offer of the town centre.

37. It is proposed that this includes using the Council Chamber for civil partnership, wedding and civic ceremonies, maintaining its grandeur and civic function. The options appraisal will assess the potential for a series of flexible rooms at both ground and first floor level, which could be used by front facing council services and or operational staff. This could include but is not limited to; consultation rooms, meeting rooms, exhibition space, and touch down spaces. Works and designs done to date will inform final designs and it is proposed that the final design and commissioning of works is delegated to the Director of Regeneration and Inclusive Growth in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Resources and Transport to be funded from the £6.5m budget already allocated for this purpose.

Debenhams

38. The former Debenhams department store building was historically in two separate ownerships. The 'rear' part of the building is included within the Wellington Square Shopping Centre ownership boundary, which the council acquired in 2019. The 'original' main building, fronting onto the High Street, was privately owned but transferred into the hands of receivers in 2018 whilst Debenhams were in occupation as leaseholders.
39. The building services, utilities, fire alarms etc were all located in the front part of the building which did not have any impact when Debenhams were operating the building as one.
40. Debenhams went into administration and ceased trading in January 2020. The property has remained vacant since that time. The property was marketed for sale shortly after it became vacant.
41. The property was then offered for sale at auction in October 2023. Given that the rear portion of the building could not be let without access to building control systems located in the front portion the council agreed a purchase price with the auctioneers in advance of the auction date and completed the purchase in November 2023 to make the building into one asset.
42. Due to the scale of the building (circa 90,000 square feet), there is limited demand for a building of this type in its current form. This trend has been observed nationwide. In recent years, retailers such as Debenhams, BHS, House of Fraser, and Wilko's ceased trading, resulting in 771 vacant properties. As of January 2024, 75% of those properties remained vacant.
43. The building occupies a prominent position at the northern end of the High Street, next to The Globe, with a separate entrance in Wellington Square. This is a key town centre asset to be brought back into use for the benefit and vitality of the town and its community.
44. The blueprint identified the former Debenhams as an ideal location to enhance the town's already thriving daytime and nighttime economies by offering accommodation that a wide range of potential users can occupy, complement the existing user mix in the town centre and maximise its commercial sustainability. This could include, but not limited to, a creative and digital "hub", market food hall, community health facilities, and leisure uses.
45. Other significant benefits could be achieved by bringing the building back into use, including job creation, private sector investment, increased visitor spend, and enhanced footfall.
46. To support the re-use of these existing assets and deliver on the agreed blueprint, it is recommended that the previously agreed allocation of £6.5m for redevelopment of Stockton Town Hall now be used to:
- a. Undertake works associated with Stockton Town Hall to bring it back into active use

- b. Any costs associated with a food & Beverage operator to taking a lease of The Shambles
- c. Create an enabling budget to develop options and engage the market in opportunities to bring the former Debenhams building back into occupation

47. It is proposed that the final allocations between the three schemes be delegated to the Director of Regeneration & Inclusive Growth in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Resources and Transport to develop a business case and designs for potential future uses.

Splash

48. Tenders for initial design stages will be finalised in autumn 2025 with an anticipated delivery timeline of January 2027 onwards on site due to operational pressures on Tees Active as work takes place in other centres.

49. The parking impact of town centre developments and changes of use will be considered in the round as development proposals are brought forwards.

Regeneration Programme Update

Billingham – Levelling Up Fund

50. As reported to Cabinet in May 2025' a signed funding agreement for the £20m Levelling Up Fund grant was received in April 2025. Since the last update to Cabinet, the final details of legal agreements between the Council and Evolve are being finalised to enact the decisions taken at Cabinet in June 2024 in regard to the acquisition of part of Queensway South, West Precinct and former Library site of the centre and the key principles of relocation of tenants and demolition to enable residential-led redevelopment alongside commercial investment by Evolve.

51. The approach presented to Cabinet in June 2024 saw the Council acquire part of Queensway South at vacant possession and then undertake demolition of the building. As drafting of legal agreements has progressed, the opportunity for Evolve to manage demolition of Queensway South prior to the partial disposal to the Council has been proposed. This approach will make for a more efficient demolition process as Evolve manage a single contractor on their land, as opposed to the more complex approach of the Council undertaking demolition and requiring access across Evolves land at different points.

52. This approach represents a deviation from the position previously reported to Cabinet and Cabinet are therefore asked to endorse this revised approach and allow for it to be reflected in drafting legal agreements that are already delegated by Cabinet in June 2024.

53. Feasibility work is also underway to explore options for repurposing the disused Council office, Wynyard House, as a public sector hub. The feasibility work has been funded through One Public Estate and is expected to conclude in autumn 2025.

54. The next stage of the project will be to develop plans for residential development on the cleared site, in line with the principles of the agreed masterplan. Options for securing a development partner for the West Precinct and former library and clinic site will be explored, including exploring the opportunity to broaden a partnership with Evolve to enable wider redevelopment, potentially incorporating, where appropriate Council assets within and adjacent to the town centre as a means of increasing investment, unlocking residential growth and safeguarding existing and traditional town centre uses. Discussion with other stakeholders in the vicinity of the town centre will also take place to explore additional opportunities to increase redevelopment potential in the area.

Thornaby Town Deal

Pavilion Pool, Gym and Golden Eagle

55. The town centre element of the Town Deal Fund allocated an overall budget to purchase and demolish the Golden Eagle, enable development on the cleared site and bring about the redevelopment of the Phoenix House site. The Town Deal Fund application process required costings up front and allocations to individual elements were therefore provisional with an understanding that the build of the final cost profile would be iterative as we progressed through acquisition, design and procurement phases to achieve cost certainty.
56. Detailed design work on the new swimming pool, gym and Pavilion Leisure Centre is progressing following planning approval for the scheme in December 2024 and the appointment of contractor, Galliford Try in April 2025. Final stages of design will be completed in late summer, with work due to commence in autumn 2025 on this exciting enhanced, modern addition to the existing leisure offer in Thornaby town centre.
57. Following the report to Cabinet in June 2024, the acquisition of the leasehold interest in the Golden Eagle and the surrender of both leases on the property were finalised in October 2024.
58. From October into early 2025, several pre-demolition surveys were undertaken throughout the building to comprehensively understand the structure and fabric of the building and gauge the level of asbestos and any other hazardous materials within the building. This was needed to inform tender documents that were issued in March 2025. The intrusive, pre-demolition surveys that could only be undertaken once the building was in the Council's ownership identified significant levels of asbestos throughout the building, applied in a manner that would very likely impact the demolition methodology, requiring area by area and in some instances room by room specific method statements and monitoring, which add to the complexity and cost of works. One surveyor identified the level and nature of contamination as one of the worst he had encountered.
59. The total Council budget for interventions in Thornaby Town Centre approved at Cabinet in June 2024 was £17.7m including professional and management fees. That budget was apportioned as £14.25m for enhanced swimming pool and gym provision, based upon early design stage cost estimate at the time. £1m on demolition of Thornaby Baths and Phoenix House and £1m fees and an allocation of £1.45m for acquisition, demolition, surveys and fees for the Golden Eagle based upon:
- valuations and purchase price approved at Cabinet in June 2024,
 - a demolition estimate of circa twice the cost of the demolition of the adjacent Phoenix House building in 2023 (in recognition of the fact that no surveys were permitted pre acquisition and no asbestos information was made available by the leaseholder)
60. Four tenders were received and evaluated, with a preferred contractor identified. The winning tender (and the lowest priced) is £1.52m, which exceeds the initial allocation from the overall budget allocated above (£600,000). The other elements of the scheme still require funding, including a reasonable contingency given that the final tender cost has yet to be confirmed.
61. To progress with awarding the demolition contract and begin work on site there is a requirement to allocate money to meet the cost (and contingency sum) of the demolition works.
62. There are several options to supplement the initial Town Deal budget from existing funding streams. These include consideration of descopeing cycleways, redirecting money from LUF/Town Deal allocations for other areas or using the budget for the demolition of Thornaby Pool. Consideration has been given to the impact of moving money between budgets on project benefits and outcomes as well as the time limited factors associated with some external funding streams none of these are recommended, due to the impact upon other schemes and other

areas. There remains an unallocated balance in the Indigenous Growth Fund. This scheme meets the strategic IGF funding criteria to 'support the remediation/regeneration of vacant and derelict land and property.

63. Having considered the above options and to maintain the scope of works on the pool it is recommended that allocating £1.34m from the Indigenous Growth Fund (IGF), be approved. This is a time limited fund (must be spent by 31st March 2026), and the demolition of the Golden Eagle would meet the funding criteria, namely to 'support the remediation/regeneration of vacant and derelict land and property'.
64. The allocation of £1.34m from IGF, when added to existing budgets will provide for the contract sum and a robust contingency, noting some of the increased actions the Council will have to take to satisfying the requirements of the Health and Safety Executive given the extensive invasiveness and application of asbestos within the building. This will enable the appointment of a demolition contractor in late July with work beginning on site in August 2025 though until Spring 2026.

Cycleways

65. Since the last report to Cabinet in June 2024, detailed design and cost planning work on the provision of a joined-up network of cycle infrastructure in Thornaby identified higher than anticipated costs. As a result, the cycleways design has been revised and elements of the route removed to fit within the available budget envelope.
66. Procurement of a contractor is well underway and is expected to complete in July with a start on site in September 25, subject to all necessary match funding agreements being in place. Statutory consultation on the Traffic Regulation Order needed to implement the scheme was completed in February 2025 and no objections were received. The construction programme is expected to complete in summer 2026.
67. A common experience of many local authorities who successfully bid for Town Deal funding was the difficulty in accurately estimating costs for schemes which were in the early development stages, against very short bidding deadlines, at a time of high construction cost inflation. In future funding rounds, where bids must be made at a very early stage of project design and development, it may be judicious to add significant optimism bias to any bid sums if there is no future opportunity to revise bid totals as cost certainty is firmed up.

NETA

68. The construction of a new skills facility in Thornaby will see the existing NETA training facility relocate from its current location near Portrack Lane into a purpose built, modern facility as part of a redeveloped Stockton Riverside College site. Working in partnership with the Education and Training Collective (ETC), with input from the Town Deal Board and Council officers, the circa 5,000sqm bespoke training facility will create a modern learning environment and maximise access to further education and skills development for residents.
69. With regards to the programme, Phase 1 (Enabling Works) completed construction of a new 162 space car park in February 2025, which is now operational. The contractor appointed for the Phase 1, went above and beyond their contractual Social Value commitment, demonstrating the positive benefits to learners of both Stockton Riverside College and the Skills Academy through the project to date.
70. Planning permission for Phase 2 (Main Build) was secured in September 2024, and the preferred contractor is expected to mobilise on-site on 11th July to begin construction of the new build facility. The facility will complete in summer 2026 ready to open to learners at the start of the 2025/26 academic year.

North Thornaby

71. To support the regeneration and economic growth of North Thornaby, positive progress has been made in the delivery of a package of social and community interventions. Refurbishment works to improve the public open space and Community Centre are complete in Victoria Park and have been well received by the local community. Investment in 'Safer Streets' has installed 9157 safety measures in 955 properties and is now complete. With regards to improving energy efficiency, 450 energy efficiency measures have been installed in 184 properties demonstrating the high level of interest and resident take up rate in this intervention. For the priority vacant properties, 9 empty properties have been purchased and are either undergoing repairs or are now in occupation, which will contribute towards providing good quality housing provision in the local area.

Yarm Eaglescliffe and Preston Park – Levelling Up Fund

72. Extensive works to transform Preston Park Museum and Grounds and strengthen its position as a cohesive, modern visitor attraction are nearing completion. Through investment of £13.5m, the scheme is delivering a package of interventions for families to come together, play, learn and explore our rich heritage. This includes the creation of a new exhibition space as an extension to the existing museum, which will be celebrated with an official opening in September 25. Improvements to the central area will provide a new focal point to the park and will open to the public in July 25. This includes the refurbishment of the café, demolition and re-provision of the existing toilet block, playground improvements and works to retain and reuse the aviary structure. Works to improve parking provision were completed in April 2025.
73. Work to refine proposals for the future of South Lodge will be undertaken with a view to submission of a new application to reflect the concerns raised at Planning Committee in early June when planning permission was refused.
74. A package of works to enhance Yarm and surrounding areas will focus on introducing new public spaces on the High Street, enhancing links to and along the River Tees and upgrading Snaith's Field Playground. The scheme will be delivered through a phased programme of works by the Council's Community Services teams, commencing in May 25 completing in summer 2026. This is likely to come in significantly under budget due to SBC direct delivery.
75. The first phase focuses on improving accessibility along True Lovers Walk by resurfacing the existing footpath and repairing root damage as well as removing the two existing fishing pontoons along the route. However, further evaluation will take place to understand the potential cost and deliverability of replacing the damaged pontoons. Works started on site on 8 May and will last approximately 12 weeks.
76. The second phase of works will deliver upgrades to Snaith's Field playground including new and existing play equipment, provision of new seating and footpath resurfacing works. Works are due to start on site in September for approximately 8 weeks.
77. The final High Street scheme was presented to the public in May 25 and will create six new public spaces that separate pedestrian areas and large sections of car parking through seating and planting, as well as improve accessibility to public transport. There will be high-quality spaces for people to sit and enjoy their surroundings, as well as new cycle parking. The scheme will include references to Yarm's history and heritage and interactive play items.
78. Following publication of proposals and in response to some concerns raised regarding the appearance of the proposed planters, a revised design has been undertaken to incorporate a more subtle and refined finish to the planter material, in keeping with the character of the High Street.

79. Works will be delivered in phases to minimise disruption to users of the High Street. The first phase will start in September and complete in October. before Yarm Fair. The second phase will start on site after Yarm Fair and complete in November before the site de-mobilises to accommodate the run up to the Christmas break. Completion of the remaining public realm phases will re-commence in January 26 and final completion will be in summer.
80. Details on all phases of High Street work will be communicated in the coming weeks, and the Council will also be engaging with directly impacted residents and businesses to explain how the first phase of construction will be delivered on-site. During the works, access to businesses and properties will be maintained at all times and working arrangements will be co-ordinated on-site to minimise disruption as far as possible.

Norton High Street

81. A series of improvements to create high quality, safe and accessible public spaces on Norton High Street completed in December 2024 for residents, businesses and visitors to enjoy. The improvements have included creation of a northbound one-way system at the southern section of Norton High Street along with public realm improvements such as new seating and landscaping to create a more pedestrian friendly environment. The scheme has created more flexible spaces which will support and enhance Norton's growing daytime and evening economy along with six additional car or taxi spaces on the High Street.

COMMUNITY IMPACT IMPLICATIONS

Proposals in this report have been the subject of an Equality & Poverty Impact Assessment.

CORPORATE PARENTING IMPLICATIONS

There are no corporate parenting implications in this report.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The recommendations in this report look to update allocations of the £20m borrowing approved in July 2021 and subsequently retained to support future investment as set out in the report to Cabinet in July 2023. The MTFP report in December 2023 committed £1m, followed by approval of £450,000 in July 2024 to support work in municipal quarter and the subsequent £18.45m of allocations in September 2024.

The full £20m can now be broken down below:

Project	Allocation £'000
Splash	£8,500
Town Hall / Debenhams / Shambles	£6,500
Stockton Waterfront and Community Diagnostic Centre	£1,750
Dunedin House Democratic Space / Council Chamber	£1,250
Regeneration Blueprints and Masterplans	£1,000
Tees Central and Stockton Masterplanning	£1,000
TOTAL	£20,000

The allocation of the £1.34m IGF funding completes the final allocation of this funding and there are no further funds available to allocate.

The £550,000 required to support masterplanning in Tees Central and including the TVCHIZ is taken from the allocation outlined for future work in the September 2024 Cabinet report.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Legal advice will be sought throughout the projects to ensure that all financial and property agreements (eg leases) and contracts are lawful, meet the Council's requirements and follow the Council's governance procedures.

RISK ASSESSMENT

The matter in this report is categorised as low to medium risk. Existing management systems and daily routine activities are sufficient to control and reduce risk.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Report To Cabinet Thornaby Town Deal June 2024

Report To Cabinet Central Stockton and North Thornaby Blueprint September 2024

Name of Contact Officer: Tracey Carter

Post Title: Director of Regeneration and Inclusive Growth

Telephone No. 01642 528369

Email Address: tracey.carter@stockton.gov.uk