

**REPORT TO EXECUTIVE  
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**18 NOVEMBER 2025**

**REPORT OF THE HEAD OF  
DEMOCRATIC SERVICES**

# SCRUTINY OF CRUSTACEAN DEATHS

## Summary

The report presents the revised terms of reference for the joint scrutiny Crustaceans Working Group, which aims to monitor the implementation of the Groups final recommendations.

## Recommendations

Executive Scrutiny Committee are asked to indicate if they wish to continue to participate in Crustaceans Working Group and, if so, appoint a representative to attend meetings of the informal Group with appropriate officer support.

## Detail

1. At the Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council meeting held on the 14 July 2022, a motion was passed regarding the mass mortality crustacean event that occurred along the length of the Tees coastline. The motion was as follows:

*MOVED by Councillor Carl Quartermain and duly seconded by Councillor Thomson:-*

*“Redcar & Cleveland Council believes that much more needs to be done to investigate the reasons for the mass death of sea creatures found on our coast in the latter part of 2021 and more recently.*

*Redcar & Cleveland Council also believes much more support should be given to our local fishing industry which has been adversely affected by the consequent radical reduction in fishing stock.*

*Since October last year dead crustaceans have been found on our beaches along with, the possibly associated, deaths of seal pups and porpoises.*

*The report of the Government Joint agency investigation into Teesside and Yorkshire Coast Crab and Lobster mortalities was published in May 2022 and concluded that as healthy crabs and lobsters were now being found the investigation was closed.*

*Redcar & Cleveland Council believes:*

1. *The decision to close the investigation was premature and demands that the Government re-open it as a matter of urgency to consider why the crustacean deaths.*

2. *The Tees Valley local authorities should work together in expressing concern to central government and commission a new independent report in the light of the inconclusive evidence. In addition, the ongoing situation should be monitored by a special Scrutiny Committee from each local authority.*
  3. *That the Government proposal to give support to the local fishing industry via the existing Seafood Fund is inadequate and calls on them to provide proper compensation for the lost income and livelihoods caused by this crisis.*
  4. *That the possibility of creating a coastal hatchery to replenish crustacean stocks should be investigated.”*
2. At meeting of Executive Scrutiny Committee on 15 November 2022 it was agreed to appoint a representative to the informal Working Group to support Tees Valley colleagues. The Chair of Place Select Committee was appointed as the most appropriate Member to represent Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council.
  3. The Working Group concluded their investigation and agreed their final report in June 2025. It provides a comprehensive analysis of the causes, impacts, and responses to the incidents in 2021/2022. While there is no definitive conclusion for the incident, the Working Group have established that there are a significant variety of factors working both independently and also collectively which influence water quality, be it sea or river. Nine recommendations were agreed for relevant organisations and agencies aimed at improving environmental monitoring, supporting affected industries, and strengthening collaboration among stakeholders.
  4. The Working Group met informally in July 2025 to discuss promotion of the report and the future of the Group. Several representatives expressed their wish to continue the work of the Group and therefore the terms of reference have been revised, attached at **appendix 1**. The Groups new remit is to monitor the implementation of the recommendations, liaising with key stakeholders and lobbying relevant decision makers, for a period of 12 months.

### **Financial and Legal Implications (optional)**

5. No financial and legal implications are identified at this stage.

### **Risk Assessment (optional)**

6. This report is categorised as low to medium risk. Existing management systems and daily routine activities are sufficient to control and reduce risk.

### **Wards Affected and Consultation with Ward/ Councillors**

7. Not ward specific

### **Background Papers**

8. None

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