

## Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council

### Call-In Request Form

I/We request that the following matter be called-in for consideration by the Executive Scrutiny Committee for the reason(s) stated below.

I/We understand that a minimum of six Members of the Council excluding Cabinet Members, or two Education representatives with voting rights in respect of education matters, must submit this request before the call-in procedure is implemented.

<b>Decision making body ie. Cabinet, Officer, or Joint Arrangement</b>	Cabinet
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<b>Details of decision</b>	Levelling Up Fund - Yarm Public Realm
<b>Ref. number (if any)</b>	
<b>Date of decision</b>	12 <sup>th</sup> March 2026

<b>Principle(s) (overleaf)</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• proportionality (i.e. the action must be proportionate to the desired outcome);</li> <li>• due consultation and the taking of professional advice from Officers;</li> <li>• respect for human rights and equality of opportunity;</li> <li>• a presumption in favour of openness;</li> <li>• clarity of aims and desired outcomes; and</li> <li>• an explanation of what options have been considered and giving the reasons for decisions</li> <li>• relevant matters have not been ignored</li> <li>• clarity and explanation of information provided</li> </ul>	<p>The report presented to Cabinet on 12<sup>th</sup> March 2026 provided a progress update on the Round 1 Levelling Up Fund programme of interventions along with a summary of the public engagement undertaken to inform whether the Council should proceed with the Yarm High Street public realm proposals as presented to the public in May 2025.</p> <p><i>The Cabinet resolved that:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <i>The findings of the public engagement undertaken in relation to the Yarm High Street public realm scheme be noted.</i></li> <li>2. <i>With regard to the £2.35m remaining funds from the allocated budget for Yarm High Street: -</i> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) <i>The £950,000 of SBC co-funding be returned to support the Council's MTFP and financial position.</i></li> <li>b) <i>£950,000 of the remaining LUF funding be used to repay the borrowing associated with the additional expenditure at Preston Park Museum.</i></li> <li>c) <i>The remaining £450,000 LUF funding be committed in the Yarm area.</i></li> <li>d) <i>Delegated Authority be given to the Director of Regeneration and Inclusive Growth, in consultation with the Cabinet Member, to produce a</i></li> </ol> </li> </ol>

*shortlist of possible projects that could be achieved with the remaining budget of £450,000 and then engage with the residents and businesses of Yarm for their priorities. The list is to include the costs of each item on the list and to include the consideration of the replacement of the pontoons, to enable residents and businesses to consider the value for money and extent of the works available when providing their priorities.*

*Reasons for the Decision*

*To inform a decision on next steps for use of the remaining approved budget for Yarm High Street.*

It is clear from the most recent consultation exercise conducted by SBC that the proposals put forward in May 2025 were roundly rejected. However, it is also clear from the responses in the latest consultation that the remaining Levelling Up Funding, £2.35m, provided by the previous Government was expected to be retained and spent in the Yarm and Eaglescliffe areas.

It is also clear that the Cabinet decision does not reflect the expectations and proposals from the responses in the latest consultation exercise. The decision record, and the discussion at Cabinet did not take these considerations into account when making their decision.

The proposal during the Cabinet meeting by Councillor Eglington (reflecting the resolution) and supported immediately by the other cabinet members did not explore any of the alternative options within the report, or the appendix, giving the perception that a decision prior to the meeting had already been made. This demonstrated a lack of transparency and openness. Clarity and explanation are sought as to why all options were not discussed.

No consultation or engagement has taken place with Yarm Town Council, a major partner and financial contributor, in any of the proposals provided in the Cabinet Report or the proposed resolution. An explanation as to why this crucial step did not take place.

The Chair, Vice-Chair and Clerk of Yarm Town Council have all confirmed that no previous consultations/discussions have taken place regarding

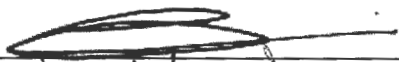
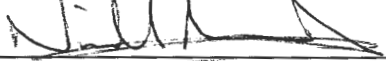


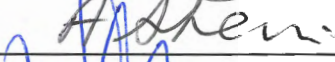

the proposed renovation works to the High Street with them. They have also confirmed that no representative of Yarm Town Council has received any correspondence from Councillor Richard Eglinton regarding any plans or proposals following the 'YOU DECIDE' consultation exercise. Clarity is sought as to why a major partner was not consulted or approached to explain the proposals set out in the Cabinet report, or the proposed final decision. The Cabinet Report itself states that the list provided is not exhaustive but collated to steer discussion.

No consideration has been given to return money to Yarm Town Council who were one of the partners co-funding the LUF bid. Clarity is sought as to why SBC have sought to retain the town council's element of the remaining funding.

No consultation has taken place with the public regarding the proposed resolution/decision by the Cabinet. The clear expectation from the public following the consultation exercise is that new proposals reflecting the comments in appendix A of the Cabinet Report would steer the spending of all the LUF awarded to Yarm and Eaglescliffe in those areas. Clarity is sought as to why the voice of residents, businesses and visitors to Yarm have had the proposals ignored.

The title of the latest consultation exercise was 'YOU DECIDE.' The clear inference and expectation from this title and the resounding No Vote was that the consultees views would be now considered as to how the remaining LUF would be spent in the Yarm and Eaglescliffe area, they would be the ones deciding. The resounding 'no' is clear that the proposals put forward by SBC were not good enough for Yarm, it was not in any way to be interpreted as an invitation for the Cabinet to take away any of the funding. Had they (consultees) known that an option to redirect 80% of that funding to help balance overspending and borrowing within SBC was being considered should have been made clear in the 'YOU DECIDE' consultation. It was not. Openness and clarity regarding, aims and outcomes is lacking and invites reputational damage to the Council. Taking away funding because people have roundly rejected an ill-conceived plan is not democracy and appears disproportionate.

	<p>These relevant matters have been ignored.</p> <p>No explanation has been provided in the decision record as to why other options (those put forward by the public and outlined in Appendix A) have not been considered. Clarity and explanation as to why those proposals have been ignored.</p> <p>The desired outcome from the 'YOU DECIDE' consultation was clear, people decide on the future shape of improvements to LUF area. The Cabinet in their short deliberation and subsequent decision appear to have completely ignored the purpose of the consultation and chose to use funding provided for the Yarm and Eaglescliffe areas to prop up the financial problems of SBC. Clarity and explanation are sought as to why the financial problems of SBC outweighed the expectations of the 'YOU DECIDE' exercise. It is suggested that the Cabinet have decided that the consultees views are irrelevant. This is a disproportionate approach from the aims and expectations of the consultation exercise. An explanation is sought to clarify the Cabinet's decision.</p>

<b>We request that the following Cabinet Member(s)/Officer(s) to be required to attend the Executive Scrutiny Committee</b>	
Relevant Corporate Management Team members, Cllr Eglington, Cllr Evans	
<b>Signed</b>	<b>Print Name</b>
	Cllr TONY JORDAN
	Cllr. NIALL INNES
	Cllr HUGO STRATTON
	Cllr STEVE DODDS
	Cllr ANDREW SHERRIS
	Cllr JOHN COULSON

**This form must be submitted to the Proper Officer (via Democratic Services) within four working days of the publication of the decision i.e. by 12 midnight on the fourth day.**

**Multiple forms (including faxed and e-mailed versions) may be submitted in respect of the same decision. If the form is e-mailed it must be subscribed to by one person only.**

**This form may be returned as follows:**

By hand to any Democratic Services Officer

Email – 'DL Democratic Services'

<b>Office use only</b>	
Date received:	Initials:
Valid: Yes/No	
Reasons for invalidity:	
Reasons notified	
Executive Scrutiny Committee date:	

<p><b>Extract from Constitution – Paragraph 1.35</b></p> <p>Decisions of the Council will usually be made in accordance with the following principles:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• proportionality (i.e. the action must be proportionate to the desired outcome);</li><li>• due consultation and the taking of professional advice from Officers;</li><li>• respect for human rights and equality of opportunity;</li><li>• a presumption in favour of openness;</li><li>• clarity of aims and desired outcomes; and</li><li>• an explanation of what options have been considered and giving the reasons for decisions</li><li>• relevant matters have not been ignored</li><li>• clarity and explanation of information provided</li></ul>
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Please also see the guidance contained with the Scrutiny Toolkit, and Constitution.