

Adult Social Care and Health Select Committee

A meeting of the Adult Social Care and Health Select Committee was held on Tuesday 17 February 2026.

Present: Cllr Marc Besford (Chair), Cllr Carol Clark, Cllr John Coulson, Cllr Lynn Hall, Cllr Barbara Inman (sub for Cllr Nathan Gale (Vice-Chair)), Cllr Mohammed Mazi (sub for Cllr Jack Miller), Cllr Vanessa Sewell, Cllr Sylvia Walmsley

Officers: Graham Lyons, Carolyn Nice, Rob Papworth (A,H&W); Francesca Magog, Gary Woods (CS)

Also in attendance: Cllr Pauline Beall (SBC Cabinet Member for Health and Adult Social Care)

Apologies: Cllr Nathan Gale (Vice-Chair), Cllr Jack Miller

ASCH/63/25 Evacuation Procedure

The evacuation procedure was noted.

ASCH/64/25 Declarations of Interest

There were no interests declared.

ASCH/65/25 Minutes

Consideration was given to the minutes from the Committee meeting held on 16 December 2025. Attention was drawn to the following:

- Attendance: The SBC Director of Adults, Health and Wellbeing was present at the December 2025 meeting but was not included in the 'Officers' section – this would be rectified accordingly.
- Minutes: The Committee welcomed the sharing of a simplified version of the Tees Valley Care and Health Innovation Zone Strategic Programme Board minutes following its meeting in October 2025, and encouraged similar future updates on a timely basis so Members were appropriately sighted on key developments (including associated staffing appointments) in relation to this initiative. It was noted that a further email update had been requested following the recent Board meeting in January 2026.
- Stockton-on-Tees Independent Complaints Advocacy – Annual Report: Further to the Committee query on whether the 75% figure for those accessing the Independent Complaints Advocacy service via telephone and email could be broken down into a percentage for each, the Operations Manager from the Carers Federation had since confirmed that this represented 52% for telephone contact and 23% for email.

AGREED that, subject to the required amendment to the attendance section, the minutes of the meeting on 16 December 2025 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

ASCH/66/25 Scrutiny Review of Stockton-on-Tees Adult Carers Support Service

Consideration was given to the draft final report for the Committee's Scrutiny Review of Stockton-on-Tees Adult Carers Support Service. Specific attention was drawn to the following:

- Paragraph 4.45 - 4.46 (page 24): Following requests at the informal 'summary of evidence' session in January 2026, additional information regarding the recent Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council (SBC) decision to extend its partnership with Mobilise (in collaboration with other North East Local Authorities) had been provided and incorporated.
- Recommendations (page 11-12 / 42-43): As discussed at the informal 'summary of evidence' session in January 2026, the recommendation in relation to Mobilise had been strengthened (see 2b and 2c).

Reflecting on the review, Members hoped that the Committee had been a 'critical friend' of the local Adult Carers Support Service and that its findings and subsequent recommendations would make a positive difference to the Borough's much-valued carers. Members recognised the debt that organisations had to those people undertaking a caring role, and encouraged the continuation of work to enhance and expand the current offer (with the value of the Time Out element, the increased facilitation of peer support opportunities, and the development of the service to appeal to those transitioning from their role as young carers specifically emphasised). Communication of the support available to local carers was key and needed to be promoted by the Council's relevant partners (particularly those within the health sector).

The SBC Cabinet Member for Health and Adult Social Care thanked the Committee for its work on this scrutiny topic and was pleased that Members were able to visit the LiveWell Dementia Hub as part of the evidence-gathering phase – the recommendation calling for the new carers awareness e-learning module to be rolled out to Members (as well as SBC staff and external partners) was also praised and needed to be monitored for uptake. Welcoming the Committee's recommendations, the SBC Director of Adults, Health and Wellbeing added that the review had highlighted areas where the service could develop, as well as showing the benefits of a range of support. Assurance was given that the extended partnership with Mobilise would be appropriately monitored to ensure effectiveness (it was noted that SBC was the lead Local Authority regarding the regional arrangements with this external provider), with ongoing efforts to simplify the SBC 'front door' also contributing towards an improved future offer for those carers seeking to access help.

The Committee approved the content of the draft final report and was informed that the agreed version would be presented to Cabinet in March 2026. The Chair thanked Members and officers for their contributions throughout the review process.

AGREED that the Stockton-on-Tees Adult Carers Support Service final report be approved for submission to Cabinet.

ASCH/67/25 Action Plan for Agreed Recommendations - Review of Reablement Service

Consideration was given to a draft Action Plan setting out how the agreed recommendations from the recently concluded review of Reablement Service would be implemented, including success measures and target dates for completion. Presented by the SBC Strategic Development Manager (Adults & Health), it was stated that many of the proposed actions were wrapped up in the ongoing work being undertaken through the Council's *Powering Our Future* (POF) programme, with specific attention drawn to the following:

- Recommendation 2 (North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust (NTHFT) reviews its discharge processes to ensure that eligible individuals who are ready to leave hospital are made fully aware of local reablement provision and are referred to it upon discharge from hospital): Proposed work on discharge processes as part of a planned review of hospital discharge pathways would be key to the future promotion of, and access to, the local reablement offer.
- Recommendation 7b (To increase public understanding of the Borough's reablement offer, SBC undertakes a joint communications campaign (repeated on a periodic basis) with NTHFT and the VCSE sector around local reablement services, making it clear what they involve, how they are accessed (including contact details), and the principal benefits): An intended communications plan was being informed by the work of the local Making It Real Board (MIRB) which was helping obtain a clearer view of public feelings on the way services were / should be promoted.
- Recommendation 8 (Healthwatch Stockton-on-Tees be asked to consider facilitating a public survey in 2026 to establish the availability of information on the local reablement offer for those who had spent time in hospital and the experiences of those who had received support from the service): Recent conversations with Healthwatch Stockton-on-Tees had confirmed a willingness for them to undertake work on assessing the local reablement offer in the coming year.

The Committee welcomed the inclusion of actions to address reablement-related issues involving North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust (NTHFT), particularly in relation to hospital discharge. Confirmation was then sought, and subsequently given, on the identity of the referenced SBC Senior Communications Officer, and praise was offered to Healthwatch Stockton-on-Tees for agreeing to support this post-review phase. Regarding the latter, Members also called for the Council to ensure its own engagement with those who had received support from the Reablement Service so crucial feedback could be obtained from their viewpoint – officers acknowledged the need to better understand how services were impacting lives (not just the numbers using them).

Continuing the theme of pursuing views on service provision, the Committee highlighted those residents within the Borough who had family living elsewhere in the country and who were seeking information (often via the SBC website) on the local reablement offer, potentially comparing this to what was available where they were based – trying to obtain the wider family perspective on existing services was also encouraged.

In hospital discharge-related matters, Members again drew attention to Nuffield Health Tees Hospital in Norton, repeating previously relayed concerns about a lack of pre-hospital and pre-discharge checks. The SBC Director of Adults, Health and Wellbeing agreed to follow this up.

The Committee approved the content of the Action Plan as presented and determined that the first update on progress of the agreed actions would be required in approximately six months (September 2026).

AGREED that the Action Plan in relation to the recently completed Scrutiny Review of Reablement Service be approved.

ASCH/68/25 CQC / PAMMS Inspection Results – Quarterly Summary (Q3 2025-2026)

Consideration was given to the latest quarterly summary regarding Care Quality Commission (CQC) inspections for services operating within the Borough (Appendix 1). Six inspection reports were published during this period (October to December 2025 (inclusive)), with attention drawn to the following Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council (SBC) contracted provider:

Providers rated 'Good' overall (1)

- Care Matters (Homecare) Limited Stockton retained its 'Good' overall rating which it last attained during a previous focused inspection (the outcomes of which were published in January 2021). This latest outcome was deemed encouraging given the Committee's past review of Care at Home which culminated in a range of recommendations to consolidate and strengthen the local offer.

The remaining five reports involved primary medical care services. The Dovecot Surgery, The Eaglescliffe Medical Practice, and Yarm Medical Practice were all graded 'Good' overall, whilst Yarm Lane Dental Practice was meeting regulations in all five inspection domains. However, A Vita Limited was graded 'Requires Improvement' (repeating its overall rating from the previous inspection in 2023) following two identified breaches of the legal regulations regarding 'safe care and treatment' (in relation to infection control and safe management of medicines) and 'good governance' (in relation to there being no clear oversight of governance).

The Committee expressed concern over the CQCs findings on services provided by A Vita Limited and asked if this could be followed up with relevant authorities. It was noted that the briefing report included within the papers stated that '*this service was archived on 26 September 2025. Archived services are ones which are no longer part of a provider's registration with CQC.*' – enquiries would be made following this meeting as to what this statement actually meant in terms of the current offer provided by this service.

Focus turned to the section on Provider Assessment and Market Management Solutions (PAMMS) inspections (Appendix 2), of which there were eleven reports published during this period (October to December 2025 (inclusive)):

- Stockton Lodge Care Home, The Beeches Care Home, Chestnut Lodge Nursing Home, The Poplars Care Home, Hadrian Park, Elton Hall Care Home, and Mandale Care Home all maintained an overall rating of 'Good' – the same grading all seven services achieved following their previous inspections. Both The Beeches Care Home and Mandale Care Home had evidenced required

improvements in the 'suitability of staffing' domain, whilst Hadrian Park had strengthened its offer of 'personalised care and support'.

- Green Lodge was upgraded to 'Good' overall following the 'Requires Improvement' judgement it had received after its previous inspection (published in August 2024). All domains were now deemed to be of a 'Good' standard following past shortfalls regarding 'safeguarding and safety' and 'quality of management'. Similarly, Allington House was upgraded to 'Good' overall after sufficient progress was made in addressing concerns relating to 'personalised care and support' and 'safeguarding and safety' (areas which were identified as requiring improvement during its previous inspection that was published in February 2025), whilst The Maple Care Home received an overall rating of 'Good' (with all domains receiving this status) which represented a significant upgrade on its previous inspection when all but the 'safeguarding and safety' domain required improvements.
- The White House Care Home had been upgraded from 'Good' to an overall rating of 'Excellent', reflecting evidence of high-quality provision in the 'personalised care and support' and 'suitability of staffing' domains (both of which were rated 'Excellent').

Praising the achievements of The White House Care Home and referencing its support of '*education sessions and placements from a local college*', Members spoke of their understanding that this training was taking place over a longer period of time (not just a few days) and wondered if this was normal practice for all services across the Borough – it was stated that this query would be followed-up with the SBC Quality Assurance and Compliance (QuAC) Team after the meeting. The Committee also drew attention to the excellent events programme employed by the service which allowed residents to engage in a range of activities outside of the home (both in the local community and further afield).

AGREED that the CQC / PAMMS Inspection Results – Quarterly Summary (Q3 2025-2026) report be noted.

ASCH/69/25 Health and Wellbeing Board – Previous Minutes (September, October & December 2025)

Consideration was given to the minutes of previous Health and Wellbeing Board meetings which took place in September, October and December 2025.

AGREED that the minutes of Health and Wellbeing Board meetings which took place in September, October and December 2025 be noted.

ASCH/70/25 Chair's Update and Select Committee Work Programme 2025-2026

CHAIR'S UPDATE

The Chair had no further updates.

WORK PROGRAMME 2025-2026

Consideration was given to the Committee's current work programme. The next meeting was due to take place on 17 March 2026, but due to the annual North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust Quality Account item being moved to the May

2026 meeting (historically, this was always presented in March), as well as the recent conclusion of the Committee's latest in-depth review of the local Adult Carers Support Service, there were no items currently scheduled. Following discussion, it was agreed that a formal update on the Tees Valley Care and Health Innovation Zone should be sought for the March 2026 date, though if this could not yet be provided, the March 2026 meeting would be stood down.

AGREED that the Chair's Update and Adult Social Care and Health Select Committee Work Programme 2025-2026 be noted.

Chair: