

Place Select Committee

A meeting of Place Select Committee was held on Monday 16th February 2026.

Present: Cllr Jim Beall (Chair), Cllr Steve Nelson (Vice-Chair), Cllr Steve Dodds, Cllr Lynn Hall (sub Cllr David Reynard), Cllr Sufi Mubeen, Cllr Tony Riordan, Cllr Ted Strike, Cllr Marilyn Surtees, and Cllr Sylvia Walmsley

Officers: Darren Robinson, Andrew Corcoran (Community Services, Environment and Culture), Iain Robinson, Tracey Carter (Regeneration and Inclusive Growth), Neil Brama (Finance, Transformation and Performance), Ged Morton, Jonathan Nertney, Judy Trainer, Sharon Caddell, Junita Agypong, Michelle Gunn (Corporate Services)

Also in attendance:

Apologies: Cllr David Reynard

PLA/47/25 Evacuation Procedure

The Committee noted the evacuation and housekeeping procedure.

PLA/48/25 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

PLA/49/25 Minutes

AGREED that minutes of the meeting held on 12 January 2026 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

PLA/50/25 Scrutiny Review of Muslim and Faith Burials

The Service Manager presented an action plan setting out how the agreed recommendations from the Scrutiny Review of Muslim and Faith Burial would be implemented and target dates for completion. There were two actions, the first to extend choice in burial provision by installing burial rings, and the second for officers to carry out a review of extending burial hours.

The deadline for installation was questioned and officers informed that there was long lead in dates from ordering to the burial rings being delivered and installed. The advertising of the rings was also raised, and the Committee were informed that local funeral services had been contacted. There would be a “buy back” option for those who had already purchased a traditional plot, to sell this back to the Council and buy a burial ring plot.

The Committee thanked the officer for the action plan and suggested that an update on progress be brought back after the rings had been installed, which was due to take place in September 2026.

AGREED that the Action Plan be approved and a progress update be provided October 2026

PLA/51/25 Scrutiny Review of Governance of Capital Projects

The Committee received information regarding the project documents used within the capital programme governance process. These included the Project Initiation Document (PID), The Risk, Actions, Issues, Decisions and Lessons learnt log (RAIDL), and the Highlight Report.

The PID followed the project from ideation until the project was completed and included key information on the project lead, finance lead, and other services involved e.g. legal, procurement, security. The named project executive would be a member of CMT. The PID asked whether similar projects had previously taken place and the lessons learnt from them, whether there were links with any other projects taking place, if there was a communication plan, and the risks of the project. It identified the costs and funding for the relevant gateway as well as any ongoing revenue implications that would need to be factored in. The PID recorded the Gateway stages and when the project was discussed at the different groups and boards within the capital programme governance process. It acted as a “single point of truth” and was centrally held in the Programme Management Office. Not all sections of the PID would apply to all projects, and some smaller projects did not need a steering group. When questioned it was noted that the document had only been in place for just over two years and every project had to have a PID and go through the project management governance process.

Member engagement was raised. Officers informed that there was Cabinet member engagement and, depending on the project, ward member and group engagement throughout the capital projects lifecycle and governance process.

It was questioned how often PIDs were reviewed and monitored, and officers noted that this was done at each gateway, which aligned with the capital projects lifecycle and governance process. It would also be reviewed if a change request was submitted.

Contingencies and risk management was discussed. It was noted that officers made an assessment on the risk and contingencies level. This level would differ depending on the project, and there was no set percentage of contingency to apply to projects within the Council due to the difference between the types of projects being carried out. Key Performance Indicators (KPI's) were described as project benefits on the PID, and external funders may have their own KPI's or standards that a project adhered to which would be included in that section. When questioned whether missing external KPI would affect future funding, officers advised that this would be determined by individual funders. Some funders included claw-back clauses but there was no set rule. If a project could not be delivered within the agreed budgets and scopes it was escalated to the appropriate governance level, including Cabinet and Council to make a decision if required, as officers did not have additional funds beyond agreed allocations.

The RAIDL included descriptions of risks and their impact, control measures, description of any issues and their impact, action needed for risks and issues, descriptions of dependencies, log of decisions made and justification of these, and lessons learnt. It was reviewed regularly at governance meetings, to check and challenge, thereby ensuring accountability and transparency in what was happening with the project.

The Highlight report provided a snapshot of project status including a Red Amber Green (RAG) rating. It included milestones, risks and issues, activity in the last period and activity planned. These were signed and dated by the project manager to ensure the data was current and used to create a single dashboard for all projects. The dashboards supported the working groups and PMB in scrutinising, challenging, and monitoring the delivery of the project/programme.

The accessibility of the documents used in the governance process was discussed. The documents were not publicly available due to containing sensitive information. The sensitivity of the document may remain once the project was completed, and there were no timescales for when information would no longer be sensitive. Sensitivity was assessed similar to the FOI test i.e. commercial prejudice, public interest, and legal compliance. There were over 100 projects on the current approved programme and therefore officers suggested they did not have the capacity to respond to ad hoc requests for information on specific projects from members. Projects were brought to Cabinet when members needed to be aware of issues and make decisions.

Three examples of projects that had been considered at a recent PMB meeting were presented to illustrate the governance process:

- Worsall Road Culvert Improvement Scheme had been presented to request that the project be moved to the Design stage. The scheme would remove existing screens and install a CIRIA C786-complaint security and debris screen serving both culvert inlets. The funding allocated to the scheme would support detailed design, site investigations, and construction works. The PID with key details had been circulated before the PMB meeting. Once the Design stage had been completed and tenders returned the scheme would be presented again to PMB to request moving to Delivery stage.
- Care Homes Solar Scheme Brief had been presented to request that the project be moved to the delivery stage. The Council had been informed by Tees Valley Combined Authority (TVCA) that they were eligible for the funding to install solar panels on public sector buildings via the Mayoral Renewables Fund however the project had to be completed by the end of the current financial year. The Council needed signed agreement for the funding from TVCA, who needed a signed agreement from the funder (Department for Energy Security and Net Zero) therefore the timeframes were tight and back-to-back funding agreements had to be in line.
- Thornaby Swimming Pool, the final proposal set out in the PID was presented to review cost, risk, and programme and approval to Delivery. The risks associated with the project were presented and the principle of proceeding with delivery in the knowledge of the risks was discussed along with the need to manage those risks throughout delivery. The principle of assigning some risk within the contract to the contractor was discussed and how that impacts the contract sum. The fact that there is a contingency sum allocated to the project to mitigate financial risk was also covered. Cabinet approval had been sought for the scheme at different stages in the process including approval of a budget for delivery of the swimming pool, approval of the existing scheme scope, and approval of moving funds from different projects within the Town Deal Programme.

Discussion took place regarding the principle of assigning risk within contract, and it was explained by officers that it was one way of mitigating risk. The Council could keep the risk which would result in a smaller contract sum, but potentially greater levels of risk. The contingency may not be needed but was there, should the Council have to

deal with any risk or cost that arises. The benefits of including the risk within a contract was a judgement and done with full understanding and knowledge of what the risk was.

The different types of contracts were discussed, with officers noting that the market had changed and preferred a design and build (D&B) model, whereby the contractor was involved in the design of the building at the beginning, rather than bidding for a contract for construction only. Members questioned the risks that were associated with the D&B model. Officers noted that there were different risks for different approaches, and it often came down to the individual projects which model to use.

It was noted that the documentation presented would be circulated to the Committee.

AGREED the information be noted

PLA/52/25 Chair's Update and Select Committee Work Programme 2025 - 2027

Consideration was given to the Work Programme

AGREED that the Work Programme be noted.

Chair: