

AGENDA ITEM

REPORT TO CABINET

15 JUNE 2023

**REPORT OF CORPORATE
MANAGEMENT TEAM**

CABINET INFORMATION ITEM

Leader of the Council – Councillor Bob Cook

COUNCIL PLAN 2022/25 UPDATE

SUMMARY

This report provides Cabinet with an update on the priorities included in the Council Plan 2022/25.

Recommended that the report be noted.

REASONS FOR PRODUCING THIS REPORT

To update Cabinet on the progress in implementing the Council Plan priorities.

DETAIL

1. This report focuses on the implementation of the Council Plan 2022/25. This is therefore the year-end update on progress during 2022/23.
2. An update on each of the Council Plan priorities is set out in Annex 1. The report indicates significant progress in all areas of this year's priorities.
3. A new approach to strategic planning will be introduced during 2023 leading to a new corporate plan being approved in June 2024. This will be covered in more detail in a report to Cabinet in July 2023.

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OUR PEOPLE

Making the borough a place where people are healthy, safe and protected from harm means creating a place where:

People live in cohesive and safe communities

People are supported and protected from harm

People live healthy lives

Priority	Update
<p>1. Help to keep families together by developing and embedding a new family support offer; enhanced respite support and new provision for children in our care</p>	<p>Strategic partnership launched 1 April with a focus on support for reunification of children with birth families where appropriate and increased family support offer. Proposals for new children’s homes developed and successful bids to DfE capital programme for 2 new homes Disability review work underway to map new approaches to supporting families</p>
<p>2. Support achievement for all pupils</p>	<p>Proposals for a new Alternative Provision Free School submitted in partnership with Delta Academies Trust Work on new attendance strategy being developed Access to free school meals pilot implemented</p>
<p>3. Develop and embed a new contextual safeguarding hub with our partners in Hartlepool to protect children from exploitation</p>	<p>Ongoing work to strengthen intelligence and to support effective practice, linked to the CYP Select Committee review. Continued focus on disruption activity</p>
<p>4. Develop joint commissioning arrangements and new provision for children with special educational needs and disabilities</p>	<p>Proposals to expand Abbey @ and develop new EMS provision at North Shore Academy New occupational therapy jointly commissioned service with Abbey Hill Special School and the Integrated care Board Additional places for ASD at Abbey Hill Work ongoing to develop Ash Trees at Billingham South</p>
<p>5. Support the Arson Reduction Strategy in partnership with Cleveland Fire Brigade</p>	<p>Continued support for Cleveland Fire Brigade Arson Reduction Strategy is being provided by our Community Safety Team. Deliberate fire setting in Stockton on Tees puts our communities at risk therefore joint working within the wider Safer Stockton Partnership has taken place. Joint patrols in deliberate fire setting hotspots has taken place and will continue throughout the summer months when we see an increase in deliberate fire setting during the school holidays. A dedicated preventative approach has been taken through the ‘bonfire’ period to tackle seasonal increases in deliberate fire setting across Stockton on Tees which was a success. A Crime and Disorder Select Committee review of bonfires on public land has been undertaken, with recommendations aligned to the arson reduction strategy agreed.</p>

<p>6. Maximise the effectiveness of the additional investment made in our community safety related services in order to protect residents</p>	<p>Following the additional investment made by the Council within our Community Safety related services we appointed an additional 12 Civic Enforcement Officers. These officers are new resources on top of the existing team of 20 Civic Enforcement Officers already employed by the Council. The additional 12 Civic Enforcement Officers are now in position and are actively working within all of our town centre settings, with the objective of ensuring they are safe and welcoming places to visit and shop. A particular area of focus has been the recent Public Space Protection Order in both Stockton and Norton Village.</p> <p>The investment in additional resources for the town centres has also meant that the existing Civic Enforcement Officers are able to spend much more time within our wider communities with a focus on tackling ASB, environmental crime and issues related to vehicles, including parking.</p>
<p>7. Consider and develop a new serious violence reduction strategy In partnership with other responsible authorities</p>	<p>Consideration of the new serious violence reduction duty has continued following guidance being made available after the Royal Assent of the Police Crime Sentencing and Court Act. The introduction of serious violence reduction in the Community Safety Plan has been completed.</p> <p>A new Violence Reduction Unit (CURV) has been introduced following additional funding from the Home Office, in Cleveland. Stockton BC is represented on this group and part of the decision-making process for funding allocation and the introduction of new initiatives to tackle serious violence.</p>
<p>8. Give due consideration to the new Protect Duty placed on local authorities as part of the wider national counter-terrorism strategy</p>	<p>Information on the development of a new Protect Duty is still not available from central government. Locally, the Publicly Assessable Locations (PALs) pilot has now concluded and information fed back to government to inform future policy setting.</p> <p>Further help and support is being provided by the Home Office and Counter-Terrorism Policing in order to ensure our designs for the new town centre provide a safe and secure area for the public to enjoy.</p>
<p>9. Work with our partners in the VCSE sector and the Community Partnerships to tackle food poverty in the Borough</p>	<p>We have arranged two multi-agency workshops for Autumn 2022 on <i>Collaborative Approaches to Healthy Weight in Stockton-on-Tees</i> to consider collective intelligence, priorities and next steps, which have been positively received by partners.</p> <p>The Council works in partnership with the Stockton Food Power Network and Community Food Pantries to improve access to support for people experiencing food poverty.</p> <p>As part of the Councils initiatives to address the Cost-of-Living Crisis monies were secure through the Household Support Round 3 to fund a variety of partners (including Family Hubs and VCSE organisations) offer hot meals and emergency food over the winter period.</p> <p>To support families during the school holidays, we commission a holiday enrichment programme working closely with Catalyst, the VCSE and communities. The programme supported children and their families across the Borough during the Summer holidays, through the provision of healthy food and free activities.</p>
<p>10. Support people to live healthy lives through a focus on chronic conditions / long term conditions, alcohol, smoking, obesity / physical activity, mental health</p>	<p>The Council continues to work closely with primary care colleagues to promote the NHS health check which identifies and supports people at risk from diabetes, heart disease, kidney disease, stroke and dementia. This includes working across NHS partners to address inequality in uptake of the checks across our local communities. We are also supporting NHS partners to raise awareness and promote uptake of the NHS lung check as well as screening programmes e.g. breast cancer, bowel cancer.</p>

	<p>Our multi-agency Tobacco Alliance has been re-established, with an initial focus on addressing smoking in pregnancy. Significant improvements in our local smoking rates have been achieved and we are keen to focus on working with and supporting those in high-risk groups e.g. pregnant women, those with mental illness, as well as continuing our work across the wider system to prevent and reduce smoking and address the new challenge presented by vaping. We continue to work across agencies to prevent and address the health harms caused by alcohol, both for adults and for children and young people.</p> <p>The multi-agency Physical Activity Steering Group continues to meet to create environments and conditions where people are more able to be physically active. A Healthy Streets pilot is commencing in May 2023 which aims to improve community ownership and use of streets and improve physical and mental wellbeing and address health inequality.</p> <p>The mental health steering group, reporting to the Health and Wellbeing Board, has continued to meet. It is informed through a VCSE-led mental health forum and a lived experience forum. The overall aim is to improve mental health and wellbeing across the life course for residents and communities. This includes mental health promotion, suicide prevention, reduction of mental ill health and inequalities and to develop a strategic framework for mental health. The Council also continues to commission bereavement support, the mental health training hub and continue to progress significant amounts of work on suicide prevention and drug-related deaths.</p> <p>To address support people to live healthy lives, we are also developing an asset-based approach to working with communities, building on the networks, resources and abilities communities have and using this to better understand how we can meet need. An example of this is work to develop our health and wellbeing model for children, young people and families through our 0-19 service offer.</p>
<p>11. Continue to lead the public health response to Covid and support the approach to recovery, working with partners in the Health and Wellbeing Board</p>	<p>The local Health Protection Collaborative (established based on learning from the pandemic) continues to meet, reporting to the Health and Wellbeing Board. The Collaborative provides assurance to the Board on local Health Protection matters and helps ensure a robust and resilient local health protection system. This has included oversight of work to respond to the syphilis outbreak in the borough and surrounding areas, support in place for those with post-Covid, and work with partners to promote uptake of immunisations in teenage years which have been impacted by Covid. We also continue to support the care sector in preventing outbreaks of infections; and have provided advice to schools on scarlet fever and invasive group A Strep.</p> <p>We continue to work closely with our community wellbeing champions on issues that are important to them such as mental wellbeing and are looking at we develop this further in future in the context of a broader asset-based approach to working with our communities.</p>
<p>12. Support people to remain safely and independently in their homes for as long as possible and offer help to people who are feeling lonely</p>	<p>The Council continues to support as many people to live independently at home as possible. Compared to both the northeast and national rate of admissions to care homes (number of admissions per 100,00 population), Stockton on Tees places less people into residential and nursing care. In addition to the initiatives we reported in October, we have recently secured funding to extend the Teleassist pilot (a One Call led service that provides daily telephone contact for vulnerable people) which will increase the contact and support we can offer people living at home. Further, we have</p>

	<p>deployed the" Virtual House" training (via ADASS and the TSA, the industry and advisory body for technology enabled care) to improve the level of competence of social care staff and ensure people are enabled to continue to live independently.</p> <p>We continue to deliver several specific contracts to address loneliness. Social Lights (a volunteering and matching service for vulnerable adults in Stockton on Tees) which continues to receive positive feedback from people and families accessing the service. Wag & Co, visiting dogs charity who we have commissioned to provide support befriending vulnerable older people in their own homes as well as in care homes / hospitals.</p> <p>437 households were supported to live independently through the provision of a property adaptation (funded through the Disabled Facilities Grant Programme).</p>
<p>13. Continue to work with adult residential care and care at home providers to improve quality of care and to continue to support them as they respond to the challenges arising from COVID-19</p>	<p>Since October 2023, The Transformation Team have coordinated a further 2 Provider Forums (in addition to existing leadership networks which meet monthly) which have brought together care home managers and colleagues in health, public health, skills for Care and TVCA. At the last meeting on 02 March 2023, the Forum also included a market stall event which allowed care home managers to network informally and talk to representatives from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public Health • Carers service • People First Advocacy • Community matrons • Fairer Stockton • Employment and training hub • Environmental health • Falls service • North Tees & Hartlepool Training Alliance • IPC • Meds Optimisation Team • Intensive Community Liaison Service • One Call • Occupational Therapy <p>The Quality and Assurance Team continue to undertake PAMMS assessments. Any care home provider that has been rated as Requires Improvement via PAMMS or CQC is included in a targeted action plan to respond to the issues that have been identified during inspection.</p>
<p>14. Engage with individuals, families, carers and communities when developing adult social care support and continue to collaborate with the NHS to ensure health and care services work effectively together</p>	<p>The new post of Lived Experience Coordinator was appointed in February 2023 and has provided capacity and focus to review our current approaches to co-production and, in line with our ambitions in the Adult Strategy and expectation through the new CQC assurance framework, develop our approaches to working with people and their carers / families.</p> <p>We have continued to develop our engagement activities with our "in house" day opportunities services. A recent reflection session between the Learning Disabilities Partnership Board with all day service</p>

	<p>(Halcyon Centre, Community Day Options and Allensway) on 29 March 2023 highlighted the positive impact these engagement activities have had on people accessing these services.</p> <p>The day service we commission for people with autism (Ware Street) is due to be re commissioned in October 2023. People accessing the service and families have been involved in reviewing the service, advising on the specification, helping write the specific questions to ask potential providers and will be included as part of the tender and evaluation process.</p>
15. Review out of area placements and day options provision for adults	<p>The current framework for residential care for people with a learning disability has insufficient capacity to meet demand in the Borough. The Council intends to reopen the framework to invite current and new providers to develop further residential provision to meet identified need.</p> <p>A new framework for Mental Health has been designed to further develop residential accommodation in the borough. The framework is expected to be commissioned in June 2023.</p> <p>The Council is also leading a collaborative project as a member of the Tees Local Implementation Group (LIG) to identify opportunities across Tees for new providers. Following a market engagement event on 25th January 2022 we have continued to work with partners and the new ICS to identify and develop provision in Borough. Providers have asked for an opportunity to further reengage and a Tees Wide development session, looking at how we develop more provision in Tees Valley, is scheduled for 18 July 2023.</p>

OUR ECONOMY

Making the borough a place with a thriving economy where everyone has opportunities to succeed means creating:

A growing economy

Improved education and skills development

Job creation and increased employment

Priority	Update
16. Continue to develop the Invest Stockton-on-Tees branding campaign and attract inward investment into the Borough	Website and social media continue to be monitored/improved/adapted. Exploring opportunities for targeted marketing campaigns
17. Develop options for increasing the availability of employment land across the Borough	Belasis Business Park – work continues with prospective occupiers Durham Lane Business Park – Knight Frank have now marketed the site, shortlisting of developers/partners taking place over May/June 2023. Work due to start later in the summer on the Car Park/Footbridge works as well as modifications to the entrance junction.
18. Finalise and implement the Inclusive Growth Strategy to support residents to benefit from growth	Complete.
19. Develop the Employment and Training Hub model to develop skills and support residents into employment	The Employment and Training Hub continues to grow with over 300 people now having gained employment through the hub.
20. Develop a procurement charter with partners to promote social value and identify potential areas of development of supply chains in order to support local business	The Council's Social Value Policy has been reviewed and updated ahead of any working with partners.
21. Deliver the major transport-related projects at the Portrack Relief Road, Billingham and Eaglescliffe Station improvements, Elton Interchange, and improvements along the A689 corridor	Portrack Relief Road - On hold due to budget gap of around £10m to £15m. Billingham Station – Bridge works completed. Eaglescliffe Station - Phase access road completed. Phase 2 – Car park planned start Summer 2023. Network Rail delivering new bridge 2023/24. Elton interchange – Onsite due for completion October 2023. Improvement along A689 – On hold due to developers refusing to fund their elements and the Government has turned down the A689 Major Road Network bid.

22. Understand and respond to the implications of changes in travel patterns as a result of the Covid pandemic	Levels of traffic and public transport usage are still being monitored. Car traffic approximately 90% volume of pre-Covid traffic with more peak spreading, light goods vehicles around 11% higher than pre-covid levels. Rail usage is around 91% and bus 86% of pre-covid levels.
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OUR PLACES

Making the borough a place that is clean, vibrant and attractive means creating:

Great places to live and visit

Clean and green spaces

Rich cultural experiences

Priority	Update
23. Continue the redevelopment of Stockton Town Centre including demolition of Castlegate and development of the Urban Park	31 businesses relocated. Demolition underway. Detailed design ongoing
24. Finalise the arrangements for the Town Deal in Thornaby	Priorities agreed and approved at Cabinet.
25. Finalise the plans for improvements in Yarm, Preston Hall Museum and Grounds and cycleway infrastructure in line with the Levelling Up fund allocation	Report to Cabinet April 2023 approved reallocation of resource to enable delivery. Planning application for Preston Hall Museum and Grounds due Summer 2023
26. Continue redevelopment of the Sycamores and Elm House estates in Stockton	The development of the Sycamores continues with Keepmoat leading the development and sales.
27. Finalise the review of the private landlord led licensing scheme	Report presented to Cabinet in November 2022, approval secured to develop a detailed Selective Licensing Business Case.
28. Assess options for accelerating affordable and specialist housing across the Borough	Specialist/supported housing needs assessment completed which will inform future service provision.
29. Continue the programme of road and pavement maintenance and repairs	The agreed Carriageway repair schemes all completed by contractor (Tarmac). Footway schemes all either completed or on site. Ontrack with Highway Asset Management Recommendations and fed back to Scrutiny Committee February 2023.
30. Implement the first stage objectives of the Carbon Reduction and Environmental Sustainability Strategy and develop the partnership and	A 'live' action plan is now in operation, and a Senior Management Team Oversight group created. The oversight group is tasked to monitor progress, constructively challenge, and break down barriers to delivery of the action plan. A data collection framework has been developed and baselines collected. Four Climate coalitions are now established (Creative, Youth, Community and Business).

<p>community work as a basis for future activity</p>	<p>A new Strategy Action Plan Coordinator has been appointed and work has commenced on developing a delivery action plan together with baseline monitoring data. A Climate Coalition has been initiated to engage with the business, community and voluntary sectors.</p>
<p>31. Develop and adapt our borough-wide events programme to respond to the pandemic, incorporating celebrations for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee and preparations for the Stockton & Darlington Railway Bicentenary</p>	<p>Stockton Borough Council's annual events programme for 2023/24 includes a range of community events which take place across the Borough. Continued support is provided to external event organisers including, financial, safety and in-kind help, as well as general advice and guidance to deliver events on Council Land.</p> <p>An extensive programme of King Charles III Coronation events has been supported, including costs for road closures, event infrastructure and Coronation packs. Events include over 70 street parties and various community led events across the six towns and a large-scale Coronation Big Lunch event in Stockton High Street. A complementary Coronation Digital Programme was also delivered supporting our inclusivity priorities and a wide range of events and activities across our Libraries and Preston Park Museum.</p>
<p>32. Support the Combined Authority and Bus Operators in delivering the agreed outcomes set out in the Tees Valley Enhanced Bus Partnership Plan and Scheme</p>	<p>Stockton working on bus corridor improvement schemes across the Borough funded by the City Regions Sustainable Transport Settlement to provide better bus priority measures. SBC staff involved in working groups looking at ticketing, fares, marketing and network improvements to encourage people back to bus following covid pandemic. Tees Flex extended for a further 18 months. £2 Fixed Single Fare Cap in place and extended until end of June along with Bus Recovery funding.</p>

OUR COUNCIL

We are committed to being a Council that is ambitious, effective and proud to serve, this means we will provide:

Financial sustainability and value for money

Dedicated and resourceful employees

Strong leadership and governance

Priority	Update
33. Review the Medium Term Financial Plan, to reflect changes in Government funding arrangements and legislative changes	The Special Council meeting on 22 February 2023 agreed the budget for 2023/24 and the Medium Term Financial Plan. There are a number of financial risks around income, pay awards, and inflation which continue to put significant pressure on the MTFP. The budget for 2023/24 includes £5m of savings, with further savings required across the MTFP. A programme of transformation is required to look at financial sustainability and delivering outcomes. There will be an update on the MTFP to Cabinet in July.
34. Develop proposals for the redevelopment of Dunedin House to support flexible working arrangements and the re-location of staff from current buildings	Esh Construction are now appointed to undertake design and costing work on Dunedin House.
35. Review the Council's land and assets and develop plans for disposal or for any potential development	This is an ongoing piece of work and linked to the revision of Playing Pitch Strategy and Accommodation Review. Updates will be provided to Cabinet as detailed proposals are developed.
36. Add new features and functions to the Council website and improve online services for customers	The new Council website went live on 28 th February with 152 live self-serve transactions. Since go live we have added an additional self-serve transactions and now have a total of 210 live solutions. Up to 31 March 2023, 20,439 customers had signed up for new My Council accounts. We are continuing with the development of more self-serve solutions and the redesign of the Stockton Information Directory and other Council websites.
37. Launch a new Council Volunteering Strategy to support our employees to volunteer in the community and to provide additional volunteering opportunities at the Council	A new Council volunteering strategy is under development. Next steps are include providing and communicating further opportunities for our employees. Our leave policy already provides for some unpaid leave for employees to undertake volunteering in the Borough.
38. Implement the new flexible working arrangements to capitalise and build on the technological advancements and new	Project Team/Groups established. Employee engagement taken place. Action Plan and timetable agreed.

<p>working practices developed during the pandemic</p>	
<p>39. Continue to develop the Bright Minds Big Futures initiative to ensure that the voice of young people is heard and valued in the development and delivery of Council policies and services</p>	<p>The BMBF youth lead movement identified 9 Big Objectives which they sought to deliver during 2022/23</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • community safety • communications and engagement • young people's services • health and wellbeing • business, regeneration, and transport • environment and green spaces • arts, leisure, and culture • special educational needs (SEN) and • equality and diversity <p>BMBF has been recognised for their outstanding work and was awarded The Queen's Award for Voluntary Service</p>
<p>40. Respond to and implement the Local Government and Parliamentary boundary reviews</p>	<p>New Boundaries came into effect for the May 2023 elections. The proposed Parliamentary Constituencies final report is expected July 2023.</p>
<p>41. Develop and implement the Fairer Stockton-on-Tees Framework</p>	<p>Work during 2022/23 focused on supported the Borough's residents in the current Cost of Living Crisis (for example Cost of Living Information HUB / and a borough wide roll out of Warm Spaces in partnership with the VCSE sector).</p>