

## People Select Committee Chair's Update – November 2025

| Scrutiny Review – Partnership Working in Early Help |  |
|---|--|
| <b>Achieved since last meeting</b>                  | <p>The Committee received evidence in October from Catalyst regarding partnership working. It was felt that there was a strong reputation for collaboration in the Borough and the sector felt supported. A report outlining learning from visits to two Ofsted rated Outstanding Local Authorities, Lincolnshire and Sunderland, was presented at the meeting. Their Early Help delivery models prioritise shared responsibility, partnership working, and system-wide cultural change, with 80% of Early Help delivery in Lincolnshire being provided by external partners. The Committee also received a presentation on the Department for Education's Family First Partnership Programme reforms for Children's Social Care, which are designed to promote partnership working to ensure families receive the support and protection they need. Statutory interventions and protections will remain with and be provided by Local Authorities.</p> <p>An informal meeting was held in November to discuss the evidence and draft recommendations. During the review the Committee have received evidence from Council officers regarding the in house and school support Early Help offer, Family Action who have a strategic partnership with the Council to provide services, Harrogate and District Foundation Trust who are commissioned to provide 0 – 19 services, Cleveland Police who chair a triage and early intervention initiative 'PiTstop', Catalyst, and Stockton Parent Carers Forum. The Committee have also joined a Service Users Focus Group at Billingham Hub and the Children and Young People Partnership workshops.</p> |
| <b>Problems or concerns</b>                         | None   |
| <b>Planned next month</b>                           | The Committee will agree the final report and recommendations at its meeting in December.  |
| <b>On track – yes / no</b>                          | Yes  |

| Monitoring                               |  |
|--|--|
| <b>Key Issues / Problems or Concerns</b> | <p>Progress updates regarding previously completed reviews were presented at the November meeting as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cost of Living Response - a briefing note provided an overview of key projects undertaken by the Fairer Stockton-on-Tees and Community Engagement team including school uniform distribution, which was the outstanding recommendation for the review. Around 700 items of school uniform have been collected by families July, and distributed via a variety of avenues including events, Thirteen Housing and Family Hubs.</li> </ul> |

## People Select Committee Chair's Update – November 2025

|                                      |  |
|--------------------------------------|--|
|                                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Disabled Facilities Grant – two recommendations, to monitor the impact of the extra funding for DFG's and to produce a study on the impact of DFG's, were fully achieved while the remaining recommendations were ongoing.</li> </ul> <p>Referral forms, application forms and letters had been updated as recommended to simplify the process and improve communication.</p> <p>The waiting list had significantly reduced from 300 when the review started in April 2024 to 120 at the time of the progress update. Subsequently, waiting times had also significantly reduced from 24- 30 months to 12-18 months.</p> <p>Conversations with Thirteen had progressed with working arrangement proposed to ensure assessments and adaptations requests are forwarded direct to Thirteen to determine and carry out. If they are beyond Thirteens capacity the Council will carry out the adaptation and reclaim the costs.</p> <p>The next progress updates will be received by the Committee as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Disabled Facilities Grant – May 2026</li> </ul> |
| <b>Requests for more information</b> | None   |

### Overview / Performance and Quality Assurance

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <b>Key Issues / Problems or Concerns</b> | No reports received since previous update. |
| <b>Requests for more information</b>     | None                                       |

### Next Scrutiny Review

Post 16 Provision

### 2025-2026 Meetings (all 2.00pm unless stated)

Monday 8 December 2025  
Monday 5 January 2026  
Monday 2 February 2026  
Monday 2 March 2026