Health & Wellbeing Board

A meeting of Health & Wellbeing Board was held on Wednesday 25 March 2026.

Present: Cllr Lisa Evans (Chair), Karen Hawkins (Vice-Chair), Cllr Pauline Beall, Cllr Clare Besford, Cllr Lynn Hall, Cllr Jack Miller, Sarah Bowman-Abouna, Carolyn Nice, Fiona Adamson, Lucy Owens and other Board members.

Officers: Michael Henderson, John Devine, Sid Wong,

Also in attendance:

Apologies:

1 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

2 Minutes of the Meetings held on 28 January 2026

RESOLVED that the minutes be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

3 Urgent Item – Meningitis Preparedness

The Chair explained that she had agreed to an update on Meningitis Preparedness being presented to provide reassurances to the Board. This was in the light of recent outbreaks of the disease in Canterbury and Reading

The Board was advised that Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council works closely with the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) on all communicable disease matters, including meningitis. Robust outbreak control arrangements were in place, including established regional and local protocols covering case identification, testing, contact tracing, communications and, where necessary, the provision of prophylactic treatment.

Members heard that individual cases of meningitis were managed routinely and that no outbreaks were currently reported within Stockton-on-Tees or the wider Northeast region. Vaccination uptake remained an important preventative measure and opportunities to promote awareness and vaccination would continue.

The update was noted

RESOLVED that the update be noted.

4 Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment (PNA) Update

The Board considered a report outlining changes to pharmaceutical provision since publication of the Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment in October 2025.

Members were advised of:

• The consolidation of two pharmacy premises on Yarm Lane onto a single site at Varo Terrace.

• The temporary relocation of Whitworth Chemists within Leven Park, Yarm.

• The opening of Elm Tree Pharmacy in December 2025, improving local access to pharmaceutical services.

• Ongoing uncertainty regarding the reopening of the former Boots pharmacy premises in Billingham pending a change of ownership.

It was noted that the identified changes did not create any significant gaps in pharmaceutical provision and that two supplementary statements had been prepared in accordance with statutory requirements.

RESOLVED that:

1. The two supplementary statements to the Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment 2025 be approved for publication.

2. The updated pharmaceutical services map be noted.

5 Neighbourhood Health Plan

The Board received a presentation on development of the Neighbourhood Health Plan and the implications of recently published national neighbourhood health guidance.

Members were reminded that Stockton-on-Tees had been selected as one of 43 national pilot areas under the Neighbourhood Health Improvement Programme. Work undertaken to date had focused on strengthening integrated working, improving community engagement and developing neighbourhood-based approaches to prevention and early intervention.

The presentation highlighted:

• Publication of new national neighbourhood health guidance and the emerging expectation that Health and Wellbeing Boards would provide strategic oversight of neighbourhood health plans.

• The continued role of the Better Care Fund as the primary planning mechanism for 2026/27.

• The importance of population health management, prevention, reducing inequalities and shifting care closer to home.

• Development of integrated neighbourhood teams and stronger partnership working across health, social care, voluntary and community sectors.

• The need for neighbourhood plans to be outcome-focused, evidence-based and jointly owned by partners.

• Ongoing work to develop monitoring and evaluation arrangements, including discussions with academic partners regarding evaluation methodology.

Discussion included:

• Strong support for the neighbourhood health approach and its alignment with the Health and Wellbeing Strategy.

• Recognition that Stockton-on-Tees was starting from a position of strong partnership relationships and existing examples of good neighbourhood working.

• Positive early feedback from residents involved in the pilot programme, particularly regarding proactive and person-centred support.

• Examples of improved partnership working at operational level, with organisations working collaboratively to address residents' needs without creating unnecessary barriers or duplication.

• The importance of maintaining continuity of leadership and partner engagement throughout forthcoming organisational changes across the health system.

• The need to ensure consistent attendance and representation from all key partners, including University Hospitals Tees.

• Acknowledgement that future progress would rely on making better use of existing assets, staff, services and community resources, rather than depending solely upon additional funding.

• Recognition that neighbourhood models may need to vary across different communities in response to differing local needs.

Members welcomed the progress made to date and the positive culture of collaboration developing across organisations.

RESOLVED that:

1. The update be noted.

2. Further work be undertaken to consider future governance arrangements and the role of the Health and Wellbeing Board in overseeing neighbourhood health planning.

3. Progress on scaling and developing neighbourhood approaches be reported to a future meeting of the Board.

8

Health and Wellbeing Board – Forward Plan Stockton-on-Tees Integrated Front Door and Families First Partnership – Children's Social Care Reforms

The Board received a report on developments relating to the Integrated Front Door and Families First Partnership arrangements in response to national children's social care reforms.

Members noted the progress being made and the opportunities presented through closer partnership working and earlier intervention for children and families.

RESOLVED that the update be noted.