AGENDA ITEM

REPORT TO HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD

November 2026

REPORT FROM

Neighbourhood Health Steering Group

SUMMARY
At its March meeting, the Board received an update on the National Neighbourhood Health Framework, its implications for Stockton-on-Tees and learning from the neighbourhood health pilot.

A further update was provided in July, confirming the requirement for each local system to develop a Neighbourhood Health Plan under the leadership of the Health and Wellbeing Board. The Board agreed that the first stage should be a high-level strategic plan, setting out the shared vision, principles, priorities and overall approach, rather than a detailed programme of activity.

Since July, the Neighbourhood Health Steering Group has worked with partners to develop the draft Stockton-on-Tees Neighbourhood Health Plan. The strategic narrative is now ready for the Board to review and consider for approval.

Recommendations
The Health and Wellbeing Board is asked to:

1. Review and approve the draft strategic narrative of the Stockton-on-Tees Neighbourhood Health Plan.
2. Discuss and agree whether a public-facing executive summary would be helpful, and for this to be co-produced with the Making It Real Board, following a similar approach to the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy.
3. Consider the proposed next steps for finalising and communicating the plan and developing the detailed delivery plan.

DETAIL
The development of neighbourhood health plans forms part of the wider national shift towards a more community-based, preventative and integrated model of health and care. The NHS 10 Year Health Plan (2025) sets out the ambition to move from hospital to community, analogue to digital, and sickness to prevention. The National Neighbourhood Health Framework (2026) provides further direction on how this should be delivered locally, through neighbourhood-based working, earlier intervention and more integrated services.

The Framework requires every local system to develop a locally owned Neighbourhood Health Plan. These plans are to be developed jointly by local authorities and Integrated Care Boards (ICBs), under the collective leadership of Health and Wellbeing Boards. Local areas are expected to have their full plans in place during 2027/28, following preparatory work and foundational activity during 2026/27.

While the Stockton-on-Tees plan responds to this national direction, its ambition is broader than an NHS-led transformation programme. It provides a shared framework for bringing

together the wider local system, including the Council, NHS, voluntary, community and social enterprise (VCSE) organisations and communities around population needs, shared outcomes and more integrated ways of working.

The plan builds on the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2025–2030, translating its borough-wide ambitions into a neighbourhood-based approach. It recognises that health outcomes are shaped by wider factors, including poverty, housing, employment, education, social connection and the local environment, and that these cannot be addressed by health services alone.

The Health and Wellbeing Board agreed that the first stage should be a high-level strategic plan, setting out the shared vision, principles, priorities and overall approach, rather than a detailed programme of activity. This will provide a framework for partners to work within, with a more detailed delivery plan to be developed subsequently, setting out how the approach will be taken forward locally.

The proposed approach is structured around three national reform agendas:

- Better routine health and care: improving access, navigation, coordination and continuity, so residents can access the right support at the right time.
- More proactive care: identifying people at greater risk earlier and providing coordinated support to prevent needs escalating.
- Better alternatives to hospital care: strengthening community-based services, rehabilitation, reablement and support closer to home.

Two initial priority cohorts have been identified for Year 1: people at risk of, or living with, cardiovascular, kidney and metabolic disease; and the top 1% of adults with complex and interdependent needs.

The plan also establishes new operational neighbourhood footprints for Stockton-on-Tees. These provide a shared geographical framework for partners to understand local population needs, organise services and coordinate activity. The footprints reflect recognised towns and communities across the borough, while allowing flexibility where services or communities operate across different boundaries. They are intended to support practical partnership working, rather than define how residents identify with or access their communities.

The plan will need to align with and complement other local strategies and programmes, including the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy, children's services reform and the Pride in Place programme in Stockton. This will help connect shared priorities, community insight and investment opportunities, rather than allow work to develop in isolation.

Next steps

- Following the Board's consideration and approval of the strategic narrative, work with start with communications colleagues to develop the final designed version of the plan, consider options for an online format and prepare a public-facing executive summary. The completed version will be brought back to the Board.

- Through the Neighbourhood Health Steering Group, partners will develop a more detailed delivery plan, setting out actions, responsibilities, timescales, outcomes and measures of progress.

- The delivery plan will be brought back to the Health and Wellbeing Board for consideration in February 2027. The Board will continue to provide strategic oversight of implementation.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS
There are no specific legal implications arising from the plan at this stage.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS
The plan does not set out any new or separate financial commitments. It identifies the importance of aligning existing resources around shared priorities and building on current pooled budget arrangements, including the Better Care Fund.

Any proposals arising from the development of the delivery plan that have financial implications will need to be assessed through the appropriate organisational and partnership governance processes.

COMMUNITY IMPACT IMPLICATIONS
Communities are central to the Neighbourhood Health Plan. It brings together health services, social care, local government, VCSE organisations and local communities around a shared ambition: to support people to remain healthy, connected and independent for longer.

The approach emphasises prevention, earlier intervention, coordinated support and services closer to home, while recognising the importance of community assets, local knowledge and the wider factors that influence health and wellbeing across the borough.

Council Plan, policy principles and priorities
The national Neighbourhood Health Framework and the proposed vision, principles and approach set out in the Stockton-on-Tees plan align with the Council Plan, its principles and priorities. In particular, the focus on prevention, reducing inequalities, partnership working and improving outcomes for residents and communities supports the Council's wider ambitions.

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