

COUNCIL – 23 SEPTEMBER 2026 MOTIONS TO COUNCIL

MOTION 1

Motion submitted by Cllr Ted Strike, to be seconded by Cllr Tony Riordan:-

Cleveland Fire Brigade Funding and Thornaby Fire Station

“Council notes that:

Cleveland Fire Brigade is consulting on a proposal to change the staffing arrangements for one of the two fire appliances based at Thornaby Fire Station.

Under the proposal, one appliance would continue to be available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, while the second would operate for 12 hours a day during daytime hours. The consultation closes on 26 November 2026, after which recommendations will be considered by Cleveland Fire Authority.

Cleveland Fire Brigade is forecasting a funding gap of at least £1.198 million by 2028/29.

The Brigade serves an area with one of the most significant industrial risk profiles in the country, including major petrochemical and other nationally important infrastructure and a significant concentration of upper-tier COMAH sites.

Council believes that:

Cleveland Fire Brigade must receive sufficient and sustainable funding to maintain effective frontline services and respond safely to the particular risks within its area.

National funding arrangements should properly reflect industrial and community risk and not be based principally upon population.

The proposed reduction in the availability of the second appliance at Thornaby raises legitimate concerns about fire cover for Thornaby, Ingleby Barwick, Yarm and the wider Borough, as well as the safety of residents and firefighters.

Any final decision must be informed by the consultation responses and by clear evidence about its effect on risk, appliance availability, response standards and firefighter safety.

Council resolves that:

1. The Chief Executive responds to the Service Delivery Review consultation on behalf of the Council, expressing Council's serious concern about the proposed reduction in the availability of the second appliance at Thornaby and asking Cleveland Fire Authority to demonstrate, before making any final decision, how appropriate fire cover, response standards and the safety of residents and firefighters will be maintained.
2. The Chief Executive writes to the Prime Minister and Chancellor of the Exchequer, sending a copy to the Brigade's Chief Fire Officer, calling upon the Government to address Cleveland Fire Brigade's forecast funding gap of at least

£1.198 million by 2028/29 and to ensure that future funding arrangements properly reflect the significant industrial and community risks within the Brigade's area.

3. The Chief Executive writes to the Members of Parliament for Stockton West and Stockton North seeking their support for sufficient and sustainable funding for Cleveland Fire Brigade."

Received 6 September 2026 12:25

MOTION 2

Motion submitted by Cllr Tony Riordan, to be seconded by Cllr Niall Innes:-

Protecting Stockton Residents from Further Tax Rises

“Council notes that:

People across the borough of Stockton-on-Tees continue to face significant pressure on their household finances.

Inflation (Consumer Prices Index) rose by 2.9 per cent in the twelve months to July 2026, with housing and household services making one of the largest contributions to rising costs.

Since April 2025, the rate of employer National Insurance contributions has increased from 13.8 per cent to 15 per cent, while the threshold at which employers begin paying these contributions has fallen from £9,100 to £5,000. These additional employment costs affect local businesses, charities and other employers and can ultimately place pressure on wages, prices and employment.

Residents in the borough have also faced a 4.95 per cent increase in Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council's element of Council Tax for 2026/27, in addition to other household bills and taxation.

Council believes that:

Hard-working people, pensioners, families and businesses across Stockton-on-Tees should not be asked to carry an even greater financial burden.

Sound public finances are essential, but further increases in taxation would risk reducing household disposable income, weakening business confidence and placing additional pressure on local jobs and the borough's economy.

National fiscal decisions should take proper account of their cumulative impact on communities such as Stockton-on-Tees, where many households and businesses are already managing significant increases in their costs.

Council resolves that:

The Chief Executive write on behalf of Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council to the Chancellor of the Exchequer:

Setting out the cumulative pressures currently facing residents and businesses across the borough.

Requesting that the forthcoming Budget does not introduce further increases in the overall tax burden on working people, pensioners or local businesses.

Asking the Chancellor to prioritise responsible control of public expenditure, economic growth and measures that allow people across Stockton-on-Tees to keep more of the money they earn.”

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MOTION 3

Motion submitted by Cllr Tony Riordan, to be seconded by Cllr Niall Innes:-

Opposing the Early Release of Serious Offenders

Council notes that:

From 1 October 2026, the Labour Government's new sentencing arrangements will allow many eligible offenders serving standard determinate sentences to be released after serving as little as one third of their custodial sentence.

Although some offences are excluded from these arrangements, the fundamental principle remains that offenders could spend substantially less time in prison than victims, their families and the public were led to expect when the sentence was imposed.

His Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation rated the North East Probation Service as "Requires improvement" overall and its public protection work as "Inadequate". The Stockton and Hartlepool Probation Delivery Unit was rated "Inadequate" for both the assessment and implementation of public protection work.

The inspection found that the North East region was already managing 8,616 people in the community, of this 3,058 people released from prison on licence, while implementing several national policies intended to reduce pressure on prison capacity.

Council believes that:

The first duty of government is to protect the public.

The exclusions set out on 30 August 2026 for life sentences, extended determinate sentences, rape offences, specified serious child sexual and grooming offences, and offences relating to unlawful killing must be maintained and applied fully in every relevant case. No offender convicted of attempted murder, terrorism, serious violence, child abuse, child sexual exploitation or serious domestic abuse should qualify for earlier release under the Progression Model.

A prison sentence should mean what victims, the public and the courts reasonably understand it to mean. Reducing the time an offender spends in custody after a sentence has been imposed undermines confidence in the criminal justice system.

The capacity pressures within the prison estate must not be addressed by transferring greater risk and responsibility onto communities, police forces, probation services and local authorities.

The findings concerning public protection work in the North East demonstrate the serious risks of placing even more offenders under supervision in communities before the probation system is demonstrably able to manage them safely.

The present Government's decision to release many offenders after as little as one third of their custodial sentence is the wrong approach. It prioritises the management of prison capacity over punishment, public protection and the rights of victims.

For victims and their families, seeing an offender released substantially earlier than expected risks creating the unacceptable impression that crime pays. It is an insult to those who have suffered and risks diminishing the seriousness of the crimes committed against them.

“Council condemns the Government’s approach and believes that dangerous and serious offenders should remain behind bars, prisons should have the capacity required to accommodate them and sentences imposed by the courts should be properly served.

Council resolves that:

The Chief Executive write on behalf of Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council to the Prime Minister and the Lord Chancellor:

Expressing this Council’s opposition to the release of offenders after serving as little as one third of their custodial sentence.

Condemning the use of earlier release as a means of managing pressure on the prison estate.

Seeking a firm assurance that the exclusions set out on 30 August 2026 for life sentences, extended determinate sentences, rape offences, specified serious child sexual and grooming offences, and offences relating to unlawful killing will be maintained and applied fully in every relevant case, while calling for them to be extended to cover any offences involving attempted murder, terrorism, serious violence, child abuse, child sexual exploitation or serious domestic abuse that might otherwise qualify under the Progression Model.

Requesting that no offender assessed as presenting a significant risk to the public is released early solely because of pressure on prison capacity.

Calling upon the Government to provide sufficient prison places so that serious criminals can serve the custodial sentences imposed upon them.

Requesting sufficient resources for the Probation Service, Cleveland Police and other agencies responsible for protecting people across the borough of Stockton-on-Tees.

Asking that victims are informed promptly of any proposed change to an offender’s release date and are given a meaningful opportunity to raise concerns about their safety and the conditions attached to the offender’s licence.”

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