

COUNCIL – 22 JULY 2026 MOTIONS TO COUNCIL

MOTION 1

Motion submitted by Cllr Barbara Inman, to be seconded by Cllr Nathan Gale:-

“This Council notes:

- The increasing use of artificial intelligence to create realistic but false images of real individuals.
- Recent national concerns regarding the creation and circulation of AI generated imagery depicting women and girls in degrading, sexualised or otherwise inappropriate ways.
- That AI generated imagery can also be used to ridicule, humiliate or misrepresent individuals through the manipulation of their appearance, body shape, personal relationships or conduct.
- The growing concern that such behaviour may deter people from participating in public life, standing for election, or engaging in democratic debate.

This Council believes:

- Robust political debate is an essential part of democracy.
- Political disagreement should focus on policies, decisions and ideas rather than personal attacks on an individual's appearance or private life.
- Women and girls are disproportionately affected by online abuse, intimidation, misogyny and degrading portrayals.
- Those serving in public life should be able to do so without being subjected to manipulated imagery intended to humiliate, denigrate or undermine them.

This Council therefore:

- Condemns the use of AI generated imagery which seeks to degrade, intimidate, harass or misrepresent individuals.
- Reaffirms its commitment to respectful political discourse and democratic engagement.
- Encourages all elected representatives, political parties, campaigners and members of the public to engage in political debate responsibly and respectfully.
- Recognises the importance of creating an environment in which women, young people and people from all backgrounds feel able to participate in public life and consider standing for elected office.
- Resolves to support initiatives which promote civility, respect and participation in local democracy.”

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MOTION 2

Motion submitted by Cllr Marcus Vickers, to be seconded by Cllr Niall Innes:-

“The Council notes:

- The courageous and profound contribution made by members of the Armed Forces community to the safety and security of the United Kingdom.
- The physical and mental health benefits of regular exercise, which is vital for veterans transitioning to civilian life or managing service-related injuries and PTSD.
- That there are approximately 8,200 veterans living within the borough of Stockton-on-Tees (UK armed forces veterans, England and Wales - Office for National Statistics)

The Council further notes:

- That Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council is a signatory of the Armed Forces Covenant, a pledge that those who serve or have served, and their families, should be treated with fairness and respect.
- That several other local authorities, including Manchester, Bolton, and Wigan, have already successfully implemented free leisure access schemes for veterans.
- That while concessions currently exist for those on War Disablement Pensions, many veterans fall outside these specific criteria but still face financial barriers to accessing leisure facilities.

The Council believes:

- That cost should not be a barrier to physical activity for those who have courageously served their country.
- That providing free access to council-operated gyms, swimming pools, and fitness classes is a tangible way to demonstrate our commitment to the Armed Forces Covenant.
- That such an initiative has the potential to reduce the long-term burden on local social care and health services by improving the overall wellbeing of our veteran population.

The Council resolves to:

1. Request the Cabinet to undertake a feasibility study into providing free gym, swim, and fitness class memberships for all veterans residing in the borough in line with current provider Tees Active.
2. Request that the feasibility study consider:
 - a) eligibility criteria;
 - b) the financial implications, sustainability and funding options;
 - c) operational and administrative arrangements;
 - d) potential partnership arrangements with Tees Active and other providers;
 - e) equality and legal implications; and

f) any other matters Cabinet considers relevant.

3. Request Cabinet, as part of the feasibility study, to engage with Group Leaders; Shadow Portfolio Holders; Tees Active and any other relevant partners to explore how such a scheme could be integrated into existing leisure provision, having regard to affordability, contractual arrangements and the continued sustainability of existing services.
4. Cabinet to consider the outcome of the feasibility study and report back to Council on its findings and any recommendations within six months. Ensure that any such scheme is accessible via the HM Armed Forces Veteran Card or other recognised service ID.
5. Should Cabinet resolve to introduce a scheme, it be requested to work with Tees Active, local leisure providers, veterans' organisations and community groups to promote the scheme and maximise awareness and uptake.
6. Should Cabinet determine that a scheme is appropriate following the feasibility study, Cabinet be requested, where practicable, to seek implementation in time for Armed Forces Day on 26 June 2027."

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