

Cabinet

A meeting of Cabinet was held on Thursday 18th June 2026.

Present: Cllr Lisa Evans (Leader of the Council), Cllr Pauline Beall (Cabinet Member), Cllr Clare Besford (Cabinet Member), Cllr Nigel Cooke (Cabinet Member), Cllr Richard Eglington (Cabinet Member), Cllr Paul Rowling (Cabinet Member) and Cllr Norma Stephenson OBE (Cabinet Member).

Officers: Mike Greene, Peter Bell, Julie Butcher, Tracey Carter, Kirsty Grundy, Clare Harper, Majella McCarthy, Rob Papworth and Jane Smith.

Also in attendance: Cllr Carol Clark.

Apologies: None.

CAB/145/25 Live Streaming

The Chair announced to those present that the meeting would be live streamed.

CAB/146/25 Evacuation Procedure

The evacuation procedure was noted.

CAB/147/25 Declarations of Interest

There were no interests declared.

CAB/148/25 Minutes

Consideration was given to the minutes of the meeting held on 14 May 2026.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 14 May 2026 be approved.

CAB/149/25 Scrutiny Review of Children Not in School

Consideration was given to a report that outlined the findings and recommendations of the Children and Young People Select Committee's scrutiny review of Children Not in School (CNIS).

Children not in school covered a range of scenarios where a child was not accessing a full-time education. The range of reasons a child may not be accessing a full-time education at a school was vast and covered:

- All reasons for absence from school including authorised absence, unauthorised absence
- Pupils on reduced/part-time timetables
- Pupils who are accessing Alternative Provision (AP) not in a registered school (whether arranged by the school or the local authority)
- Pupils receiving Home and Hospital Provision (H&H)

- Pupils who are CME (Children Missing Education)
- Children who are EHE (Electively Home Educated)
- Children who have no school base and are EOTAS (Educated Other Than at School)
- Children who move into the borough and are waiting for a school place

RESOLVED:-

Home and Hospital (H&H)

1. That staffing capacity is reviewed to ensure provision remains, safe, responsive and broad enough in curriculum and that the staffing model adopted provides flexible and responsive provision in the most cost-effective way.
2. That opportunities are explored and expanded for peer social interaction.
3. That opportunities for partnership working to enhance both curriculum and enrichment are explored.
4. The re-integration pathways are explored.

Electively Home Educated (EHE)

5. That a more relational approach be strengthened with EHE families with identification of dedicated staffing resource to promote this.
6. That clearer information is provided to parents about:
 - Examination entry processes
 - Associated costs
 - Available support services
7. That work continues to prepare for legislative changes on compulsory registers and strengthened Local Authority powers.
8. That the range of support shared via EHE networks is broadened.
9. That opportunities for partnership working to strengthen intervention and support are explored.
10. That the capacity for schools to provide early intervention and support in response to emotional and mental health needs is reviewed.
11. That best practice identified at the Attendance Networks on re-integrating vulnerable learners into school is widely and regularly shared.
12. That the support available to children and their families experiencing Emotional Based School Avoidance (EBSA) is widely and regularly shared.
13. That the Team Around the School be fully apprised of the needs of previously Electively Home Educated pupils who are returning to mainstream education to support and nurture them back into school.

Children Missing from Education (CME)

14. That off roll audits are maintained and expanded to prevent inappropriate removal from school rolls.
15. That opportunities to work in partnership with the Voluntary and Community Sector are fully utilised to gather intelligence.
16. That consideration is given to how the social care reforms can be used to reduce the number of children missing from education.

Educated Other than at School (EOTAS)

17. That multi-agency working arrangements for children receiving EOTAS be strengthened, to ensure earlier, coordinated planning for children with complex needs, with education, health and social care partners jointly developing, owning and reviewing EOTAS packages to improve timeliness, quality and outcomes.

Alternative Provision (AP)

18. That the new QA framework is implemented fully with follow up action plans for providers needing improvement.

19. That AP networks continue to be expanded to promote consistent practice.
20. That action is taken to ensure that all AP placements have a clear education plan, regularly reviewed, with reintegration as a priority where appropriate.

Admissions

21. That processes and capacity for pupils with EHCPs who move into the Borough are reviewed to minimise time out of education.

Safeguarding

22. That caseworker training in professional curiosity is enhanced to seek to ensure that risks are spotted during educational monitoring visits.
23. That multi-agency information sharing for EHE and CME cohorts is strengthened, to compensate for restrictions on direct safeguarding checks.
24. That CME processes continue to involve agencies such as Border Force, Police, Health and Housing to track and protect high risk pupils.

CAB/150/25 Procurement of Temporary and Supported Accommodation Contracts

Consideration was given to a report on the Procurement of temporary and supported accommodation contracts.

The report sought approval to commence a procurement exercise to ensure that the Council had access to appropriate temporary emergency and supported accommodation for adults (singles, couples and families), children in Council care (over 16 years of age), care leavers and 16 and 17 year olds who were homeless or at risk of homelessness.

As members were aware, significant cross cutting work was ongoing at the present time to improve access to affordable housing, particularly to increase the availability of 1-bed properties. In addition (and as detailed within the body of the report) work was ongoing to proactively prevent children entering care and to support the reunification of children with their birth families.

These key strands of work would have a positive impact on the demand for temporary and supported accommodation including reducing overall expenditure; however, they would take some time to deliver measurable outcomes. In the interim, it was essential that appropriate temporary and supported accommodation provision was maintained to meet the needs of adults (including singles, couples and families), children in Council care aged 16 and over, care leavers and 16–17-year-olds experiencing homelessness. It was therefore proposed to proceed with the procurement approach outlined paragraphs 12 to 15 and 31 to 35 of the report.

RESOLVED that:-

1. The proposal be approved (as detailed in paragraph 12 to 15 of the report) to move forward with the procurement of new contracts for both Temporary and Supported Accommodation for adults (including singles, couples and families).
2. The proposal be approved (as detailed in paragraph 31 to 35 of the report) to move forward with the procurement of new contracts for Supported Accommodation for 16-year-old and over Children in Our Care, Care Leavers and 16 and 17 year-olds who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.

3. Authority be given to the relevant Director or Assistant Director to make the specific contract award decision and any subsequent contract variation, annual inflationary uplifts (where allowed in the contract terms and conditions) and extension decision.

CAB/151/25 Minutes of Various Bodies

In accordance with the Council's Constitution or previous practice the minutes of the meeting of the bodies indicated below were submitted to members for consideration:-

TSAB – 11 March 2026
TVCA Cabinet – 24 April 2026
SSP – 18 March 2026

RESOLVED that the minutes be noted.

CAB/152/25 Powering our Future: Supporting People to Live Independently (Phase 2)

Consideration was given to a report on Powering our Future Supporting People to Live Independently - Phase 2.

In October 2024, the Council completed the Phase 1 of the Powering Our Future (POF) review with the decommissioning of contracted Discharge to Assess (D2A) service and the transfer of this capacity into the Council's reablement service. This was fully implemented in 2025/6 and (as illustrated in Figure 1 of the report), Phase 1 delivered significant growth in the numbers benefiting from reablement support.

Phase 2 was to consider what additional opportunities there were for further development. During 2025/26, the Council worked with Peopletoo (independent consultancy firm with expertise in Adult Social Care & Integrated Health) to look at opportunities for greater reach for the Reablement Service alongside supporting Adult Social Care and Health (ASCH) Scrutiny Committee (Appendix 1 of the report) who undertook a scrutiny review of reablement (published December 2025).

Consistent with the Council's design principles (reducing inequality and prioritise prevention, having efficient processes and use data and intelligence to inform the decision) the Council had reflected on the findings from Peopletoo and ASCH and, working with stakeholders (including the NHS) developed an outline plan for Phase 2 that would maximise the efficiency and effectiveness of the processes and pathways to support people being discharged from hospital and those living in the community.

A key element of Phase 2 was expanding the scope for the Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council (SBC) Reablement service alongside the commissioning of assessment beds. This was intended to strengthen alignment with One Call and commissioned services, reduce reliance on bed-based rehabilitation, and increase the ability to positively impact a greater number of people.

RESOLVED that the direction of travel be agreed for the proposed service improvements planned under Phase 2.