

COUNCIL – 21 JANUARY 2026

MEMBER QUESTIONS

QUESTION 1 – Deferred from November Council Meeting

Member Question submitted by Cllr Jim Taylor:

“Many proud residents within our Borough, who do not have access to their own gardens, rely heavily on the allotment provision by Stockton Borough Council to grow precious fruit and vegetables to supplement their ever-increasing grocery bills.

Will the Cabinet Member agree with me, that in August of this year, when the then Labour Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, gave the green light for eight cash strapped councils to sell off their allotments, resulting in a direct kick in the teeth to those residents who had cherished and cultivated their own small piece of England, was a disastrous mistake?”

Received Sunday 9 November 2025 18:26

QUESTION 2 – Deferred from November Council Meeting

Member Question submitted by Cllr Tony Riordan:

“Hopefully, the Cabinet Member will be aware of the dilapidated and dangerous property at 18 South Road Norton.

Will the Cabinet Member agree with me that the long standing and intolerable situation faced by residents and neighbouring properties of 18 South Road, who complain of rampaging feral gangs of youths armed with baseball bats transiting and damaging their properties to gain access to 18 South Road, who defecate and urinate in and around their properties, who threaten and intimidate them in their own homes if they dare to intervene, have been badly let down by this council and other agencies for far too long?”

Received Sunday 9 November 2025 18:26

QUESTION 3

Member Question submitted by Cllr Ted Strike:

“Councillor Paul Rowling was recently reported as asking for residents’ views on “How to spend its money, and where it should save to fill a £11.3m budget gap?”

What assurance can the council provide that it is achieving value for money from its suppliers?

How frequently are supplier costs and contracts reviewed as part of the council’s procurement and contract management arrangements, including the use of market testing or competitive quotations where appropriate?

Finally, where elected members or members of the public identify alternative suppliers offering equivalent quality a lower cost, what scope exists within the council’s procurement framework to consider such options?”

Received 2 January 2026 13:32

QUESTION 4

Member Question submitted by Cllr Ted Strike:

"I recently met an elderly homeless man whilst shopping. During my conversation with him I asked if he had contacted the council, he advised me he is known by SBC homeless team and they regularly check on him. He also told me he has been advised he is not a high enough priority.

My question to the cabinet member is:

- 1) How many people are currently recorded as homeless in the Borough of Stockton on Tees, and how many are rough sleepers?
- 2) What criteria are used by the council to determine priority need under its homelessness duties, and how does age feature, and which groups are a higher priority than the elderly?
- 3) What support and safeguards are in place for older people who are homeless but who may not meet the statutory definition of priority need?"

Received 2 January 2026 16:14

QUESTION 5

Member Question submitted by Cllr Ted Strike:

House building sites are all over our borough and in a very short period of time houses become occupied and we then have a mixture of occupied houses alongside a building site which has its own dangers. Ingleby Barwick are extremely fortunate in that we have Community Public accessible defibrillators at a maximum of 500 metres away from any given point thanks to the amazing work of CPAD IB. When building sites are being constructed there are no way of volunteer groups for placing Defibs in those areas unless individual building sites agree. This means residents living in those areas and the workforce are not covered by these life saving devices.

Can the Cabinet Member advise:

- 1) How the council promotes good practice around workforce health and safety on major construction sites, including the provision of defibrillators?
- 2) What expectations the council sets for contractors on projects it commissions?
- 3) Given the limits of planning and regulatory powers in this area, whether the council would consider taking a leadership role by encouraging developers voluntarily, and by lobbying Government and MPs for changes in National Law to require defibrillator provision on major construction and regeneration sites?

Received 8 January 2026 10:28

QUESTION 6

Member Question submitted by Cllr Niall Innes:

The taxpayers of this borough were burdened with an eye watering bill of £1.65m to support the Ambassador Theatre Group with audience development and the attraction of artists in years one to five for the Globe Theatre.

Can the Cabinet Member please provide an update on the audience development along with the attraction of artists, and if the £1.65m has proved an astute investment?

Received 11 January 2026 12:57

QUESTION 7

Member Question submitted by Cllr Niall Innes:

On the 4 June 2025, the Planning Committee declined permission for an application to demolish the South Lodge at Preston Park and replace it with the erection of a metal structure, artwork, hard and soft landscaping, and other associated works.

Can the Cabinet Member please provide an update as to whether the mooted plans for a revised application for South Lodge will be coming forward, and if so when?

Received 11 January 2026 12:57

QUESTION 8

Member Question submitted by Cllr Tony Riordan:

In the Council meeting of 20 November 2024 the Cabinet presented their report to members recommending prudential borrowing of £1m to resurface the top deck (only) of Wellington Square Car Park, with the annual borrowing repayments of £80k generated from the new car parking charges commencing in February 2025. The Council voted in favour of the recommendation and financial numbers presented to them by the Cabinet.

Can the Cabinet Member inform members of what the financial impact, following their U Turn in December 2025, will be on the lost revenue and how they intend to make up the shortfall to pay off the repayment charges for the prudential borrowing following that decision?

Received 11 January 2026 12:57

QUESTION 9

Member Question submitted by Cllr Tony Riordan:

Council approval is required for all new capital schemes, acquisitions, or developments which require the use of prudential borrowing that is outside the budget. Can the leader advise members of the procedure if the recommendation and benefits to support prudential borrowing decisions change?

Received 11 January 2026 12:57

QUESTION 10

Member Question submitted by Cllr Niall Innes:

Following the decision by the Labour Led Council to not extend their contract with Stockton & District Advice and Information Service for the provision of advice and information.

Can I ask the Cabinet Member to explain to members why this Labour Led Council, as highlighted by the CEO of Stockton & District Advice Service, provided that organisation with a contract, which last year amounted to £230k of unrestricted funding with no spending criteria attached?

Received 11 January 2026 12:57

QUESTION 11

Member Question submitted by Cllr Tony Riordan:

Stockton Hotels Company Limited, set up by this Labour led council to run the Hilton Hotel, submit their accounts to Companies House each year as required.

Can the Cabinet Member explain to members why those accounts are presented in a different format, with varying information, each year that they have been submitted?

Received 11 January 2026 12:57

QUESTION 12

Member Question submitted by Cllr Lynn Hall:

This labour Led Council, has recently begun a consultation exercise with residents and businesses of the Borough. It is entitled 'Let's Talk Money' and seeks their views on how the Council should prioritise its spending.

Is the Leader of the Council confident in the detail provided to residents and businesses within the consultation pages?

Received 11 January 2026 12:57