

EXECUTIVE

Date: Wednesday 11th March, 2026
Time: 5.00 pm
Venue: Mandela Room

AGENDA

1. Welcome and Fire Evacuation Procedure

In the event the fire alarm sounds attendees will be advised to evacuate the building via the nearest fire exit and assemble at the Bottle of Notes opposite MIMA.

2. Apologies for Absence

To receive apologies for absence.

3. Declarations of Interest

To receive any declaration of interests.

4. Minutes - Executive - 4 February 2026

5 - 16

To receive the minutes of the previous meeting of Executive.

5. Minutes - Executive Sub-Committee for Property - 4 February 2026

17 - 18

To receive the minutes of the previous meeting of the Executive Sub-Committee for Property.

6. Announcements from the Mayor

To receive any announcements from the Mayor.

7. Questions from Members of the Public (if any)

To receive questions from members of the public.

8. Questions from elected Members (if any)

To receive questions from elected Members.

9. Matters referred from Scrutiny or Council (if any)

To consider reports of Overview and Scrutiny Board following the Call-In process or Council following the Budget setting process.

10. Reports from the Overview and Scrutiny Board or a Scrutiny Panel (if any)

To receive any reports from the Overview and Scrutiny Board or Scrutiny Panels.

11. Reports from Member Bodies which are the responsibilities of the Executive

To receive any reports from Member Bodies which are the responsibility of the Executive.

THE MAYOR

12. Council Plan 2026-29 19 - 42

Report for decision.

13. Continuous Improvement Plan Progress Report 43 - 100

Report for decision.

14. Corporate Performance Quarter Three 2025/2026 101 - 136

Report for decision.

EXECUTIVE MEMBER - FINANCE

15. Tender Pipeline 2026/27 137 - 170

Report for decision.

16. Any other urgent items which in the opinion of the Chair, may be considered.

Charlotte Benjamin
Director of Legal and Corporate Services

Town Hall
Middlesbrough
Tuesday 3 March 2026

MEMBERSHIP

Mayor C Cooke (Chair) and Councillors I Blades, T Furness, P Gavigan, L Henman, J Rostron, J Ryles, P Storey and N Walker

Assistance in accessing information

Should you have any queries on accessing the Agenda and associated information please contact Scott Bonner, 01642 729708, scott_bonner@middlesbrough.gov.uk

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EXECUTIVE

A meeting of the Executive was held on Wednesday 4 February 2026.

PRESENT: Councillors C Cooke - Elected Mayor (Chair), I Blades, T Furness, P Gavigan, L Henman, J Rostron and N Walker

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: D Hodgson (Local Democracy Reporting Service)

OFFICERS: K Allan, S Bonner C Benjamin, B Carr, H Dalby, G Field, L Grabham, R Horniman and E Scollay

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Councillors J Ryles and P Storey

25/93 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest received at this point in the meeting.

25/94 **MINUTES - EXECUTIVE - 21 JANUARY 2026**

The minutes of the Executive meeting held on 21 January 2026 were submitted and approved as a correct record.

25/95 **ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE MAYOR**

None.

25/96 **QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC (IF ANY)**

None.

25/97 **QUESTIONS FROM ELECTED MEMBERS (IF ANY)**

None.

25/98 **MATTERS REFERRED FROM SCRUTINY OR COUNCIL (IF ANY)**

None.

25/99 **REPORTS FROM THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD OR A SCRUTINY PANEL (IF ANY)**

None.

25/100 **REPORTS FROM MEMBER BODIES WHICH ARE THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE EXECUTIVE**

None.

25/101 **NEIGHBOURHOOD HUBS INVESTMENT**

In accordance with Council Procedure Rules 4.8.25 the Chair proposed a motion without notice, which was seconded and agreed, to change the order of business. The motion proposed that Agenda Item 15 to be heard next.

It was agreed that the order of business for the remainder of the meeting be items 10,11,12,13,14,16.

The Executive Members for Development and Neighbourhoods submitted a joint report for

Executive consideration, seeking approval for significant investment in Middlesbrough's Neighbourhood Hubs.

The report outlined the planned enhancement of the North, South, East and West Neighbourhood Hubs, which form a key part of the Council's Neighbourhood Working approach approved in April 2025. The Hubs are located in Hemlington (South), Newport (North), Berwick Hills (East) and Grove Hill (West) wards, each serving as a central base for community delivery within their areas. It was highlighted that £5 million of Transformation Programme capital funding had been allocated to support the upgrade of the hubs and selected community spaces, with the intention of improving access to services, strengthening community resilience and enabling a broader range of local activities.

Members were advised that the investment would allow more staff and partner organisations to be based within neighbourhoods, offering tailored support specific to local needs. The proposed works included building adaptations to ensure the hubs are accessible, fit-for-purpose, and able to accommodate multiple uses. The report also set out the proposed phasing of works to maintain service continuity and the governance arrangements for managing project design, scope, and budget adjustments.

Members noted that the hubs would play a key role in delivering Neighbourhood Working, which had been approved by the Executive in April 2025. Members were advised that the reference to approval in 2026 within the Executive Summary was an administrative error.

Members raised concerns regarding the condition and accessibility of the existing neighbourhood facilities and discussed that neighbourhood staff had been required to work in poor conditions following their relocation from office accommodation, and that residents were unable to access buildings they believed should be open. Members also highlighted inconsistencies across the hubs, with some offering public access and others not, and commented on the terminology used for "community hubs" and "neighbourhoods' hubs". It was noted that further work would be undertaken to address the naming issue.

Following the recent management structure changes, it was identified that the titles of Directors referenced in the recommendations were incorrect, and it was suggested that the wording be amended to state that the Executive would delegate any construction contract, design, scope and budget adjustments to the Director responsible for Regeneration, in consultation with the Director responsible for Environment and Community Services, insofar as these were compliant with financial and contract procedure rules.

OPTIONS

A range of options and requirements had been considered with the occupant services and Neighbourhood Managers. The service had informed the scope and requirements of the specifications set out.

ORDERED that Executive:

- a. Approves the specification of works outlined for the enhancement of the North, South, East and West Neighbourhood Hubs;**
- b. Approves that any of the £5m resource allocation which is not used on the redevelopment of the Neighbourhood Hubs, be vired towards neighbourhood assets and open spaces; and,**
- c. Delegates any construction contract, design, scope and budget adjustments to the Director of Regeneration, in consultation with the Director of Environment and Community Services – insofar as they are compliant with financial and contract procedure rules.**

AGREED that Executive:

- a. Notes the phased development and delivery of works to ensure that continuity of Community services was prioritised;**
- b. Approved the amendment to the above recommendation to read: 'Delegates any construction contract, design, scope and budget adjustments to the Director responsible for Regeneration, in consultation with the Director responsible for Environment and Community Services, insofar as these are compliant with**

- financial and contract procedure rules'; and,
- c. **Notes that work would be undertaken to address the terminology used for community hubs and neighbourhood hubs.**

REASONS

Neighbourhood Working was identified as a key transformational strategy designed to increase efficiency and reduce demand pressures over the medium term. The approach was intended to deliver improved outcomes for Middlesbrough residents and, in time, become the primary operational model for addressing the entrenched challenges faced across the town's neighbourhoods.

Following consideration of this item, Councillor T Furness left the meeting.

25/102

REVENUE AND CAPITAL BUDGET – FORECAST YEAR-END OUTTURN POSITION AT QUARTER THREE 2025/26

The Executive Member for Finance submitted a report for Executive consideration presenting the Council's forecasted financial position at Quarter Three 2025/26 and seeking approval for several required financial actions.

Members were informed that the projected year-end revenue budget pressure stood at £7.719 million before mitigations, and that the proposed use of £6.044 million in central contingencies and other budgets would reduce this to a net pressure of £1.675 million (1.1%), representing a slight improvement from the Quarter Two position.

The report outlined continued budget pressures within key service areas, most significantly in Children's Care, Adult Social Care, Environment and Community Services, and Strategic Commercial Properties, and noted that £7.675 million of required savings were forecast as undeliverable in 2025/26. Directors had therefore submitted financial recovery plans, supported by ongoing corporate spending controls, in an effort to stabilise the year-end position.

In relation to capital activity, Members were advised that the report sought approval for a series of revenue and capital virements over £250,000 and the inclusion of £0.357 million of new and expanded externally funded schemes, increasing the revised Capital Programme for 2025/26 to £88.451 million. The projected capital outturn was reported as £64.173 million, reflecting £23.300 million of slippage to future years and £0.978 million of identified underspends.

The report also provided updates on the latest forecast for reserves, including expected usable unrestricted revenue reserves of £25.937 million at year-end, the Dedicated Schools Grant position, which showed a forecast cumulative deficit of £31.213 million by 31 March 2026, and the Council's borrowing, prudential indicators, and debt-recovery performance.

Members were further informed of actions already implemented and those planned to address identified pressures, including strengthened financial controls, ongoing review of savings delivery, and continued monitoring of expenditure, reserves and cashflow.

Members noted that the graph on page 21 demonstrated that, despite the forecast overspend, the Council's reserves were still expected to increase by year end compared with the position at the start of the financial year.

Members acknowledged areas of improvement and noted that, when viewed in the context of the wider Budget, several actions being taken to manage service demand were expected to contribute to reducing overspends over time.

Reference was made to the recent decision on school catering, which would result in additional costs, and Members emphasised the importance of ensuring such impacts were reflected and built into future budgets.

It was considered helpful to set out clearly why service demand levels were being reset and how this supported efforts to address budgetary pressures.

In relation to crematorium income, Members noted that if income targets could not realistically be achieved, it was appropriate to adjust the budget accordingly. Members also stressed that underspends within service areas should not be absorbed into future budgets, as services

were expected to manage within their allocated resources rather than rely on historic overspends.

OPTIONS

The alternative would be to not approve the revenue budget virements over £250,000 and the changes to the Council's capital programme, and to not report on the Council's forecast year-end financial outturn for the financial year 2025/26. This would not enable the Executive to discharge their responsibilities to manage and control the revenue budget, capital programme and overall balance sheet position of the Council.

ORDERED that Executive:

- a. Approves budget virements over £250,000 within the revenue budget (Appendix 1);
- b. Approves budget virements over £250,000 within the Capital Programme (paragraph 4.47); and,
- c. Approves the inclusion of new schemes and additions to existing schemes to the Capital Programme totalling £0.357m for 2025/26, which are all externally funded to either new or existing schemes (detailed in Appendix 5). Subject to approval this will increase the approved 2025/26 Capital Programme budget to £88.451m.

AGREED that Executive:

- a. Notes the Council's financial performance and forecast year-end financial outturns for revenue and capital budgets for the financial year 2025/26 as at Quarter Three, highlighting the budget pressures and the forecast year-end position if no further action is taken. At present, the revenue budget is forecast to be under pressure by £1.675m (1.1%) at year end after the proposed use of central contingences and other budgets; and,
- b. Notes that Directors continue to implement recovery plans, mitigations and financial controls aimed at reducing their forecast budget pressures and acknowledges the ongoing requirement for Directors to continue refining and implementing these plans to achieve a balanced budget by the end of 2025/26. In support of this corporate revenue budget spending controls will continue to be applied during 2025/26.

REASONS

The recommendations would enable effective management of finances, in line with the Council's Local Code of Corporate Governance, the Scheme of Delegation and financial regulations.

25/103

2026/27 REVENUE BUDGET, MEDIUM TERM FINANCE PLAN, AND COUNCIL TAX SETTING

The Executive Member for Finance submitted a report for Executive consideration which set out the proposed 2026/27 Revenue Budget, Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP), and Council Tax proposals following the publication of the Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement.

The report outlined key financial assumptions, Government funding allocations, service demand pressures, proposed budget growth, and the recommended Council Tax position for 2026/27, and requested that the Executive approved a series of recommendations for referral to Full Council at its meeting on 18 February 2026.

Members noted that Government funding through the Fair Funding Allocation totalled £130.960m, an increase of £14.171m, and that the Council's Core Spending Power was forecast to increase by £57.369m (28.3%) between 2025/26 and 2028/29. A balanced MTFP had been achieved for all four years, with a proposed Net Revenue Budget of £200.675m for 2026/27. The Mayor and Executive proposed no increase in core Council Tax but a 2% Adult Social Care precept, resulting in a Band D charge of £2,115.86.

Members acknowledged the significant service demand pressures and re-basing requirements amounting to £15.549m in 2026/27, alongside the proposal to remove £2.458m of previously approved savings that were no longer achievable. It also noted the proposals for £6.460m of service budget growth, aligned with Council Plan priorities, and £0.499m of corporate demand pressures, as well as the continuation of the Member-Led Ward Schemes budget. Details of the proposed Capital Programme were provided, totalling £183.741m over 2026/27–2029/30, together with the 2026/27 Flexible Use of Capital Receipts Strategy amounting to £5.789m.

The recommendations on reserves were noted, including maintaining the General Fund at a minimum of £11.1m and building the Financial Resilience Reserve to £10m in 2026/27, rising to £20m by 2029/30. It also considered the outcomes of the public consultation, which saw 54% support for the 2% Council Tax proposal, and received an update on the Dedicated Schools Grant, with an indicative allocation of £222.114m and a forecast cumulative deficit of £31.213m at 31 March 2026.

Members proposed a series of amendments to the report which following a vote, were agreed. The budgets for the Members' Small Scheme programme for 2025/26 and 2026/27 were reprofiled to reflect the earlier decision to allocate £150,000 for 2025/26 and £120,000 for 2026/27. It was further agreed to roll forward the £6,400 underspend from 2025/26 to 2026/27 and to bring forward £7,500 from 2027/28, resulting in a total allocation of £133,900 for 2026/27 to cover all eligible schemes proposed for that year.

In relation to Pest Control, the committee agreed that the wording be amended in Appendix 3 to clarify that increased capacity would enable the Council to extend the service beyond back alleys and open spaces to *domestic properties*, ensuring it was clear that the expanded offer focused on key public health pests. This amendment was made to avoid the wording being interpreted as applying to offices or shops, and it was noted that a separate report would follow setting out detailed operational arrangements.

Members were advised that the proposed budget had been shaped through close working with colleagues across the Council and had been underpinned by what was described as “a simple ABC” of core principles: A – ensuring the budget was affordable, B – delivering clear benefits for residents, and C – cementing the Council's financial position.

It was highlighted that significant financial risks remained, particularly within Children's Services. In relation to Council Tax, members noted that a 0% increase would have contradicted the strong advice issued in the briefing the previous week, and that an increase below 2% was considered insufficient to meet rising Children's Services costs. Members acknowledged that a very low or no increase would not have reflected the Council's current financial circumstances, could have sent the wrong message to central government, and might have been detrimental in future years, particularly given the three-year phased settlement which only provided part of the funding uplift in year one.

In discussing service priorities, members recognised that although the Council could have chosen not to grow services, residents did not yet feel that service levels were where they should be. Continued investment, mature decision-making and a focus on key services, including youth provision and pest control, were therefore considered essential. It was noted that pest control remained a town-wide service and that frontline services more generally required strengthening. Members also heard that even at the end of the three-year financial process, the Council would remain £50m short of previous funding levels, making it important to continue rebuilding services that had historically been underfunded and acknowledging that the phased settlement did not allow a return to earlier budget levels.

Members expressed a range of views regarding the broader impact of the budget. Members noted the benefits for neighbourhoods, elderly residents and children, and welcomed investment in CCTV, evidence-gathering capability, the professional witness service, parenting support and over £500k per year for neighbourhood improvements. Members also highlighted town-wide benefits, including the doubling of the caretaking team, investment in the becks team to improve their condition and reduce flood risk, and enhanced provision of park rangers. Members noted that the budget was refreshing and reflective of a more positive position, referencing the increasing complexity of Adult Social Care needs, improvements to frontline services, strengthened homelessness and domestic abuse support, a shift towards

prevention, and alignment with the Adult Social Care Strategy. Members endorsed the approach in Children's Services, recognising the importance of reducing reliance on external residential placements, the role of scrutiny in examining costs, and the value of programmes such as 10 x 10 in providing life-changing opportunities for young people. Members also emphasised the need for flexibility for children in care and the critical contribution made by foster carers.

OPTIONS

1. **The Council is required by law to set a balanced budget and to operate robust and meaningful financial planning arrangements and this report is a key part of achieving that objective. Therefore, no other options were feasible.**

ORDERED the Executive to approve that the following are forwarded to Council for approval:

- a. **Proposed service budget growth of £6.460m from 2026/27 in order to reinvest in some direct services to the community and provide reinvestment in the resilience of enabling services (detailed in Appendix 3)**
- b. **Budget provision of £15.549m for 2026/27 rising to £35.963m in 2029/30 to address forecast service demand pressures and re-basing of budgets (including for reduced income levels and legislative requirements). This includes the decision by Executive not to increase school meals prices for parents who do not receive free school meals in order to support families, for which budget provision of £0.230m for 2026/27 rising to £0.371m in 2029/30 has been provided (paragraphs 4.59 to 4.61 and Appendix 1)**
- c. **Budget provision of £0.499m p.a. from 2026/27 for Corporate Demand, and the continuation of the Member Led Ward Schemes budget of £0.235m p.a. from 2026/27 (Table 7 in paragraph 4.62)**
- d. **Budget provision of £2.458m p.a. from 2026/27 to remove savings from the MTFP which are now found to be unachievable in the manner originally intended (paragraph 4.65)**
- e. **No increase in core (general) Council Tax for 2026/27, but an increase in Council Tax for 2026/27 of 2% relating to the Adult Social Care precept to fund increased costs of statutory duties in Adult Social Care (paragraph 4.30), resulting in a proposed Council Tax level (Band D) of £2,115.86 excluding parish, Fire, and Police precepts (detailed in Appendix 11)**
- f. **The proposed General Fund revenue budget for 2026/27 with a net budget requirement of £200.675m (Appendix 5)**
- g. **The Financial Reserves Policy for 2026/27 (Appendix 7) including the proposed contributions to reserves to strengthen the Council's financial resilience and the setting up of a new Budget Smoothing Reserve from 2026/27**
- h. **The proposed Fees & Charges Policy for 2026/27, and the schedule of fees and charges arising from the application of the approved policy for 2026/27 (Appendix 8)**
- i. **The Capital Strategy Report 2026/27 and the proposed 2026/27 to 2029/30 Capital Programme totalling £183.741m which includes the addition of new Council funded schemes and additions to current schemes and extension of schemes deemed Business as Usual totalling £11.735m in 2026/27 and rising to £56.633m by 2029/30, and the associated financing statement (Appendix 9)**
- j. **The Flexible Use of Capital Receipts (FUoCR) Strategy for 2026/27 including transformation and redundancy expenditure as part of the Transformation Programme amounting to £5.789m which can be capitalised in 2026/27 (Appendix 10)**
- k. **The Pay Policy Statement for 2026/27 which sets out the Council's policies on**

remuneration of its staff in accordance with Section 38 of the Localism Act 2011
(Appendix 13)

AGREED the Executive:

- a. Notes the statutory s25 report of the Council's Section 151 Officer in respect of the robustness of the estimates within the budget and the adequacy of reserves (Appendix 6)
- b. Notes that the Council's S151 officer recommends that the Council increases the Council Tax each year by the maximum allowed by the Government due to the reasons outlined in paragraph 4.31. However, whilst not recommended, given the improved financial position and financial resilience of the Council and the improved governance and budget spending controls that exist, and the increased Government funding available to the Council it is possible to financially accommodate a decision by the Mayor and Executive for a lower than maximum increase in core (general) Council Tax to be proposed to Council for 2026/27 (paragraph 4.32). Also, it is recommended that no decisions are made in relation to 2027/28 and 2028/29 Council Tax increases, and these should be made at a later date when there is more certainty on the financial position (paragraph 4.33)
- c. Notes the updated financial planning assumptions in the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan following the publication of the Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement, and that these will be updated further following publication of the Final Local Government Finance Settlement in early February 2026, with any changes being reported to the Council on 18 February 2026 as part of the budget setting report
- d. Notes the Government funding in the form of Fair Funding Allocation (Revenue Support Grant, Local Authority Better Care Fund, Retained Business Rates and Business Rates Top up Payment) of £130.960m in 2026/27 (summarised in Table 1a in paragraph 4.14), which is an increase of £14.171m for 2026/27 (as shown in Table 1b in paragraph 4.14)
- e. Notes the increase in the Council's Core Spending Power (the Government's calculation used to illustrate the overall impact of local authority funding which includes the Settlement funding, the Government's assessment of Council Tax income, and various specific grants) from 2025/26 to 2028/29 is £57.369m or 28.3% and from 2024/25 to 2028/29 £75.096m or 40.6% (paragraph 4.17)
- f. Notes that there is no requirement currently for the Council to make any additional further budget savings in 2026/27 other than those already included in the current MTFP, however work will continue to identify and deliver efficiencies and savings in the future through robust budget monitoring and the Transformation Programme (paragraphs 4.63 and 4.69)
- g. Notes the updated Medium Term Financial Plan position for 2026/27 to 2029/30 highlighting a balanced budget each year for the MTFP period (Table 12 in paragraph 4.74)
- h. Notes the feedback of the budget consultation exercise (paragraphs 4.76 to 4.86 and Appendix 4)
- i. Notes the forecast level of Council reserves over the period of the MTFP from 2026/27 to 2029/30 following the proposed budget, and that the proposed budget and MTFP should not negatively impact reserves levels in the medium term. The estimated balances on unrestricted usable revenue reserves as at 1 April 2026 of:
 - General Fund balance - £11.100m
 - Unrestricted Usable Earmarked reserves – £14.837m
- j. Notes the details of the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) Grant for 2026/27 and

the allocation to schools, the forecast total cumulative DSG deficit of £31.213m on 31 March 2026, and the risk to the Council if Government does not provide a suitable funding solution (Appendix 12)

- k. Notes that the budgets for the Members' Small Scheme programme for 2025/26 and 2026/27 would be reprofiled to allocate £150,000 for 2025/26 and £120,000 for 2026/27. The £6,400 underspend from 2025/26 would be rolled over to 2026/27 and £7,500 would be brought forward from 2027/28, resulting in a total allocation of £133,900 for 2026/27 to cover all eligible schemes proposed for that year.
- l. Notes that wording on appendix 3 would be amended to clarify that increased capacity would enable the Council to extend the service beyond back alleys and open spaces to *domestic properties*, ensuring it was clear that the expanded offer focused on key public health pests. This amendment was made to avoid the wording being interpreted as applying to offices or shops, and it was noted that a separate report would follow setting out detailed operational arrangements.

REASONS

The forward planning and setting of a robust budget and balanced MTFP ensures the Council can deliver services within its corporate and financial framework and supports its vision for Middlesbrough as a thriving, healthier, safer, and more ambitious place where communities can flourish. All elected members are legally required to agree a balanced budget and set Council Tax by 11 March 2026, and the Council must meet its Best Value duty by demonstrating financial sustainability through a balanced MTFP covering at least three years, with Full Council approval scheduled for 18 February 2026.

The recommendations support progress toward meeting these statutory duties by enabling the Council to set a balanced revenue budget for 2026/27 and secure medium-term financial sustainability, while taking a systematic and controlled approach to addressing ongoing financial challenges and delivering the Mayor's priorities through the wider Council Plan.

25/104

COUNCIL TAX REDUCTION SCHEME 2026/27

The Executive Member of Finance submitted a report for Executive consideration which set out the proposed Council Tax Reduction (CTR) Scheme for 2026/27.

Members were advised that the Council had a statutory duty to design and locally fund a CTR scheme each year, with the final scheme required to be approved by full Council no later than 11 March.

The report outlined the minor legislative amendments to be incorporated into the scheme for 2026/27 and explained that increases to income bandings were proposed to ensure that levels of support for low-income households were maintained.

Members noted how the Council had continued to develop its income-banded CTR scheme, first introduced in 2022/23 to simplify administration, reduce recalculations, and improve collection rates. The scheme provided discounts of 90%, 72%, 36% and 23%, determined by net weekly income and household composition, and continued to support Care Leavers with up to 100% relief. The report explained that for 2024/25 and 2025/26, band ranges were adjusted to reflect annual inflation increases to prevent reductions in entitlement. For 2026/27, Members were informed that further increases to the income bands were required due to above-inflation uplifts to Universal Credit scheduled from April 2026 to April 2029, ensuring households maintained broadly the same level of support. It was noted that the Council's CTR scheme supported approximately 18,500 households, with expenditure of around £22.183 million, and that the proposed adjustments were expected to be largely cost-neutral, with any minor changes in entitlement being incidental to overall scheme expenditure.

OPTIONS

1. **The Council could reduce the level of support offered to working age residents in receipt of CTR. However, the Council recognises the financial challenges placed on residents and is therefore proposing that the current level of support is maintained which incorporates the proposal to increase the income bandings in line with inflation.**
2. **The Council could increase the level of support provided by adjusting the income bands and / or the discount rate although this would be subject to a full consultation exercise, which has not taken place during the current financial year. It is therefore intended that the Council will again review the scheme in June / July 2026 in line with government changes in legislation and any proposed local alterations, with Executive approval sought should consultation be necessary.**

ORDERED that the Executive approve the proposed Council Tax Reduction Scheme for 2026/27, as set out in the report, to be forwarded to Council for formal approval.

REASONS

The proposed scheme would assist low-income households and support the collection of council tax whilst remaining affordable for the Council to provide.

Council Tax Reduction (CTR) was introduced by Central Government in April 2013 as a replacement for the Council Tax Benefit scheme, which was administered by councils on behalf of the Department for Work and Pensions. As part of the introduction, the Government placed the duty to create a local scheme for working age claimants with Billing Authorities.

Middlesbrough Council, as the Billing Authority, has a statutory requirement to revise or design and fund a CTR scheme by no later than 11 March each year which must be approved by a Full Council.

25/105

EXCEPTIONAL HARDSHIP FUND - SECTION 13A (1) (A) POLICY

The Executive Member for Finance submitted a report for Executive consideration which sought approval for adoption of the refreshed Exceptional Hardship Fund - Section 13A (1) (a) Policy under the Local Government Finance Act (LGFA) 1992 (as amended).

The report explained the need to review the existing policy and outlined the introduction of an additional element to provide further support for certain Care Leavers. It was noted that a reciprocal regional agreement had been developed between the twelve North East local authorities regarding council tax liabilities for Care Leavers, and that Executive approval was required to adopt and extend the updated policy.

Members noted that the previous Exceptional Hardship Fund Policy had last been amended on 26 April 2022 and was due for review during the 2025/26 financial year. Directors of Resources had supported the development of a reciprocal regional arrangement to ensure that Care Leavers under 25 did not pay council tax, and a working group had been established to finalise an agreement between the twelve North East authorities. The Council's Council Tax Reduction Scheme already provided a 100% reduction for Care Leavers under 25, meaning the impact of the new agreement would be minimal. However, as some Care Leavers may not qualify for CTR and could still face council tax liability, the updated policy proposed the introduction of a discretionary reduction in such cases. It was noted that any financial impact of awards would be minimal and met from existing resources, and that no other changes to the policy were proposed. Members were also informed that continued government funding through the temporary Household Support Fund had enabled support to taxpayers, reducing potential Section 13A demand, but the forthcoming transition to a Crisis Resilience Fund from April 2026 might increase applications under the policy depending on future funding flexibilities.

OPTIONS

By extending eligibility under the policy further or increasing the value of awards would likely come at a cost to the Council. There was no clear evidence that would suggest a further change is necessary which would justify further cost.

Not extending the policy to provide for the situations where the Council needs to cover the cost of Care Leaver council tax would be administratively more involved as this would require further manual intervention, additional cost and potentially prone to error.

ORDERED that Executive:

- a) **Approve the refreshed Exceptional Hardship Fund - Section 13A (1) (a) Policy, which includes an additional element for some Care Leavers as set out in 4.5 below; and,**
- b) **Approve that delegated authority be provided to the Chief Finance Officer to make minor modifications to the Policy in consultation with the Executive Member for Finance.**

REASONS

The proposed scheme confirmed, following review, the Council's ongoing approach to requests for additional financial support reducing council tax liabilities and has been extended to provide additional support to Care Leavers in certain circumstances.

The Council was required to have a policy to set out a framework within which it would provide the additional support.

25/106

ANNUAL TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY AND PRUDENTIAL INDICATORS 2026/27 TO 2029/30

The Mayor noted that the agenda title and report title were not consistent however this did not affect the content of the report.

The Executive Member for Finance submitted a report for consideration by the Executive, presenting the Prudential Indicators for 2026/27 to 2029/30 and the Treasury Management Strategy for 2026/27. The report outlined the statutory requirement for the Council to set prudential indicators and approve an annual Treasury Management Strategy, which governs the Council's borrowing, investments, and overall capital financing framework.

It was noted that the Prudential Indicators demonstrated the scale of the Council's borrowing requirement, with the Capital Financing Requirement forecast to rise from £312.383 million in 2025/26 to £333.755 million in 2026/27, increasing further to £358.733 million by 2029/30.

The report explained that the Council had total external debt of £269.360 million as at 31 December 2025, with a further £20 million of borrowing expected before the end of the financial year, resulting in an estimated year-end total of £289.360 million. This created an under-borrowed position of £23.023 million, financed through internal cash balances. Members were informed that capital financing costs were expected to total £14.151 million in 2026/27, representing 7.1% of the net revenue budget.

Members also noted the Council's approach to managing investment and borrowing risks, confirming that £24.917 million of cash balances were invested as of 31 December 2025, and that long-term PWLB borrowing formed 89% of external debt.

The report further detailed the requirement to set an authorised limit for external debt, which was £331 million for 2025/26, rising to £354 million for 2026/27.

The Strategy also described the Council's Minimum Revenue Provision policy, the knowledge and skills framework supporting treasury activity, and the external advice and benchmarking arrangements used to ensure the robustness, affordability and sustainability of the Council's financial planning.

OPTIONS

It was a statutory requirement for the Council to approve the annual Treasury Management Strategy and set of Prudential Indicators. This report is a key step in achieving that objective. As a result, there are no alternatives available.

ORDERED that Executive approve that the following are forwarded to Council for approval as set out below:

- a) The Prudential Indicators and Limits for 2026/27 to 2029/30 relating to capital expenditure and treasury management activity set out in tables 1 to 9 of Appendix 1;
- b) The Treasury Management Strategy for 2026/27, which includes the Annual Investment Strategy for that financial year;
- c) The Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Policy for the 2026/27 financial year; and,
- d) An Authorised Limit for External Debt of £354 million for the 2026/27 financial year.

REASONS

The recommendations ensured that the Council are compliant with the Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities and with the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) investment guidance. They also ensured compliance with the CIPFA Treasury Management Code of Practice and the requirements of Part 1 of the Local Government Act 2003. In addition, the recommendations establish a clear financial governance framework within which officers would operate when making borrowing and investment decisions and entering into material financial transactions.

25/107

ANY OTHER URGENT ITEMS WHICH IN THE OPINION OF THE CHAIR, MAY BE CONSIDERED.

None.

The decision(s) will come into force after five working days following the day the decision(s) was/ were published unless the decision(s) become subject to the call in procedures.

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EXECUTIVE SUB-COMMITTEE FOR PROPERTY

A meeting of the Executive Sub-Committee for Property was held on Wednesday 4 February 2026.

PRESENT: Mayor C Cooke (Chair) and Councillors I Blades, P Gavigan, L Henman, J Rostron and N Walker

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: D Hodgson (Local Democracy Reporting Service)

OFFICERS: K Allan, S Bonner, C Benjamin, B Carr, H Dalby, G Field, L Grabham, R Horniman and E Scollay

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Councillors T Furness, J Ryles and P Storey

24/18 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Name of Member	Type of Interest	Item/ Nature of Interest
Cllr P Gavigan	Non-Pecuniary	Item 3. Cllr Gavigan submitted a proposal as Ward Cllr for Longlands and Beechwood.

24/19 **UPDATED MEMBERS SMALL SCHEME ALLOCATIONS**

The Executive Member for Finance submitted a report for the Executive Sub-Committee’s consideration presenting the updated position regarding applications submitted by Members for the Small Scheme Allocation.

The scheme allowed each ward to submit one application for grant funding of up to £15,000 to deliver improvements as part of the capital programme. Where project costs exceeded this limit, match funding from relevant service areas was sought.

Members noted that at the previous meeting, held on 19 November 2025, eleven applications were awarded grant funding for the wards of Acklam, Ayresome, Berwick Hills and Pallister, Coulby Newham, Hemlington, Kader, Marton East, Marton West, Newport, Nunthorpe, and Trimdon. These applications had been assessed by Council Officers to determine suitability, affordability, and deliverability. Following assessment, two projects in the Berwick Hills and Pallister Park and Nunthorpe wards (ANPR cameras and a pedestrian crossing) were identified as undeliverable and were therefore omitted from the scheme.

The total funding requested across all proposals at that time was £143,400. Of this, £113,400 was requested for supported schemes, with match-funding contributions totalling £99,050, including £89,050 for the proposed approved schemes.

Following approval of the schemes, an administrative error was subsequently identified in relation to two projects that had been omitted in the Longlands and Beechwood, and Central Middlesbrough wards. Further analysis confirmed that both schemes were suitable for funding allocation for a park refurbishment and the removal of a planter. This decision enabled the projects to be designed and scheduled for implementation at the earliest opportunity, in line with the available budget.

Members commented that the scheme was an excellent initiative and that it was positive to be able to make a real difference to communities. They added that the scheme was a valuable offer for wards.

Members noted that the scheme had been introduced in 2003, and that this was when the process had first been initiated. It was further noted that the amount allocated to the scheme in the current year had not increased. Members were informed that, over the past two years, the budget had accumulated, and therefore Officers were asked to review the funding amount.

In response to a query regarding whether the scheme had continued under the previous administration, it was explained that funding had been retained. Due to the Council's financial position at the time, it had not been appropriate to deliver the scheme, which had resulted in a rollover of approximately £270,000. Finance had reprofiled £150,000, with a further £120,000 allocated to ensure a more even distribution across the years.

Thanks were expressed to both Members and Officers for their contributions to the process.

OPTIONS

The Council had the option not to approve the funding however this was not recommended as the proposals had been assessed by Officers for suitability and were deemed as acceptable improvements.

ORDERED that the Sub Committee for Property:

1. Approve the updated eligible Members' Small Scheme project allocations, following applications from Members and assessment by Council Officers.
2. A review of the funding allocated in the budget is carried out in line with the updated financial position.

REASONS

The recommendations ensured the appropriate use of the Members' Small Scheme grant and empowered Councillors to deliver meaningful improvements within their wards. The approved updated schemes also confirmed that the overall budget remained within limits. In line with a more structured bidding process, which will enable officers to programme the work with sufficient notice, a review of the funding allocated within the budget will be completed in line with the updated financial position.

24/20

ANY OTHER URGENT ITEMS WHICH IN THE OPINION OF THE CHAIR, MAY BE CONSIDERED.

The decision(s) will come into force after five working days following the day the decision(s) was/ were published unless the decision(s) become subject to the call in procedures

MIDDLESBROUGH COUNCIL

Report of:	Chief Executive, Erik Scollay
Relevant Executive Member:	The Elected Mayor of Middlesbrough, Chris Cooke
Submitted to:	Executive
Date:	11 March 2026
Title:	Council Plan 2026-29
Report for:	Decision
Status:	Public
Council Plan priority:	Delivering Best Value
Key decision:	No
Why:	Decision does not reach the threshold to be a key decision
Subject to call in?	Yes
Why:	Non-Urgent Report

Proposed decision(s)

That Executive:

- **APPROVES** the refreshed Council Plan which sets out how the Council will measure success, following previous agreement of the outcomes in December 2025 By Executive.
- **APPROVES** further minor amendments to the outcomes agreed by Executive in December 2025 to create separate outcomes for digital and transport connectivity and minor, non-material changes to sentence structure to enhance readability and do not change the nature of the agreed outcomes.
- **APPROVES** the cessation of the Council's Transformation Programme and transition into a Continuous Improvement model.
- **APPROVES** the transition of the Customer Strategy and the Neighbourhoods Model into business-as-usual delivery.
- **APPROVES** the Council's engagement in the Place Leaders Partnership, its membership on that Partnership.
- **ENDORSES** the planned development of a Place Strategy for the Town, to be led by the Place Leaders Partnership.

Executive summary

This report seeks Executive approval of the refreshed Council Plan, setting out the refreshed Outcomes that were agreed by Executive in December 2025, alongside the indicators that will measure the impact of that activity, as set out in the refreshed Council Plan appended to this report at Appendix 1.

The Council Plan is the organisation's overarching business plan for the medium-term and is typically refreshed on an annual basis. This refresh follows a review of performance in the previous year and consideration of an outcome-driven approach to demonstrate progress and impact, which was agreed as the direction of travel at Executive in December 2025.

The Council Plan is part of the Council's Policy Framework and so requires the approval of Full Council, as set out in the Constitution. The Council's Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rules provide for the Executive to draw up firm proposals on the Strategic Plan for submission to Full Council. Full Council approved the Council Plan for the period 2024-27 on 28 February 2024, which was structured around the following vision and priorities:

The vision for Middlesbrough is ***a thriving, healthier, safer and more ambitious place where people want to live, work, invest, and visit. We will support our residents to live fulfilling lives, to ensure that our communities thrive***, with the four priorities remaining, as follows:

- **A Successful and Ambitious Town:** Maximising economic growth, employment, and prosperity, in an inclusive and environmentally sustainable way.
- **A Healthy Place:** Helping our residents to live longer and healthier lives, improving life chances and opportunities to thrive.
- **Safe and Resilient Communities:** Creating a safer environment where residents can live more independent lives.
- **Delivering Best Value:** Changing how we operate, to deliver affordable and cost-effective outcomes for residents and businesses.

The vision and priorities will remain; this report seeks to refresh the underpinning activity to deliver the vision. The activity set to deliver the Council Plan will be embedded within Directorate Plans to ensure effective delivery. The Directorate Plans will form a key part of the Council's approach to performance management and continuous improvement.

The report also sets out the planned development of a Place Strategy by the Place Leaders Partnership and proposes that Executive endorses the Council working with the partnership to develop that Strategy.

The Strategy, once developed, will provide a blueprint that the Council and its partners can all use to work together, to tackle Middlesbrough's economic and social challenges.

The draft Place Strategy will go through the Council's decision-making processes to ensure that all Members have the opportunity to consider and agree the Council's contribution to that strategy.

1. Purpose of this report and its contribution to the achievement of the Council Plan priorities

1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek approval of the completed refresh of the Council Plan 2026 – 29, appended to this report at Appendix 1 which reflects the amended outcomes and the proposed key measures of success that will measure the impact of the Council Plan. Details of activities to deliver the plan will be embedded within Directorate Plans for 2026/7.

Our Priorities	Summary of how this report will support delivery the Council Plan
A successful and ambitious town	The refreshed Plan sets out the outcomes that will be achieved by the Council Plan to deliver its vision and the measures we will track to understand impact of planned actions.
A healthy place	
Safe and resilient communities	
Delivering best value	

2. Recommendations

2.1 That the Executive:

- **APPROVES** the refreshed Council Plan which sets out how the Council will measure success, following previous agreement of the outcomes in December 2025 By Executive.
- **APPROVES** further minor amendments to the outcomes agreed by Executive in December 2025 to create separate outcomes for digital and transport connectivity and minor, non-material changes to sentence structure to enhance readability and do not change the nature of the agreed outcomes.
- **APPROVES** the cessation of the Council’s Transformation Programme and transition into a Continuous Improvement model.
- **APPROVES** the transition of the Customer Strategy and the Neighbourhoods Model into business-as-usual delivery.
- **APPROVES** the Council’s engagement in the Place Leaders Partnership, its membership on that Partnership.
- **ENDORSES** the planned development of a Place Strategy for the Town, to be led by the Place Leaders Partnership.

3 Rationale for the recommended decision(s)

3.1 Refreshing the Council Plan enables the Council to continue to plan over the medium term. Updating outcomes and measures of success ensures that the Council Plan reflects current progress against the Council’s vision and priorities. Under the Local Government Act 1999, local authorities must legally deliver what is termed ‘Best Value’ – a council must be able to show that it has arrangements to secure continuous improvement in how it carries out its work. The proposals in this report set out how the Council is embedding continuous improvement within its strategic planning.

4. Background and relevant Information

Council Plan 2026–29

4.1 The Council Plan is the organisation's overarching medium-term business plan and is typically refreshed annually. This refresh follows a review of performance in the previous year and introduces an outcome-driven approach to demonstrating progress and impact, as agreed by Executive in December 2025.

4.2 The Council Plan is part of the Council's Policy Framework and therefore requires approval by Full Council, as set out in the Constitution. The Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rules allow the Executive to draw up firm proposals for submission to Full Council where a new Plan is proposed. Changes to outcomes can be approved by Executive. This report proposes no changes to the vision or priorities; it reflects the revised outcomes agreed in December 2025 and updates the measures used to assess impact.

Transition from Transformation to Continuous Improvement

4.3 In 2024, the Council established a time-limited Transformation Programme in response to significant financial pressures. This programme was reviewed in 2025 to ensure better alignment with the Council Plan. Its purpose was to stabilise the organisation, deliver agreed savings, improve outcomes for residents and maintain statutory service delivery during a period of financial constraint.

4.4 The programme has achieved many of its financial objectives, and the time is now right for the Council to move into the next phase. It is no longer proportionate or sustainable to operate transformation as a standalone initiative. The conditions that required exceptional programme governance have shifted, and improvement capability is now better embedded within day-to-day operations.

4.5 This transition represents a deliberate shift in emphasis:

- From discrete projects to continuous improvement owned by Directorates, with a clear golden thread connecting the Council Plan, the performance management framework, and individual appraisal objectives.
- From a dominant focus on cost reduction to a balanced approach covering financial sustainability, service quality, and resident outcomes.
- From centralised transformation activity to local accountability within Directorates, supported by enabling functions.

4.6 While the Transformation Programme successfully delivered savings, sustained improvement in outcomes for residents cannot be achieved through short-term programmes alone. Lasting change requires empowered frontline teams, routine use of data, and improvement embedded into everyday operations. The strong delivery of the Transformation Programme now enables continuous improvement to become central to business-as-usual performance management.

4.7 This transition is not the end of transformation but a maturing of it. The Council remains committed to improving outcomes for residents, and this shift provides a more sustainable and accountable operating model. This is in line with the Mayor's 'Recover, Reset and Deliver' priorities for the Council, and the Council is now ready to move into the 'Deliver' phase.

4.8 The implementation of a new performance management cycle, embedding the principles of continuous improvement, will enhance the Council's ability to deliver the

Council Plan vision. A revised Performance Management Policy will be brought forward for Executive consideration.

- 4.9 The Customer Strategy and the Neighbourhoods Model, previously agreed by Executive and currently in delivery, will continue within business-as-usual arrangements. Housing and digital activity from the former Transformation Programme will be embedded within the Council’s performance management framework. A refreshed Programme and Project Management Policy will also be brought forward, simplifying governance and reflecting the transition to Continuous Improvement.
- 4.10 The table below sets out the arrangements that are being put in place to ensure the ongoing delivery of these key pieces of work within the continuous improvement approach:

Theme	Remit	Inter-dependencies and interactions
Customer	<p>Delivery of the Customer Strategy will continue.</p> <p>Following delivery of the Strategy to date and the movement of resources to centralise corporate customer resources to enable delivery, future work will be overseen with in the Finance Directorate Plan and supporting performance management cycle, and if necessary, the project management framework, where new project activity is identified.</p>	<p>Organisational Development – the Council’s People Strategy will deliver a programme of activity around customer good practice to ensure the organisation’s leadership, culture, systems and capabilities are aligned with resident needs and the principles of good customer engagement, as set out in the Customer Strategy.</p> <p>Digital Strategy (in development) – The Digital Strategy will provide the clear, ethical and practical direction on the technical solutions the Council will implement to meet its needs. The Customer Strategy work will ensure these solutions are utilised to improve outcomes for residents.</p> <p>Customer facing functions within other Directorates -work collaboratively with services to identify high volume customer engagement processes that would me most likely to benefit from use of digital tools identified and implemented by the Digital Strategy, to improve customer experience and reduce processing costs.</p> <p>Neighbourhoods model – there is ongoing model that continues to be developed that will ensure that both customer and neighbourhoods provide one tiered support offer with Customer services focussing on universal access services and the neighbourhoods model providing place-based locality services for more complex support needs, with a focus on prevention.</p> <p>This will ensure both elements deliver one support offer, with no overlap to provide the right door, at the right depth.</p>
Digital	<p>The Digital Strategy will set the strategic direction of the organisation in relation to digital. It will identify and deliver implementation of new technical solutions to meet needs of business within the Council’s suite of digital solutions that comprise its digital estate.</p>	<p>Customer Strategy – the Customer Strategy will deliver changes to Council processes, to exploit the technical solutions that are identified and put in place by the Digital Strategy to reduce costs of customer interactions and improve outcomes.</p> <p>Corporate Asset Management Plan – Where the strategy plans work on Council assets, there will need to be ongoing alignment between it and the Asset Management Strategy to ensure that</p>

Theme	Remit	Inter-dependencies and interactions
	<p>It will ensure that the Council has a digital estate that has:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Clear visibility and control of its digital products and platforms - A coherent estate with reduced complexity and duplication - Robust governance and accountability for the lifecycle of digital systems - Secure, resilience and compliant technology. - A sustainable funding model, including realignment of budgets to reflect ongoing ownership, maintenance and support costs for digital products - Clear identification of functional owners responsible for defining business requirements, processes, data quality and operational change. <p>There will be project activity once written — requiring project oversight and project governance to deliver implementation.</p> <p>ICT will support services to deliver digitally-aligned processes, where technology can enhance, extend or streamline service delivery, improve efficiency, strengthen compliance and produce better customer outcomes. Successful implementation is dependent on services completing preparatory work, requirements definition, demand analysis, and data readiness.</p> <p>The draft strategy will be presented to Executive for consideration in June 2026. It will set out in more detail, the content of the strategy, project activity that may be required to deliver it, resources and a timeline for implementation.</p>	<p>planned investment considers the Council's planned medium- and long-term use of its assets.</p> <p>All Directorates – the Strategy, and its implementation, will need to be regularly reviewed to ensure ongoing alignment between it and the strategic direction of the organisation and its directorates. Implementation of Directorate Plans will support visibility of future direction of travel on key responsibilities of departments.</p> <p>Capital Programme – the emerging Strategy will identify its Capital support needs. There will need to be consideration of this within the Capital programme, which has already earmarked an indicative amount to support investment in the Council's digital estate.</p>
Housing	<p>The Council will ensure that a Housing Strategy is brought forward, underpinned by a robust housing needs assessment.</p> <p>The Strategy will set out how the Council will meet current and future housing needs, using its powers and partnerships to improve housing supply, quality and support.</p> <p>It will provide a framework that focusses on preventing and reducing homelessness, improving the quality and management of existing homes</p>	<p>Adults and Children's directorates – understanding current and future volumes and needs of the most vulnerable residents. If the strategy is successful, it should ensure there is a housing market that can meet the needs of all residents, reducing the number who are homeless or having to be housed in unsuitable temporary accommodation.</p>

Theme	Remit	Inter-dependencies and interactions
	and shaping a balanced market that attracts investment while protecting vulnerable residents.	
Neighbourhoods	<p>The Council will continue to implement the Neighbourhoods model that was agreed by Executive in April 2025.</p> <p>The model sets out a vision for Neighbourhoods to deliver an approach, working with partners and communities ‘to make Middlesbrough a cleaner, safer, stronger, and healthier place to live through proactive, intelligence led partnership working and by building community resilience’.</p> <p>The Head of Neighbourhoods will continue work to implement the model with all stakeholders, which will involve reconfiguring relationships between statutory organisations, voluntary sector, private sector, residents and businesses to achieve change by developing collaborative approaches that address underlying causes of community problems.</p> <p>This programme of work will align with the Pride in Place to ensure the community has an opportunity to shape their community and strengthen them.</p> <p>Actions to implement the model fully will be embedded within Directorate Plans, including action to put in place Neighbourhood Plans for the North, South, East and West of the Town.</p> <p>It will also capture key actions to deliver a Community Engagement Strategy to deliver the second part of the model’s vision.</p> <p>Where there is ongoing project management activity required to deliver the model, this will be continued and oversight maintained through the emerging performance and budget management framework.</p>	<p>Customer Strategy - ensuring ongoing alignment between the customer and neighbourhoods model and adherence to the principles set out in the Customer Strategy.</p> <p>Capital Programme – Ongoing funding required to maintain to deliver the building works to establish the physical footprint of the locality working model as agreed at Executive in February 2026.</p> <p>Regeneration - dependent on delivery of building works required.</p> <p>Pride in Place – this programme will have to have consideration of the community driven priorities for investment in pride in place designated areas and identify opportunities to work with those areas to further enhance the impact of the Neighbourhoods model alongside Pride in Place investment. A report will be brought forward on Pride in Place for Executive consideration in April 2026.</p> <p>All Directorates – Collaboration to implement the staffing model to ensure the locality hubs contain staff with the right skill sets to be able to provide an integrated, prevention focused support service that improves outcomes for our residents and reduces the number of residents that need to seek Council support in crisis by helping them at an earlier stage.</p> <p>Partners – again, by focussing on resident needs rather than Council remit, the locality working model will collocate those partners that most commonly support residents who are also being supported by the Council. This will reduce overlap in provision of public sector intervention, reduce costs to the public sector, remove barriers between organisations and most importantly improve outcomes for residents.</p>

Developing a Place Strategy

4.11 The report also sets out the planned development of a Place Strategy by the Place Leaders Partnership and proposes that Executive endorses the Council working with the partnership to develop that Strategy. The Strategy will enable the Council to identify key priorities, in partnership with our public, private and voluntary sector partners.

4.12 It will provide a blueprint that the Council and its partners can all use to work together, to tackle Middlesbrough’s economic and social challenges. Once drafted, the draft Place Strategy will go through the Council’s decision-making processes to ensure that all Members can consider and agree the Council’s contribution to that strategy.

4.13 The next step will be that public consultation by the partnership will be undertaken in the spring. The consultation will seek views on the emerging vision and priorities for a Place Strategy. Following completion of this, a draft strategy is planned to be ready for adoption by all partners within the partnership in early Autumn 2026. Full Council will be asked to approve the Council’s participation in the strategy at this point.

5. Ward Member Engagement if relevant and appropriate

5.1 Not applicable.

6. Other potential alternative(s) and why these have not been recommended

6.1 Members could choose to not refresh the activity within the plan or the measures that assess impact. This is not recommended because the Plan would not then provide a blueprint against which the organisation can set its supporting plans, strategies and policies against, with any confidence that the Plan reflects the priorities and needs of the town’s residents.

7. Impact(s) of the recommended decision(s)

Topic	Impact
Financial (including procurement and Social Value)	The Council Plan 2026-29 and the Council’s annual revenue and capital budgets are developed in parallel, to ensure full alignment between the Council’s ambitions and spending plans.
Legal	Implementation of the refreshed Council Plan 2026-29 will enable the Council to operate within the resources available to it, and continue to meet its various statutory duties, including the overarching Duty of Best Value.
Risk	The proposed refresh sets out a range of outcomes, which when delivered would address key risks within the Council’s Strategic Risk Register
Human Rights, Public Sector Equality Duty and Community Cohesion	The impact assessment found that the Council Plan 2026-29 will have a positive impact on individuals and communities. It contains within it, plans to ensure that the Council has an inclusive approach for all its residents.
Reducing Poverty	The proposed plan will have a positive impact on reducing poverty, it sets out how poverty will be at the heart of everything we do.
Climate Change / Environmental	The plan will have a positive impact on climate change and the environment, with relevant priorities including supporting people to live healthier lives for longer, improving the look and feel of physical spaces in the town and reducing poverty.
Children and Young People Cared for by the	The proposed Council Plan will have a positive impact on children and young people, proposed outcomes around improving educational attainment included.

Authority and Care Leavers	
Data Protection	There are no concerns that the proposed plan could impact adversely on data protection or GDPR.

Actions to be taken to implement the recommended decision(s)

Action	Responsible Officer	Deadline
Publish the refreshed Council Plan in the Council's website and communicate it to staff.	Head of Chief Executive's Department	31 March 2026
Submit a report to Executive on the Pride in Place National Programme and its delivery in Middlesbrough	Corporate Director of Regeneration and Housing	8 April 2026
Amend the Council's Performance Management Policy to ensure the Council maximises its ability to achieve the Council Plan and submit it for consideration by Executive.	Head of Chief Executive's Department	30 April 2026
Amend the Council's Programme and Project Management Policy to ensure the Council has a proportionate and sustainable approach to the identification and delivery of project activity.	Head of Chief Executive's Department	30 April 2026
Submit a draft Place Strategy to Full Council.	Director of Regeneration and Housing	30 September 2026

Appendices

1	Refreshed Council Plan
2	Impact Assessment Level 1 (Initial screening assessment)

Background papers

Body	Report title	Date
Executive	Council Plan 2024-27	28 February 2024
Executive	Council Plan 2026-29	3 December 2025

Contact: Ann-Marie Johnstone, Head of Chief Executive's Department,
Email: Ann-Marie_Johnstone@middlesbrough.gov.uk

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Council Plan 2026-29



'We're approaching the future with more confidence and putting in place the foundations for lasting change. We're ambitious for Middlesbrough and believe our priorities will help us build on the progress we've made.'

Foreword

Welcome to our Council Plan for the 2026-29 period.

This document is an update on our priorities and how we'll judge our performance. Our vision is for Middlesbrough to be a thriving, healthier, safer and more ambitious place where people want to live, work, invest and visit. We believe we're heading in the right direction.

Middlesbrough is a town with a proud history, strong communities and enormous potential. In recent years, the Council and the town have faced significant financial, organisational and social challenges.

Meeting these challenges has required honesty, determination and difficult decisions. Thanks to the dedication of our staff, partners and residents, we are now in a much stronger position - financially, operationally and in how we govern ourselves.

This Council Plan sets out our shared priorities for the next three years. It is focused on improving outcomes for residents. The plan is designed to support thriving neighbourhoods and build a more inclusive and resilient local economy. It also aims to give children and young people the best possible start in life and improve the health and wellbeing for people of all ages.

Looking further ahead, we're approaching the future with more confidence and putting in place the foundations for lasting change. That means investing now in programmes that will

have benefits for years to come. We're investing in our children and young people so they're not left behind in the future, regardless of where they live in our town.

We're rethinking our town centre, so it becomes a more attractive place to live, work and visit, with the benefits felt right across Middlesbrough. And we're working with our partners on new approaches to help people live healthier and longer lives.

We're ambitious for Middlesbrough and believe our priorities will help us build on the progress we've made.

Chris Cooke
Elected Mayor of
Middlesbrough

Erik Scollay
Chief Executive



Chris Cooke, Elected
Mayor of Middlesbrough



Erik Scollay,
Chief Executive

Middlesbrough's challenges and opportunities



1. Middlesbrough is a lively and exciting place with a diverse population. Approximately 20% of our people are of an ethnic minority. We are proud that people from different backgrounds get on well together.



5. Our population is younger than the regional and national averages.



2. We're the heart of the Tees Valley with 800,000 people living within a 30-minute radius. We're a busy place with lots happening.



6. We must ensure our future workforce has the right skills so we can attract investment.



3. Our population of around 156,000 lives in an area of just 35 square miles. Roughly 19 people live on each football pitch size of land making it the most densely populated part of the North East.



7. Life expectancy and healthy life expectancy for men and women are both lower than national averages.



8. We must build on the progress we have made financially and start to deliver improved services to our residents.



4. Middlesbrough is a vibrant place with a strong sense of community.



Our vision and priorities

We will thrive

Our vision for Middlesbrough is a thriving, healthier, safer and more ambitious place where people want to live, work, invest, and visit. We will support our residents to live fulfilling lives, to ensure that our communities thrive.



1

A successful and ambitious town

Maximising economic growth, employment and prosperity in an inclusive and environmentally sustainable way.

2

A healthy place

Helping our residents to live longer, healthier lives.

3

Safe and resilient communities

Creating a safer environment where residents can live more independent lives.

4

Delivering best value

Changing how we operate, to deliver affordable and cost-effective outcomes for residents and businesses.



A successful and ambitious town

Maximising economic growth, employment and prosperity in an inclusive and environmentally sustainable way.

Outcomes we want to achieve

We will grow businesses and employment opportunities within the town

Middlesbrough is home to thriving companies in innovative industries who compete on the world stage. To ensure we continue to be an attractive place to start or build a business, we will work to grow the range of employment opportunities. We will attract new businesses and support existing ones to grow, increasing the links between employers and job seekers.

We will close attainment gaps and work with education providers to increase the number of students who achieve their expected grades

Our town boasts award-winning education institutions including Teesside University, Middlesbrough College and the Northern School of Art. We have dozens of wonderful schools led by inspirational teachers.

We will support these organisations to deliver better education outcomes for children and young people. This will include a focus on groups that have experienced poorer outcomes in recent years.

We will ensure housing supply meets local demand

Our population is growing and we need to have homes that meet all types of needs and aspirations. Housing provided through the Council must promote and support independent living.

Services for homeless people will be safe and dignified, supporting access into long-term sustainable accommodation.

Transport connectivity will improve

Our transport infrastructure will meet the needs of our residents and businesses.

How will we know we are having a positive impact?

- More new businesses will be created.
- We will help more young people to get an apprenticeship.
- Attainment levels for children in the town will increase. Not only that, attainment levels for children that have had poorer education outcomes in recent years will improve. We will make sure children get this help.
- There will be a reduction in the number of children from disadvantaged backgrounds who are excluded from schools.
- More new homes will be built.
- The number of empty properties in Middlesbrough will be reduced.
- We will work with owners and landlords to bring empty homes back into use to meet local housing demand.
- We will work with owners and landlords to address and respond to properties that have been neglected or have problem tenants.
- We will reduce demand for our homelessness service, by trying to stop people becoming homeless in the first place.
- We will work with Tees Valley Combined Authority to maintain and improve transport connectivity to major opportunities as they arise.



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A healthy place



Helping our residents to live longer, healthier lives.

Outcomes we want to achieve

People will live healthier lives for longer, and health inequalities will be reduced

Using our Family Hub model, we will support families to secure the best start in life for children.

Page 35 Early intervention and support for families will prevent issues escalating and build resilience.

Through our Public Health Strategy we will work with partners to increase the prevention and early detection of disease and act on the structural factors that drive ill health.

Adult Social Care Services will further develop early intervention and prevention services to reduce the need for social care assessment.

We will consistently promote the conditions for improved health and wellbeing to users of our services and their carers.

The look and feel of the physical space in Middlesbrough will improve

Through our Green Strategy we will continue to drive up recycling rates and encourage our residents to join with us in protecting our environment, green spaces and parks.

We will be closer to our communities and involve them in decision making

To ensure the principle of fairness is at the heart of everything we do, we will work together with communities and partners to develop solutions that improve outcomes for all.

We will always consider the impact our policies, strategies and decision making have on health inequalities.

We will reduce and alleviate the impact of poverty to improve lives and life chances for people in Middlesbrough

We will work with partners to support our residents out of poverty and improve community resilience to prevent people falling into poverty.

Meeting this challenge is central to all of the ambitions within the Council Plan.



How will we know we are having a positive impact?

- People will have access to healthy food as well as safe and tidy streets and green spaces.
- Health outcomes for those with multiple vulnerabilities will improve.
- Preventable illness and premature death will be reduced.
- More people will be satisfied with Middlesbrough as a place to live.
- People who commit environmental crimes will be fined and prosecuted.
- Equipment in play parks will be maintained to a high standard.
- More people will get involved in our community activities.
- People will get the opportunity to have their say on topics that matter most to them.
- More residents will agree that their local area is a place where people get on well together.
- More people will use our libraries and Community Hubs.
- The impact of school holiday hunger and inactivity will reduce.
- More children from low-income families will benefit from our 10 x 10 programme, which offers positive life-changing experiences.
- People will be able to access essential items when they are in financial crisis.
- The number of young people who stay in education, employment and training after 16 will increase.
- Less people will be homeless or living in extreme poverty.

Safe and resilient communities

Creating a safer environment where residents can live more independent lives.



Outcomes we want to achieve

All adults will be supported through strength-based practice to live the lives they choose

We will improve access to advice and information for adults and informal carers.

We will develop and expand our use of assistive technology and reablement to minimise the need for ongoing care.

We will develop the choice of accommodation and support options for vulnerable adults to promote independent living, reducing reliance on residential care.

We will support digital inclusion

We will work to improve digital inclusion, including by enabling residents to access our services in the most convenient way.

We will continue to work with voluntary and community groups and individuals to improve the resilience of our communities

We will develop an approach that will allow individuals and groups to benefit from volunteering opportunities.

We will improve our support to children and young people and increase their ability to access opportunities.

Residents will feel safer

We will work to reduce crime and antisocial behaviour across the town, allowing residents to live safer lives.

How will we know we are having a positive impact?

- Adults' rights, dignity and independence will be protected through our safeguarding process.
- The number of people who manage their own health and wellbeing through advice, guidance and initial support will increase.
- We will promote independence and reduce long-term dependency on care.
- We will increase the number of residents supported to improve their confidence in using digital technology.
- We will work effectively with the voluntary community to improve services and support to residents.
- We will work with Cleveland Police and other partners to continue to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour.
- We will help more people to get support from domestic abuse services.



Delivering best value

Changing how we operate, to deliver affordable and cost-effective outcomes for residents and businesses.

Outcomes we want to achieve

We will be a well-run Council that provides Value for Money Services

We have continued to make progress in this area over the past two years and are now well placed to be able to deliver real improvements to the services we offer residents. We are embedding the principles of continuous improvement throughout our work to ensure we deliver, real, sustained change.

We will continue to provide auditors with assurances that we have robust and effective governance in place.

We will set a balanced budget and medium-term financial plan

We are required by law to set a balanced budget each year. We also have a duty to deliver a balanced Medium Term Financial Plan over a period of three to five years.

The 2026/27 Budget report of February 2026 highlighted a significant improvement in our financial position. The improved position includes increased levels of reserves.

We will continue to intervene when service areas are overspending. There needs to be a continued focus on our finances in the future so we can provide the best possible services.



How will we know we are having a positive impact?

- We will continue to deliver our Continuous Improvement Plan.
- We will regularly consult with our staff to find out what is going well and where we need to improve.
- Our staff and elected members will work positively with each other.
- Our external auditors will continue to progress towards a position where they are able to give an unqualified judgement on our Statement of Accounts.
- We will deliver our services within planned budgets.
- We will have enough money in our reserves to be able to effectively deal with challenges and continue to meet the needs of our residents.
- We will collect Council Tax and business rates to deliver the sums budgeted as income through the Collection Fund.

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Middlesbrough
moving forward

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PO Box 500, Middlesbrough, TS1 9FT

Phone: **01642 245432** (Monday to
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Appendix 2: Impact Assessment Level 1 (Initial screening assessment)

Subject of assessment:	Council Plan 2026/27-29			
Coverage:	Overarching / crosscutting			
Decision relating to:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Strategy	<input type="checkbox"/> Policy	<input type="checkbox"/> Service	<input type="checkbox"/> Function
	<input type="checkbox"/> Process / procedure	<input type="checkbox"/> Programme	<input type="checkbox"/> Project	<input type="checkbox"/> Review
	<input type="checkbox"/> Organisational change	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (please state)		
It is a:	New approach:	<input type="checkbox"/>	Revision of an existing approach:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
It is driven by:	Legislation:	<input type="checkbox"/>	Local or corporate requirements:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Description:	<p>Key aims, objectives, and activities: The Council Plan is the Council's overarching business plan for the medium-term, and is refreshed on an annual basis, setting out the priorities of the Elected Mayor of Middlesbrough and other corporate priorities and ambitions for the Council.</p> <p>Statutory drivers: Local Government Act 1999; Equality Act 2010.</p> <p>Differences from any previous approach: This will result in new Council Plan content around the outcomes to be delivered and how we will assess if we are achieving them, reflecting progress made since the last annual refresh of content. The vision and four priority themes remain unchanged.</p> <p>Key stakeholders and intended beneficiaries (internal and external as appropriate): Elected members, employees of the Council, local communities and businesses, partners.</p> <p>Intended outcomes: To ensure that the Council's strategic objectives are achieved, and that the Council continues to comply with the duties of the Equality Act 2010 relating to the publication and pursuit of equality objectives.</p>			
Live date:	February 2024			
Lifespan:	2026/27-29, reviewed annually			
Date of next review:	Potential for full refresh 2027-28			

Screening questions	Response			Evidence
	No	Yes	Uncertain	
Human Rights Could the decision impact negatively on individual Human Rights as enshrined in UK legislation?	x			No. The content of the proposed plan and delivery of it would not contravene Human Rights as identified in national legislation.
Equality Could the decision result in adverse differential impacts on groups or individuals with characteristics protected in UK equality law? Could the decision impact differently on other commonly disadvantaged groups?	x			No. The Council Plan commits to reducing inequalities within Middlesbrough. It is based on a robust evidence base of needs and includes a commitment to inclusivity for all. As a result, there are no concerns that the Plan or associated activity could have a disproportionate adverse impact on groups or individuals with characteristics protected in national legislation.
Community cohesion Could the decision impact negatively on relationships between different groups, communities of interest or neighbourhoods within the town?	x			No. The Plan commits to improving community resilience within the town, which will result in direct benefits for cohesion. As a result, there are no concerns that the proposed plan could have an adverse impact on community cohesion. Evidence used to assess this impact includes analysis of proposed activities and measures.
Care leavers Could the decision impact negatively on those who are care experienced?	x			No. The proposed Council Plan will have a positive impact on children and young people, and those who are care experienced by ensuring that actions to improve outcomes for these groups are woven throughout the activities and measures. Evidence used to assess this impact includes analysis of data on need and analysis of proposed activities and measures.
Reducing Poverty Could the decision impact negatively on the Council's ambitions to reduce poverty in the town?	x			No. The proposed Council Plan will have a positive impact on reducing poverty, subsuming actions from the recent Poverty Sprint are woven throughout the activities and measures. Evidence used to assess this impact includes analysis of data on need and analysis of proposed activities and measures.
Assessment completed by:	Ann-Marie Johnstone, Head of Chief Executive's Department			
Date:	3 February 2026			
Head of Service:	Erik Scollay, Chief Executive			
Date:	3 February 2026			

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MIDDLESBROUGH COUNCIL

Report of:	Chief Executive, Erik Scollay
Relevant Executive Member:	Mayor, Chris Cooke
Submitted to:	Executive
Date:	11 March 2026
Title:	Continuous Improvement Plan Progress Report
Report for:	Decision
Status:	Public
Council Plan priority:	All
Key decision:	No
Why:	Decision does not reach the threshold to be a key decision
Subject to call in?	Yes
Why:	Non-Urgent Report

Proposed decision(s)

That Executive:

- **APPROVES** the updated Continuous Improvement Plan
- **NOTES** the progress made in delivering the commitments within the Continuous Improvement Plan.

Executive summary

This report provides an overview of delivery against the Council's Continuous Improvement Plan. It captures strategic improvement action being delivered within the organisation to ensure Middlesbrough Council can fully demonstrate its compliance with the principles of the Best Value Duty.

Provision of this report forms part of the assurance framework that has been put in place to demonstrate the Council's ongoing commitment to continuous improvement. It will also be considered by Overview and Scrutiny Board.

The report summarises progress made since the Plan was put in place in March 2025.

It focuses on progress made since Executive last considered this Plan in November 2025. The report highlights key achievements, grouping them by Best Value theme and includes a key to indicate the source of recommendations.

1. Purpose of this report and its contribution to the achievement of the Council Plan ambitions

1.1 The purpose of this report is to set out progress in delivering the Continuous Improvement Plan for Executive consideration. The purpose of the Plan is to ensure the Council can articulate its ongoing commitment to continuous improvement and capture activity that has been undertaken to deliver that commitment.

Our ambitions	Summary of how this report will support delivery of these ambitions and the underpinning aims
A successful and ambitious town	The Continuous Improvement Plan contains commitments to work collaboratively with partners, communities and businesses to develop a vision for the Town. Delivery of this will positively impact on the Council's ability to work with partners to deliver all the ambitions within the Council Plan.
A healthy Place	The Continuous Improvement Plan contains a series of actions that will impact positively on the Council's ambitions around Middlesbrough being a healthy place. In particular it includes commitments around poverty reduction ambitions.
Safe and resilient communities	Action is planned within the Continuous Improvement Plan to strengthen the Council's approach to community engagement which will positively impact on this ambition. It sets out progress made to expand community development capacity and develop the proposed Neighbourhoods Strategy with a strong focus on community engagement and co-production of solutions.
Delivering best value	Successful delivery of the Continuous Improvement Plan will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ improve partnership working ▪ further enhance financial planning and management ▪ reset the Council's approach to transformation ▪ strengthen internal audit arrangements ▪ enhance scrutiny ▪ better support Members.

2. Recommendations

2.1 That the Executive:

- **APPROVES** the updated Continuous Improvement Plan
- **NOTES** the progress made in delivering the commitments within the Continuous Improvement Plan.

3. Rationale for the recommended decision(s)

3.1 Having a Continuous Improvement Plan that captures all strategic continuous improvement activity provides Members and Officers with a comprehensive overview of improvement activity within the organisation as part of a framework of assurance reports. The plan ensures the Council is tracking this type of activity within one document. Successful delivery of continual improvement activity will improve the Council's ability to deliver against its Council Plan ambitions.

4. Background and relevant information

4.1 In March 2025, Full Council considered the final reports of both the Local Government Association (LGA) Corporate Peer Challenge team and the Middlesbrough Independent Improvement Advisory Board (MIIAB).

4.2 Both of those reports were hugely positive, recognising the improvements the Council had made over the previous two years on its improvement journey. They also contained a series of recommendations, designed to ensure the Council maintained an outcome focussed commitment to the principles of its continuous improvement journey as it transitioned from a period of intervention. In November 2025, the LGA team came back to Middlesbrough and conducted a follow up visit. A copy of their report is attached at Appendix 2. The Continuous Improvement Plan of the Council has been updated to reflect this and their findings.

4.3 The plan also continues to track delivery of actions arising from the External Assurance review undertaken by Grant Thornton as part of the Exceptional Financial Support (EFS) application. It also includes an action arising from the Care Quality Commission inspection of Adult Social Care services.

4.4 Appended to this report, is a copy of the Continuous Improvement Plan and its status as of January 2026. The Plan continues to evolve as actions are delivered and follow up actions are identified where necessary.

4.5 There are currently 49 actions within the plan. In November 2025 it was reported that 22 had been completed. Since that time a further eight have been completed, bringing the total number of completed action to date to 30. Two new actions have been added since the Plan was last reported. The first new action builds on the increased capacity within the neighbourhoods teams and captures plans to bring forward a Community Engagement Strategy in the summer. The second new action captures plans to conduct a further survey with Members and embed regular surveys within the Member Development Strategy.

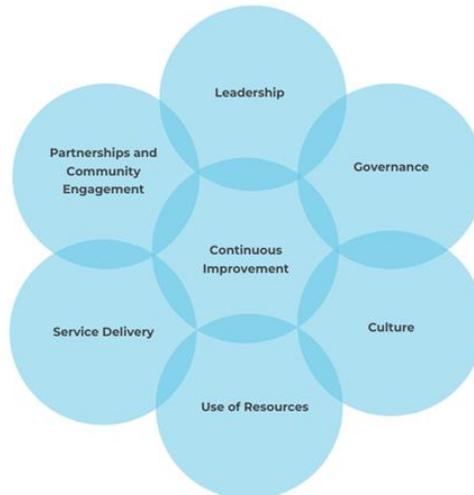
4.6 There are five actions that have been reprofiled:

- Creation of a Partnerships Strategy – reprofiled to allow the Place Leaders Partnership to emerge and develop organically, in order to ensure that all Partners who are involved are assured it is a true partnership approach. As such, while conversations are ongoing to define what partnership working should look like, this action has been reprofiled to enable the proposed document to reflect that emerging thinking

- Creation of a Continuous Improvement Team – this has been reprofiled to allow it to be implemented following agreement of the proposals within the Council Plan report being considered at this executive.
- Executive Member training on finance – the deadline has been reprofiled. Some training has been delivered but Member feedback is awaited on future training needs.
- Development of a communications strategy – this has been reprofiled to ensure there continues to be a focus on communications following the transition from Transformation to Continuous Improvement.
- Implementation of a revised approach to Performance Management – reprofiled slightly, a proposed Performance Management Policy will be brought to Executive for consideration in April 2026.

4.7 A number of actions have been closed to reflect the proposed transition from Transformation to Continuous Improvement.

4.8 Key highlights, filtered by Best Value theme are set out below:



Partnerships and Community Engagement

4.9 The Council is continuing to improve the way it works with partners with the aim of establishing a consistent, place-based approach, focussed on what Middlesbrough needs, rather than individual organisations. Since progress was last reported to Members:

- The Place Leaders Partnership has identified a company to undertake youth engagement as part of steps to further develop a draft vision
- Continued to work with the Tees Valley Combined Authority. The Local Government Association Peer Challenge follow up report acknowledged the progress that the Council has made to build stronger relationships and praised the action to date.

4.10 The LGA follow up report has commented on the Place Leaders approach, and went on to say that:

‘The emerging vision - centred on young people and extending into early adulthood - signals long-term aspirations for the town and provides a solid foundation for lasting change. This marks a significant shift from a period of internal focus to Middlesbrough taking an active role as the convenor of place.’

Culture

- 4.11 The latest peer challenge update stated that those the peer team spoke to found the Council to be ‘more stable, confident, and calm, reflecting a wider cultural shift’.
- 4.12 One of the key documents the Council will deliver over the next three years is the People Strategy. The People Strategy sets out the steps the Council will take to ensure its staff have the skills, capabilities, behaviours and values that are needed to deliver improved outcomes for our residents and ultimately deliver the Council Plan ambitions. Since this was last reported, the Council continues to deliver actions within the strategy and regularly report progress and impact. Leadership Management Team considered a progress report in December 2025.
- 4.13 The People Strategy sits alongside the Member Development Strategy, which sets out how the Council will support the training and development needs of councillors. Since last reported, training continues to be delivered for Members. The Continuous Improvement Plan has been amended to include an action to embed a cycle of regular temperature check surveys within the Member Development Strategy as part of steps to increase participation. A variety of methods will be trailed in the next survey to attempt to increase participation. This will be delivered in May 2026.
- 4.14 While the peer team identified many positives, as set out in the Continuous Improvement Plan, it did also agree that while both staff and member perceptions and engagement have improved, there was room to increase the levels of engagement from both groups to ensure their views were being shared and heard. Action to address this is embedded within the ongoing Continuous Improvement Plan.

Use of Resources

- 4.15 Ensuring resources are used effectively has been, and will continue to be, a key focus of the Council given the financially challenging environment that it continues to operate in. Over the last three months the Council has continued to build on the positive progress it achieved in relation to financial management. The 2026/27 Budget includes provision to increase both reserves and spending on priorities, in a balanced approach that focusses on financial sustainability, following positive local government funding settlement for Middlesbrough.
- 4.16 The Council has now ensured that there is a Pay and Reward specialist in place. The review of Internal Audit arrangements is on track, and the outcome is due to be considered by Audit Committee in April 2026. Since it was last reported, actions in relation to the Treasury Management Strategy have been delivered and in addition, external training on good practice in relation to this field has been commissioned for both Executive and Audit Committee Members. The training was made available to all interested members. Actions in relation to the management of commercial property have now been completed, with new arrangements now live.

Governance

- 4.17 An action to provide a mid-year Treasury Management Strategy update to Executive in response to an Exceptional Financial Support review recommendation has now been delivered.
- 4.18 Additional capacity is now in place to support the Councillor Gateway system. The Officer started in the post in September 2025. The aim of the post is to improve the user experience Members have with the system. The Council has also reestablished the project group that implemented the system to review whether further improvements can be made. Since this was last reported, a session was held with the most frequent users of the system to deepen understanding of their frustrations and identify opportunities to improve their experiences. This is an area of ongoing focus for the Council in order to ensure that there is a simple, effective system to support Member needs.

5. Ward Member Engagement if relevant and appropriate

5.1 Not applicable.

6. Other potential alternative(s) and why these have not been recommended

6.1 The Council could choose to maintain multiple documents capturing continuous improvement activity; however, this would be an inefficient approach and would reduce Members' ability to see a comprehensive overview of the Council's ongoing activity in relation to continuous improvement.

7. Impact(s) of the recommended decision(s)

Topic	Impact
Financial (including procurement and Social Value)	Responding to the recommendations fully that have been made by both the LGA Corporate Peer Challenge team and Middlesbrough Independent Improvement Advisory Board (MIIAB) as well as wider strategic continuous improvement activity captured within the Plan will inevitably have financial implications for the Council. Financial implications in relation to individual activities will be set out as necessary and appropriate authority sought to deliver actions.
Legal	While both the LGA peer challenge process and the work of MIIAB are discretionary exercises, the topics covered by both support the Council's compliance with its Best Value Duty. A Continuous Improvement Plan ensures there is a systematic approach to continuous improvement that will provide future assurance to all stakeholders that the Council will respond effectively to any recommendations arising from inspections, reviews and other relevant reports.
Risk	If the Council failed to deliver this Continuous Improvement Plan, this could have a negative impact on potentially all Strategic Risk Register risks. Successful delivery will impact positively on the risk of a failure in corporate governance.

Human Rights, Public Sector Equality Duty and Community Cohesion	The Continuous Improvement Plan includes actions that will impact positively on this theme, in particular there are planned actions to strengthen the Council's approach to equality, diversity and inclusion and community engagement.
Reducing Poverty	While not directly impacting on this theme, the LGA Corporate Peer Challenge acknowledged the Council's plans which are already underway to strengthen focus on the existing commitment within the Council Plan that tackling poverty should be at the heart of everything we do.
Climate Change / Environmental	The content of this report is not directly relevant to these areas of impact, however continued implementation of improvement activity will ensure the Council is better able to deliver its Council Plan ambitions and compliance with good governance.
Children and Young People Cared for by the Authority and Care Leavers	
Data Protection	

Actions to be taken to implement the recommended decision(s)

Action	Responsible Officer	Deadline
Report progress on delivery of the Continuous Improvement Plan to Overview and Scrutiny Board	Ann-Marie Johnstone, Head of Chief Executive's Department	15 April 2026

Appendices

1	Continuous Improvement Plan – Progress as at October 2025
2	Local Government Association Corporate Peer Challenge – Progress Review

Background papers

Body	Report title	Date
Full Council	Local Government Association Peer Review and Middlesbrough Independent Improvement Advisory Board reports and planned approach to Continuous Improvement – moving forward	26 March 2025
Executive	Delivery against the Continuous Improvement Plan - Progress update	16 July 2025
Overview and Scrutiny Board	Delivery against the Continuous Improvement Plan - Progress update	30 July 2025

Contact: Ann-Marie Johnstone, Head of Chief Executive's Department
Email: ann-marie_johnstone@middlesbrough.gov.uk

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Continuous Improvement Plan

Delivery of the Council's Continuous Improvement Plan has a clear relationship with the Best Value Duty. Delivery of actions will ensure it has a robust approach across all the seven themes that comprise the Best Value Duty:



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This will ensure the Council is in a stronger position to deliver the four ambitions it has set out within the 2024 – 2027 Council Plan that Middlesbrough will:

- Be a successful and ambitious town
- Be a healthy place
- Have safe and resilient communities
- Deliver Best Value.

This plan encompasses the following strategic continuous improvement activity:

- The findings of the Local Government Association (LGA) Corporate Peer Challenge team and the progress visit held in November 2025. It now also reflects the content of the follow up visit by some of the team, held in November 2025, where action will not be addressed by the content of this plan, other reports in this meeting or the 2026/7 budget setting process.
- Responses to the last report of the Middlesbrough Independent Improvement Advisory Board (MIIAB)
- recommendations from the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA)
- An action in response to the Care Quality Commission inspection of Adult Social Care services.

There are currently 49 actions within this plan. Of those 22 are marked as complete, although some still have ongoing commitments and may result in further actions being identified. Since this was last reported, 8 actions have been completed. Two new actions have been added since the Plan was last reported. Of the remaining ongoing actions, 5 that have been reprofiled.

Rec.	Council Plan Ambition	Best Value Theme	Recommendation	Action	Owner(s)	Target date for completion	June 2025 update	October 2025 update	January 2026 update
1	All	Partnerships and Community Engagement	(CPC) Develop in co-production with communities, residents, partners and businesses a long-term vision for the town that is inclusive, practical and deliverable. By looking outwards and harnessing untapped potential to deliver its vision, this will enable everyone to understand and contribute to delivering shared ambitions for the benefit of Middlesbrough and its communities.	The Council is in the process of reestablishing a town wide engagement mechanism for Partners which will be called a Town Board and will replicate the best parts of the defunct Local Strategic Partnership arrangements to ensure there is a regular meeting of key strategic public, private and VCS partners to set the strategic direction for the town and identify and deliver system wide change to improve outcomes for our residents. Once established, the first key task will be to co-produce a vision in a process that engages local communities and residents.	Chief Executive	Board to be established by June 2025 and a co-produced vision will be developed during 2025/26.	Ongoing. Draft Terms of Reference developed, and initial communications will be issued this month with a view to setting up the first meeting in June 2025 to be held in July 2025.	Ongoing. The Board, now known as the Place Leaders Partnership, has now agreed a work programme for its work. The Board has a series of workshop sessions planned between September and December 2025 to focus on the following topics: 1. Identifying top priorities for intervention in Middlesbrough's economy 2. Evidence base including an updated economic assessment from Locus and strategic approach to communications 3. How we can extract the best social value from our collective interventions.	Ongoing. This emerging Partnership has continued to refine its approach and thinking on this topic. The workshops have been held and continue to be held. A company has been identified to undertake youth engagement as part of steps to further develop a draft plan. The Council Plan report to Executive in March 2026 provides an update on the work of the Partnership and sets out the planned approach to development of the vision. This report, if agreed will give a democratic mandate for the work of the Council in this emerging partnership.

Rec.	Council Plan Ambition	Best Value Theme	Recommendation	Action	Owner(s)	Target date for completion	June 2025 update	October 2025 update	January 2026 update
								The output of this work will be creation of a Town Plan and a vision for the town.	
2	All	Partnerships and Community Engagement	<p>(CPC) Redefine Middlesbrough's strategic approach to partnership working based on principles of timely and meaningful collaboration, co-design and with common purpose to inspire and build a team beyond the council that are galvanised to deliver for the town.</p> <p>This will strengthen delivery of Middlesbrough's place shaping ambitions, maximise use of collective resources, and help shift the focus from organisational recovery to delivery of improved outcomes for residents.</p>	The Council is committed to working with partners more effectively to co-produce a vision for the town, alongside a strategy, underpinned by agreed principles which will govern how we will work together to deliver improved outcomes for our residents. It is planned to use the reestablished Towns Board to co-produce an agreed strategic approach to partnership working.	Chief Executive	March 2026 – reprofiled to August 2026	See above.	Ongoing. The outcome of the workshops set out above will be used to then develop a collective, long-term vision for the town and a coproduced partnership vision and plan for the town.	Ongoing and reprofiled. It has been important to allow the Partnership to emerge and develop organically, in order to ensure that all Partners who are involved are assured it is a true partnership approach. As such, while conversations are ongoing to define what partnership working should look like, this action has been reprofiled to enable the proposed document to reflect that emerging thinking.
3	All	Partnerships and Community Engagement	(CPC) Develop and seek to strengthen relationships with the Tees Valley Combined Authority (TVCA) and Tees Valley councils. This will maximise the potential for Middlesbrough and the wider Tees	Officers are continuing to engage with the TVCA officers to work positively with them and there are a range of officer working groups that are well established across the Tees Valley.	Mayor and Chief Executive	May 2025	Complete. Following publication of the LGA corporate peer challenge team report, the Chief Executive wrote to the Interim Chief Executive of TVCA to seek	Tees Valley Chief Executives continue to meet weekly with the TVCA and supporting statutory officers are also regularly meeting with their respective partners.	In November 2025, the Council had a Corporate Peer Challenge follow up visit by the Local Government Association. That report acknowledged the progress the Council has made to build stronger

Rec.	Council Plan Ambition	Best Value Theme	Recommendation	Action	Owner(s)	Target date for completion	June 2025 update	October 2025 update	January 2026 update
			Valley to realise the benefits from being at the forefront of devolution and drive economic development and growth which will be critical to all the council's ambitions.	The Council will seek formal engagement with the TVCA other Local Government members of the Combined Authority to outline a proposed revised engagement approach across matters of mutual interests to enable improved outcomes for residents and businesses in the Tees Valley			discussions. First sessions were held in May. The Council has also engaged with TVCA staff to provide support in response to the recent Best Value Inspection Notice and Section 24 statutory recommendations that have been issued to TVCA. This is just the start of work and while this specific action is complete, further actions will be generated in due course to build on this. Chief Executives have agreed their participation in recruitment of the development corporation chairs for other areas as part of steps to continue positive relationships.	TVCA is on an improvement journey which the Council is actively supporting it on. There have been some key initial improvements. We will continue to work proactively with TVCA to build on this.	relationships with TVCA. The report praised the action to date.
4	All	Partnerships and Community Engagement	(CPC) Seek to resolve the hiatus with the Middlesbrough Mayoral Development Corporation (MDC)	The Council will seek formal discussions with TVCA and government on options to address the hiatus in the best interests of	Chief Executive	May 2025	Complete and ongoing. TVCA have agreed to develop a document which will articulate	The TVCA Mayor has now appointed a Chief Operating Officer for the MDC. There is now a plan in place to manage the transfer of assets	Work on this is ongoing on this. The TVCA budget setting report for 2026/27 considered by Cabinet on 30 January 2026 has identified risks in relation future funding

Rec.	Council Plan Ambition	Best Value Theme	Recommendation	Action	Owner(s)	Target date for completion	June 2025 update	October 2025 update	January 2026 update
			<p>to achieve a shared plan for the town.</p> <p>This will unlock its potential as a powerful mechanism for effectively delivering economic development and growth and integrating the resources and assets of the council and TVCA.</p>	the residents of Middlesbrough.			<p>planned outcomes from the MDC and the timing of the Council and TVCA's contributions toward it.</p>	<p>into MDC which has resolved the hiatus.</p> <p>As part of the TVCA Best Value Notice governance review, the TVCA Mayor has now appointed an independent chairperson of the MDC, former Middlesbrough Council Chief Executive, Tony Parkinson.</p> <p>MDC is now a partner on the Place Leadership Partnership. Work is underway between the Council and the MDC to reassess existing development and delivery plans collaboratively.</p>	to cover the core costs of the MDC between 2026-28.
5	All	Culture	<p>(CPC) Develop and embed a comprehensive approach to strengthening equality, diversity, and inclusion, including:</p> <p>a. In organisational development, the workforce and democratic representation;</p> <p>b. Within strategy, policy, and service delivery; and</p>	We will raise the ambitions within the People Strategy and Member Development Strategy (expanding to include promotion of councillor roles to potential future councillors) to seize the opportunities that an improved approach to community engagement will	Head of HR and Head of Legal (People)	<p>People Strategy annual review (April 2025)</p> <p>Member Development Strategy annual review (To note, the last review determined that it should be moved from February 2026 to June 2026 to follow</p>	<p>Complete and ongoing.</p> <p>Revised People Strategy considered and adopted by LMT in May. There is a detailed workplan in place which contains greater ambition and activity in relation to community engagement.</p>	<p>The Leadership team continue to receive regular reports setting out progress in delivery of the People Strategy and its impact on the workforce and the commitment to improve the way it reflects our local population. The Council is continuing to develop its organisational development offer which is now live and</p>	<p>A further update on the People Strategy was provided to LMT in December 2025, and the strategy will be reviewed in April 2026.</p> <p>The HR EDI Lead provided an update of activity to LMT in October 2025 including the expansion of staff networks to include a Neurodivergent Group and a Parent and Family Group.</p>

Rec.	Council Plan Ambition	Best Value Theme	Recommendation	Action	Owner(s)	Target date for completion	June 2025 update	October 2025 update	January 2026 update
			<p>c. Community engagement, ensuring it looks at this agenda strategically for Middlesborough as a whole, not only for the organisation and those elected or employed.</p> <p>This will ensure EDI is at the heart of everything it does, that the council is representative of the communities it serves and delivers better decision-making by harnessing different perspectives</p>	bring as our residents increase their trust in the Council.		the municipal year.)	<p>The Council now offers briefings to those who are considering standing for local election. This needs to be codified within the next review of the Member Development Strategy.</p>	<p>will be further developed. We have invested in the capacity of our HR and OD functions in order to ensure we can deliver our ambitions.</p> <p>As part of delivery of the Member Development Strategy, there is ongoing engagement, delivered through the Members Communications working group.</p> <p>Following a meeting of the Members and Officers Communication Working group in September, the Council will be establishing regular quarterly training sessions to drive a regular cycle of training opportunities as part of the suite of actions being delivered by the Member Development Strategy.</p>	<p>Ongoing delivery of the Management Development Programme focussed on the three C's - Collaboration, Communication and Change continues to build on improving workforce culture.</p> <p>On the Member Engagement Strategy, the Council acknowledges the ongoing challenges referenced in the latest peer team report, that highlight ongoing mixed levels of attendance at development events. It will continue to deploy a variety of engagement methods and considered this issue within the annual review of the Member Development Strategy.</p>
				We will review the Council's report formats, policy and strategy templates to strengthen the way the Council	Head of Governance, Policy and Information	May 2025	Complete. Report formats were revised in April. Communications		

Rec.	Council Plan Ambition	Best Value Theme	Recommendation	Action	Owner(s)	Target date for completion	June 2025 update	October 2025 update	January 2026 update
				assesses the impact of its activities on equality, diversity and inclusion.			<p>issued to report authors and all staff involved in the report development process. An Engagement session was held with Wider Leadership Management Team to outline the rationale for changes including improved consideration of impacts on EDI as well as improving the way reports demonstrate their impact on the four Council Plan ambitions.</p> <p>The Council has also reviewed its Impact Assessment Policy to capture impacts on poverty.</p>		
				Over the next 12 months the Council plans to increase community development capacity as part of the emerging Neighbourhoods Strategy which will include actions to also reset its	Director of Environment and Community Services	March 2026	Ongoing.	<p>Ongoing. The Council has now put in place additional Community Engagement Staff to increase its capacity around this as well as employment of additional capacity to undertake public engagement in key</p>	<p>Complete. Neighbourhoods model, agreed by Executive in April 2025, is now in delivery.</p> <p>A new follow up action has been added in January 2026 to capture the next steps</p>

Rec.	Council Plan Ambition	Best Value Theme	Recommendation	Action	Owner(s)	Target date for completion	June 2025 update	October 2025 update	January 2026 update
				<p>approach to community engagement to ensure it better understands and responds to the needs of its communities as well as reestablishing a proactive approach to decision making that focusses on coproduction where possible.</p>				<p>areas. In the first instance this has focussed on education around waste and recycling.</p> <p>We have commenced a programme of community conversations.</p> <p>The Council is also engaging with a national leader in community engagement to review its strategic, long-term approach, reviewing the current approach and making recommendations to further strengthen community engagement and cohesion work.</p> <p>Recent confirmation for two Middlesbrough Wards to be included in Pride in Place programme Phase 2 (formerly Neighbourhood Trailblazers will give an opportunity to put the new principles into practice during 2026 and into the following 10-year delivery phase.</p>	<p>which are to set out a Community Engagement Strategy.</p>

Rec.	Council Plan Ambition	Best Value Theme	Recommendation	Action	Owner(s)	Target date for completion	June 2025 update	October 2025 update	January 2026 update
				NEW** Bring forward a Community Engagement Strategy that will set out how the Council uses this increased capacity to systematically engage with its residents.		August 2026			New action identified in January 2026 following completion of the above.
6	Delivering Best Value	Use of Resources	(CPC) Bring further rigour to financial planning and management to support savings delivery and financial resilience by: a. Reviewing the MTFP assumptions and updating them on a quarterly basis, with clear plans for managing demand and delivering savings reported in monthly budget reports. b. Supporting Executive Members to own and shape the financial position, within their portfolio areas and collectively, working with senior officers to challenge,	Effects on the Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP) are going to be included within future quarterly budget outturn reports. The Council already has a cycle of monthly budget reporting and agreement of actions in response to issues raised by this process. These are then formally reported to Members/ appropriate member decision making and engagement is undertaken. This is included within the quarterly outturn reports.	Section 151 Officer	To commence within the year-end report for 2024/25 (June 2025)	Complete and ongoing. Impacts on the MTFP are reflected within the year-end report being considered by Executive in June 2025. Going forward this will be expanded on in future reports.	Financial pressures have been a significant issue in 2025/26 to date and were reported in full in the Quarter One Budget outturn report and also in the September MTFP update to Executive. As a result of this predicted overspend, all services with an overspend were required to develop financial recovery plans with a view to achieving a balanced budget overall in 2025/26. The output of this work will be reflected within the Quarter Two Budget Outturn report and will feed the update of the MTFP due in December. The Section 151 Officer is considering all measures that could be taken	

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			<p>monitor and hold each other to account.</p> <p>c. Embed understanding and ownership of the financial position with budget holders to ensure the on-going delivery of transformation, savings and efficiencies.</p> <p>d. Ensuring that scrutiny and audit oversight is effective, transparent and supports understanding - beyond the council - with key partners and the public.</p> <p>e. Reviewing pay scales to support recruitment and retention of key staff, linked to workforce and succession planning, with a focus on both bringing in external, as well as nurturing internal, talent.</p>	<p>Executive role - Further training will be provided to Executive Members on financial management disciplines. The Council already has in place Executive involvement in the budget clinic cycle, attending on a quarterly basis for all areas except Children's Services where they attend monthly.</p>	Section 151 Officer	March 2026	<p>Ongoing. Following identification of the Executive Members, a training programme is being developed in consultation with the lead member for finance with a draft training programme to be in place by July for delivery from September onwards.</p>	<p>should the above action not result in an improved budget position.</p> <p>In delivery. The first training session was held in September to provide an overview of the Financial position of the Council for all members and training sessions have been held targeted at Executive Members on wider governance issues and communications good practice. The next phase needs to cover financial management good practice and disciplines to commence in late October. While this is still being scoped, the first training session has been set to be jointly delivered from a Member and Officer perspective and will cover the role of an Executive Member in the budget setting process.</p>	<p>Ongoing.</p>
				Commence delivery of the Executive Member training programme in relation to finance.	Section 151 Officer	<p>July 2025</p> <p>Reprofiled to March 2026</p>	In development.	<p>Ongoing. Executive Members will be asked to shape their training ask as part of their training session in late October.</p>	<p>Ongoing. Treasury Management training being delivered in February. Action reprofiled to March 2026. Member feedback on further</p>

Rec.	Council Plan Ambition	Best Value Theme	Recommendation	Action	Owner(s)	Target date for completion	June 2025 update	October 2025 update	January 2026 update
									training needs is required to shape the content of a wider training programme.
				Regular monthly reports continue to be submitted to Leadership Team and Wider Leadership Management Team on the budget position. We have an ongoing training programme that we are committed to delivering to ensure we raise and maintain the financial skill sets of our budget holders. Additional support is targeted at new budget holders, on a risk-based approach, with the highest levels of support targeted at those managing the most volatile budgets.	Section 151 Officer	Monthly	Ongoing.	Ongoing. The Council's budget continues to be monitored on a monthly basis.	Ongoing. As the Council transitions into business-as-usual continuous improvement, this process will be refined in 2026/27.
				A proposal will be submitted to Audit Committee to recommend it completes a self-assessment against CIPFA Good Governance guidance in March. If agreed, it will be delivered during 2025/26.	Section 151 Officer	March 2025, with the review to be completed during 2025/26	Complete and ongoing. The review is underway and is being facilitated by an LGA regional advisory who is a former Section 151 Officer.	Complete. The outcome of this was agreed by Committee and reported to Full Council in October within the first Annual Report of the Committee.	Complete. Work is ongoing to implement an agreed development plan.

Rec.	Council Plan Ambition	Best Value Theme	Recommendation	Action	Owner(s)	Target date for completion	June 2025 update	October 2025 update	January 2026 update
							The outcome of that review will be agreed by committee and then reported within the first annual report from the Committee to full Council, anticipated to be delivered by September 2025.		
				Scrutiny - the Monitoring officer and S151 officer are working towards development of an integrated approach to reporting the quarterly outturn position to improve members understanding of the overall position of the Council financially and their understanding of the impact on delivery of Council plan priorities.	Section 151 Officer and Monitoring Officer Reallocated to the Chief Executive from the Monitoring Officer following the Senior Management review	June 2025 onwards Revised target April 2026	Discussions on how to ensure that integrated performance and finance reporting works effectively to demonstrate a narrative across the two disciplines and informs Council decision making is ongoing. It is proposed that this initial target is reset to allow the Council time to reset its wider approach to Performance management, with a view to implementing a new approach from 2026/27.	Ongoing. The Council is in the process of completing recruitment to additional financial and performance posts that will support this outcome.	Ongoing. Since last reported, the Council has identified staff to enter key roles and is in the process of onboarding these staff. There will be an integrated Performance and Budget Management Policy brought forward to Executive in April 2026 for agreement following collaborative working with finance and performance staff. The new cycle will be implemented to align with the refreshed Council Plan.
				The Town Board, once reestablished, will become the vehicle through	Chief Executive	June 2025	See previous.	Complete. The Town Board, now known as the Place Leaders Partnership, has now been	

Rec.	Council Plan Ambition	Best Value Theme	Recommendation	Action	Owner(s)	Target date for completion	June 2025 update	October 2025 update	January 2026 update
				which strategic discussions with our partners are held this will include sharing information about our spending power and priorities. The Board will be established during 2025.				established, it has agreed a work programme that is designed to enable it to create a shared vision for the town.	
				We are securing additional capacity within the HR team to be able to look at options around the Council's recruitment and retention of key staff as well as ongoing delivery of the People Strategy to ensure our staff have the skills and capabilities to be able to meet the needs of succession planning.	Head of HR	May 2025	Complete. Growth bid has been approved to provide this additional capacity. Additional action captured to track recruitment to the post.		
				Complete recruitment of the Pay and Reward Specialist to provide additional capacity to review the Council's approach on this matter.	Head of HR	September 2025		Overdue. Following failure to attract candidates, the post was reviewed and is currently being recruited to again. Should this also be unsuccessful, the organisation will be looking at all options to ensure it has capacity in this key area.	Complete. Post now in place.

Rec.	Council Plan Ambition	Best Value Theme	Recommendation	Action	Owner(s)	Target date for completion	June 2025 update	October 2025 update	January 2026 update
7	All	Use of Resources	<p>(CPC) Reframe Middlesbrough's approach to transformation, shifting from tactical savings during a crisis, to long term financial sustainability and continuous improvement to deliver better outcomes, by:</p> <p>a. Undertaking a cross-council reset and relaunch of its transformation priorities, alongside the council plan and council values, underpinned by strong leadership, a robust communications and engagement plan, and organisational development strategy.</p> <p>b. Creating a senior transformation officer role to lead, consolidate and prioritise the current programme, identify new</p>	<p>Following successful delivery of a programme of projects which have been primarily focussed on putting the council on a sound financial footing.</p> <p>The Council is currently pausing slightly to ensure the next phase of its approach to transformation of services, using a refined set of projects and programmes that has an increased focus on delivery of improved outcomes for our residents to support delivery of the council plan vision and underpinning ambitions, within a sustainable cost envelope.</p> <p>A report on the revised approach and the plans to put in place the capacity to deliver it successfully will be presented to Executive shortly.</p>	Chief Executive and Section 151 officer	April 2025	<p>Complete. The Council has taken a reset report to Executive in April which has set out how it will amend delivery of the Council's approach to transformation. This includes plans to recruit a senior transformation officer.</p>		<p>Complete. Following the refresh of the Council Plan and the transition to continuous improvement, the Council has transitioned away from the original transformation programme to an embedded approach to continuous improvement that will focus on identification and delivery of business change, where needed to improve outcomes for residents and businesses.</p>

Rec.	Council Plan Ambition	Best Value Theme	Recommendation	Action	Owner(s)	Target date for completion	June 2025 update	October 2025 update	January 2026 update
			<p>areas for transformation, track progress and delivery of desired outcomes, and drive the organisational change and buy-in required to deliver successful transformation.</p> <p>c. Reviewing capacity to deliver Middlesbrough's transformation ambitions, including within corporate services and supporting data and analysis and performance management, to ensure that all relevant services are adequately resourced to support transformation outcomes.</p>	Complete recruitment of a Strategic Lead for Transformation.	Chief Executive	September 2025 To be reprofiled.	New action added following completion of the initial commitment to reset the Council's approach to transformation	Overdue. The Council had appointed a strategic lead who was due to commence working with the Council in October 2025. This person has unfortunately withdrawn from this process. Over the next quarter action will be taken to seek other candidates.	Action cancelled and replaced with the Council's continuous improvement approach, embedded within the Council's revised approach to performance management.
			complete recruitment of a Continuous Improvement Team.	Strategic Lead for Transformation	October 2025 To be reprofiled. Reprofiled to May 2026	New action added following completion of the initial commitment to reset the Council's approach to transformation	Overdue. This action was delayed as a result of delays to the appointment of the Strategic Lead for Transformation. This is being reprofiled to be delivered by March 2026. The Council has created additional capacity within its senior leadership around the transformation themes of digital and housing, with two new Head of Service posts created and appointed to over the summer who are providing additional leadership capacity in those areas.	Ongoing.	
8	Delivering Best Value	Continuous Improvement	(CPC) Establish a locally owned assurance and improvement	This Continuous Improvement Plan and the regular reporting of it to	Chief Executive	July 2025 onwards	Ongoing. This document forms part of the first	Ongoing. This is the second report that has been produced	Ongoing. This is the third report that has been produced.

Rec.	Council Plan Ambition	Best Value Theme	Recommendation	Action	Owner(s)	Target date for completion	June 2025 update	October 2025 update	January 2026 update
			<p>approach for Middlesbrough once the voluntary improvement Board steps down.</p> <p>This will help embed and sustain continuous improvement and support, providing oversight of the golden thread between the council's vision, corporate plan, performance and delivery of outcomes. By doing so, it will provide the council, its partners, and residents with assurance that the improvement journey is continuing at pace.</p>	Executive and Scrutiny will ensure there is a locally owned assurance and improvement plan in place.			reports that will be submitted.	as part of this framework.	
9	Delivering Best Value	Use of Resources	<p>(CPC) Review and strengthen Middlesbrough's internal audit arrangements and provision. This will ensure they are fit for purpose and adequately support its continuous improvement and assurance journey, with internal audit a key tool when deployed strategically in the delivery of high-</p>	Commission an external review of the current arrangements for internal audit to provide assurance to the Council as to whether they remain fit for purpose or require adjustment to better support the Council's continuous improvement and assurance journey.	Section 151 Officer	Review to be commissioned by September 2025 for deliver in 2025/26.	<p>An initial meeting has been held with Veritau to discuss the scope of this review and timescales.</p> <p>It is anticipated that a draft scope setting out required outcomes from an Internal Audit Service will be developed in consultation with Leadership Management</p>	<p>Ongoing. There are ongoing discussions with the Council's provider to review the approach and the outcome of this will be reported to Audit Committee in April 2026.</p> <p>In line with good practice, some initial changes have already been agreed. For example, it is good practice to change the lead auditor</p>	<p>Ongoing. On track to be considered by Audit Committee in April 2026 as per that committee's work programme.</p>

Rec.	Council Plan Ambition	Best Value Theme	Recommendation	Action	Owner(s)	Target date for completion	June 2025 update	October 2025 update	January 2026 update
			quality services, transformation and financial outcomes				Team by August 2025.	periodically. This will be implemented in 2025/26 by the provider.	
10	All	Governance	<p>(CPC) Review and strengthen Middlesbrough's overview & scrutiny arrangements.</p> <p>This will ensure arrangements support robust and impactful scrutiny for the future, aligned with best practice.</p>	<p>A planned review is already underway to assess the impact and effectiveness of the current arrangements following 12 months of their implementation with a view to changing if needed. Guidance from the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny will be used and members will be fully engaged in the review.</p> <p>In addition, a pre-scrutiny protocol will be developed to establish a collaborative working relationship between Executive and Scrutiny Councillors to enhance decision-making in the organisation.</p>	Monitoring Officer	May 2025	<p>Complete. Review of scrutiny arrangements completed in December and the final report went to Overview and Scrutiny Board in April 2025. As a result of the review, scrutiny panels have been amended to increase panel capacity from 3 to 4 (including OSB).</p> <p>Pre-scrutiny protocol submitted to LMT in May 2025 prior to submission to OSB in July.</p>		
				NEW** Conduct a survey of scrutiny members to seek their views on the current approach to scrutiny to	Monitoring Officer	May 2026			Action put in place to assess the extent that the new arrangements are embedded and identify opportunities

Rec.	Council Plan Ambition	Best Value Theme	Recommendation	Action	Owner(s)	Target date for completion	June 2025 update	October 2025 update	January 2026 update
				assess the impact of the revised model.					for further improvement.
11	All	Governance	(CPC) Support councillors further in their roles through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Providing the Executive with administrative support and training for their roles; b. Addressing issues with Councillor Gateway system; c. Providing sufficient advanced notice for meetings, and at times that meet councillors' needs; and d. Promote and encourage good councillor conduct, including on digital platforms. 	We are securing additional democratic support capacity to support the Executive team administration their roles.	Monitoring Officer	September 2025	Completed. Agreed growth bid in place.		
				Complete recruitment to an additional Business Support Officer post to support the work of the Executive	Monitoring Officer	September 2025	Completed in June 2025.	Completed. The occupant is now in place for the new post.	
				The Council has reinstated the Gateway Project Board that oversaw development of the gateway. Deliver the Improvement action plan that has been developed by that Board. The Board includes Member representatives.	Monitoring Officer	Ongoing	n/a	Ongoing. New action focussed on ensuring there is a mechanism to improve the user experience.	Ongoing. There is a group that is meeting regularly to understand this. Officers have recently met with the most frequent users of the system to improve their experience. At the same time there is focussed work ongoing to improve processes.
				Training for Executive Members to be developed	Monitoring Officer	Ongoing	Complete and ongoing. The incoming Executive have been offered access to the LGA Executive member leadership training course as well as provision of an ongoing		

Rec.	Council Plan Ambition	Best Value Theme	Recommendation	Action	Owner(s)	Target date for completion	June 2025 update	October 2025 update	January 2026 update
							<p>training and development offer covering governance, communications, finance and</p> <p>This will continue to be tracked to ensure a good take up. It aligns with the governance and finance training also in delivery.</p>		
				We are securing additional capacity to support the quality of responses to Members and to manage feedback from Members to establish a continuous improvement approach to both the system and the outcomes members are seeking.	Monitoring Officer	September 2025	Completed. Agreed growth bid in place.		
				Complete recruitment to the additional support to support an improved Member Enquiries experience for Councillors	Monitoring Officer	September 2025	Ongoing.	Complete. The occupant is now in post.	
				Ongoing discussions will continue to be held with Members to	Monitoring Officer	May 2025 committee diary setting	Complete. In order to ensure this is member led, it has been		

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				<p>identify the issues with timings and options the Council could put in place to manage timings and support Members to attend.</p>		<p>by Council and ongoing</p>	<p>decided to book provisional dates for meetings of committees and then facilitate a committee-by-committee discussion on timing and frequency of meetings to meet Member needs. The Council will continue to seek feedback on this and refine the approach as necessary.</p>		
				<p>We have recently delivered further training to all Members on good conduct on social media and will regularly push out reminders on good practice on social media usage.</p>	<p>Monitoring Officer</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Ongoing, social media posts continue to be a source of standards complaints.</p>	<p>Ongoing. Standards training delivered in September for Councillors and Parish Councillors covered this as a topic. Unfortunately, there was a very low turnout for that training. Members are being urged to engage in the training that is being offered. Officers continue to look at the way training is delivered and timings to ensure they consider all options to improve Member engagement. Member feedback will be sought on an ongoing basis to</p>	<p>Complete and embedded. The Council will maintain a regular cycle of analysing root causes of Member conduct and delivering preventative training. This is embedded within the work programme of the Council's Standards Committee.</p>

Rec.	Council Plan Ambition	Best Value Theme	Recommendation	Action	Owner(s)	Target date for completion	June 2025 update	October 2025 update	January 2026 update
								adjust the approach as necessary.	
12	All	Governance	<p>(CPC) Continue to improve member and officer relationships with clear understanding of the respective roles, responsibilities and promoting good behaviours.</p> <p>This will continue to strengthen Middlesbrough's governance guardrails, promote conduct in line with the Nolan Principles, and avoid the risks which in the past have arisen from Middlesbrough's Mayoral model.</p>	We are committed to an ongoing cycle of training and development of both officers and Members and will regularly take the temperature of the organisation through engagement and surveys to identify where more needs to be done.	Monitoring Officer	Ongoing regular surveys throughout the year	<p>Ongoing. Staff temperature check survey went live in June 2025.</p> <p>Members were surveyed as part of the review of the Member Development Survey in February 2025. The next planned survey will be undertaken in September 2025 and will focus on Member and Officer relationships.</p> <p>The Statutory Officers meet with group leaders on a monthly basis.</p>	<p>Ongoing. Since last reported, the Council has completed a further survey of its staff. This year's survey had a significant increase in respondents with 16% more of the workforce responding to the survey. As well as increased engagement, there was an increase in the positivity staff feel about working for the Council. Staff also felt more comfortable in expressing their opinions honestly. Most staff were also very clear how their work linked to the ambitions in the Council Plan.</p> <p>A temperature check survey of Members was launched in October and the outcome will be reported in the next update.</p>	<p>Ongoing. The Council will maintain a regular cycle of analysing root causes of Member conduct complaints and delivering preventative training. This is embedded within the work programme of the Council's Standards Committee.</p> <p>A further survey will be completed in May 2026 of members – regular contact with surveys with Members will be embedded within the Member Development Strategy. The methodology of engagement will be varied to attempt to increase participation.</p>
13	Delivering Best Value	Use of Resources, Service delivery and Continuous Improvement	(MIIAB) Develop a medium-term plan, as organisational capacity improves, to integrate finance and performance reporting within the	Following successful growth bids to put in place the capacity within Finance, action is being taken to secure additional	Section 151 Officer and Monitoring Officer	Staff will be recruited into post by September 2025.	Ongoing. Additional posts have now been job evaluated for the performance team and are	Overdue. Further recruitment underway within finance and performance to facilitate this. There have been some	Complete. Additional capacity is now secured; the Corporate Performance Manager will commence work during April 2026.

Rec.	Council Plan Ambition	Best Value Theme	Recommendation	Action	Owner(s)	Target date for completion	June 2025 update	October 2025 update	January 2026 update
			corporate governance framework.	capacity to reestablish a more embedded performance management process as well. Action will initially be taken to recruit additional capacity, with a view to first working together to strengthen performance management and reporting and then jointly developing an integrated approach to reporting to improve the Council's ability to demonstrate alignment of its resources with Council priorities and the relationship between resourcing and performance across its priority areas.			going through the VCF process. Recruitment to the Deputy 151 officer post has been completed. This post will be necessary to shape the nature of the additional capacity within finance and complete recruitment. They will commence in post in late July 2025.	delays following two unsuccessful attempts to recruit to a Corporate Performance Manager post. The Council is exploring all options to address this.	Some further capacity planned to be recruited to during 2026/27 to support the Corporate Performance Manager. Initial population of the finance structure is in place but will be subject to further development in 2026/27 as part of actions to move the Council toward achievement an improved star rating against the CIPFA financial good practice model.
14	Delivering Best Value	Use of Resources	(MIAAB) Focus on long term financial resilience and: a. tight control on 2025/26, b. develop a balanced position for the medium term, c. have a planned approach to	The Council has a robust budget management approach in place which it intends to maintain in 2025/26, including ongoing budget clinics, with Member involvement within them, as well as	Section 151 Officer	Quarterly throughout 2025/26 Proposed revised target of April 2026 onwards	Discussions on how to ensure that integrated performance and finance reporting works effectively to demonstrate a narrative across the two disciplines and informs Council	Ongoing	Ongoing. Work is ongoing to develop this model with an ambition to start its implementation, subject to member approval, from the end of Quarter One 2026/27.

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			<p>growth,</p> <p>d. do not fund ongoing expenditure from one off funding pots,</p> <p>e. focus on transformational opportunities.</p>	<p>monthly budget reporting to inform these processes.</p> <p>Regular liaison with Executive will be undertaken as part of the quarterly review of the effects of decisions and expenditure on the MTFP. This will include medium term planning for growth.</p> <p>Not funding ongoing expenditure from one off pots of funding is a principle that is already robustly applied to Council budget setting processes. For example the proposed governance of the Middlesbrough Priorities fund includes such a principle.</p>			<p>decision making is ongoing.</p> <p>It is proposed that this initial target is reset to allow the Council time to reset its wider approach to Performance management, with a view to implementing a new approach from 2026/27.</p>		
15	Delivering Best Value	Use of Resources	(MIIAB) Be prudent with extra money: top up reserves (to a level higher than currently suggesting), invest in contingency.	This is another principle within the Council's budget setting process and there are a number of contingencies built into the budget	Section 151 Officer	n/a - Ongoing over the life of the Medium Term Financial Plan	Ongoing. The Year end outturn report on 11 June 2025, shows a positive direction of travel on reserves over the life of the MTFP.	Ongoing.	Ongoing. The 2026/27 proposed budget includes a substantial increase in reserves, with further increases planned over the medium term. Further detail on this is

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				<p>including a risk fund to manage risks around non-delivery of savings.</p> <p>The Medium-Term Financial Plan includes plans to grow the reserves prudently while balancing against the level of demand arising from being a local authority in one of the country's most deprived areas.</p>			<p>On 31 March 2025, reserves were at £21.654m, compared to a target that was set during the section 24 action plan delivery of £18.1m by 31 March 2025.</p>		<p>set out in the Reserves Policy 26/27.</p>
16	All	All	(MIIAB) Build organisational capacity to strengthen resilience in finance, HR, OD and transformation to support delivery of your corporate plan priorities.	<p>The Council has already taken action to identify funding for growth in these areas and it will consider whether there are any further growth needs within its reset approach to transformation which will be considered by Executive in April 2025.</p>	Chief Executive	May 2025	<p>Complete and ongoing. Finance growth bid is now secured and a service review will be undertaken to ensure it is utilised effectively once the new Deputy 151 Officer is in post from late July 2025. The review is expected to commence by November 2025.</p> <p>The Council has reset its approach to transformation and set aside significant capital receipts that can be drawn down as needed to</p>	<p>Review of Finance capacity is ongoing with additional capacity built into the structure which are currently out for recruitment. The Council is carefully building up its capacity in this area to ensure that it has a planned approach to onboarding this additional capacity to ensure it is able to make the maximum positive impact.</p>	

Rec.	Council Plan Ambition	Best Value Theme	Recommendation	Action	Owner(s)	Target date for completion	June 2025 update	October 2025 update	January 2026 update
							<p>fund support services as the Strategic Lead of Transformation drives the Council's approach to transformation and develops, in detail, the activities that will need to be taken. In April 2025, Executive agreed flexible use of Capital receipts to fund a strategic lead for Transformation and additional support capacity in the form of a continuous improvement team.</p> <p>Recruitment to these posts is expected to commence in July 2025.</p>		
17	All	Leadership	(MIIAB) Continue to focus on organisational development as an important part of your continuous improvement journey, with a particular focus on team development and embedding stable, permanent leadership	Executive and Leadership team development programme has been put in place and is resuming at pace, with external support and expertise. In addition, the Council is refreshing support for its wider	Monitoring Officer	Ongoing	The Council's Organisational Development (OD) Team has developed a leadership and management training programme that spans from aspiring manager level through to Chief Executive.	Ongoing. The post has now been recruited to and a start date agreed for November 2025. Once this person is in post, the organisation will be moving at pace to launch its revised management support offer.	Ongoing. New Senior OD Business Partner appointed in November 2025, enabling to us to develop OD Projects in - Workforce Planning, Coaching & mentoring, Work Experience and Apprenticeships. All to be rolled out from

Rec.	Council Plan Ambition	Best Value Theme	Recommendation	Action	Owner(s)	Target date for completion	June 2025 update	October 2025 update	January 2026 update
			arrangements.	Managers, reestablishing a management training gateway, along with a wide range of programmes to develop skills and capacity. This is being overseen within the delivery of the People Strategy.			<p>The programme focusses on a core set of skills and behaviours to ensure they are embedded across the organisation.</p> <p>The Council is working to increase the capacity of its OD team and aims to complete recruitment to a vacant post within the team by September 2025.</p>	<p>A series of sessions are already in delivery with Leadership Management Team and Executive over the autumn.</p>	<p>February 2026 onwards.</p> <p>New Customer Excellence training programme to mobilise the new Customer Strategy and Charter is also in development and will be rolled out from March 2026 to the full workforce.</p> <p>We have also developed and introduced a new Staff and Management Development Programme to further develop knowledge and skills in Communication, Collaboration and Change. Successful pilot programme ran October – December 2025, delivery schedule agreed to offer this to the full workforce until March 2027.</p> <p>In addition, the OD Manager continues to work with LMT and Executive to build relationships and develop collective leadership behaviours and approaches, sessions ran in October and</p>

Rec.	Council Plan Ambition	Best Value Theme	Recommendation	Action	Owner(s)	Target date for completion	June 2025 update	October 2025 update	January 2026 update
									November 2025 will be continued this year.
18	All	All	(MIIAB) Complete and implement your communications strategy and use it as an effective tool to bring the council vision to life and to ensure that both the internal and external environment understands the outcomes the council is trying to achieve.	Once the Council has reset its approach to transformation, a draft Communications Strategy will be developed to ensure that there is a plan in place, owned by senior leaders, that ensures the Council is clearly communicating its vision, priorities and actions to ensure Members, Staff, the public and partners understand and engage with the outcomes the council is trying to achieve.	Chief Executive	Draft Strategy June 2025, to be reviewed on a quarterly basis by Leadership team. Reprofiled to September 2025. This will be reprofiled to June 2026.	In progress. The Communications team continues to prioritise topics that are linked to the Council Plan. The changes to the approach to transformation are still emerging. One key update is the briefings for staff held by the Chief Executive on the Council Plan, the organisation's values and transformation	Ongoing. This will be revisited as part of the refreshed approach to Transformation that will be led by the incoming Strategic Lead for Transformation. Once they have taken an initial view, this target date will be reprofiled to align with their work priorities. The Council is continuing to review the effectiveness of its internal communications within business-as-usual processes.	Ongoing. As the original transformation programme evolves into one of continuous improvement, a communications plan will be developed to keep staff, partners and residents updated.
19	Delivering Best Value	Use of Resources	(EFS) The council are mitigating this risk for 2024/25 through contingencies and EFS. There are also reserves though these are at a critically low level. From 2025/26 onwards, the council aims to deliver transformational savings but we consider there to be significant risk in this	The Council has put in place a savings delivery risk budget and has also increased the levels of reserves to manage this risk and is in the process of also resetting its approach to transformation. Regular monitoring of savings delivery will continue to	Section 151 Officer	September 2025	Ongoing. The Section 151 Officer has in place a regular monitoring and reporting cycle on delivery of savings and sets out this performance within the Quarterly budget outturn reports to Executive and Overview and Scrutiny Board.	Ongoing. This is being considered within the Financial Recovery Plans during Quarter Two.	Complete. The Council has delivered substantial savings during its transformation programme and is now in a position to be able to move into a Continuous Improvement cycle. It will continue to maintain a grip on savings identified, using that new cycle,

Rec.	Council Plan Ambition	Best Value Theme	Recommendation	Action	Owner(s)	Target date for completion	June 2025 update	October 2025 update	January 2026 update
			plan. We raise Recommendation 15 for the council to develop comprehensive mitigation plans for savings that have been designated as 'Amber' and 'Red' within the Transformation Programme, focusing on identifying barriers and implementing solutions to reduce risks. Ensuring these plans are regularly updated and integrated into the projects.	take place with mitigation being developed as appropriate. SMART action – Any savings that are deemed to be undeliverable must be replaced with mitigation. Financial Regulations will be amended to set out clear expectations around this.			As of June 2025, no savings for 2025/26 have been identified as undeliverable. Performance by quarter will be reported in the Quarter One outturn report, due to be submitted to Executive in September 2025. Further actions as required will be developed following that.		
20	Delivering Best Value	Governance	(EFS) We raise Recommendation 3 encouraging the council to: a) consider the merits of appointing at least one independently, ideally two, co-opted independent members to its Audit Committee; b) ensure that the Audit Committee reports directly to Full Council and that this is documented within the Constitution; and c) include quarterly presentation of the Strategic Risk Register to the Audit Committee	Audit Committee to complete a self-assessment of its effectiveness with external independent support which will inform a develop plan for the committee. Completion of the first annual report from Audit Committee to Full Council.	Section 151 Officer and Monitoring Officer	September 2025 December 2025	Ongoing. The self-assessment was already in train and was a commitment in the 2023/24 Annual Governance Statement. An independent LGA advisor is supporting the committee to complete this. Ongoing. The outcome of the self assessment will be reflected in the first annual report of the committee and will form a development plan	Complete. Audit Committee agreed the recommendations in principle and their formal response at its meeting in September 2025. Complete. The first annual report of the Audit Committee was reported to the October 2025 meeting of Full Council.	Complete. A development plan is in delivery and progress monitored by the Committee.

Rec.	Council Plan Ambition	Best Value Theme	Recommendation	Action	Owner(s)	Target date for completion	June 2025 update	October 2025 update	January 2026 update
							for the Committee.		
				The Risk Register is reported to the Audit Committee every 6 months and to Overview and Scrutiny Board every quarter.		N/a already in place every 6 months.	Complete.		
21	Delivering Best Value	Governance	(EFS) We raise Recommendation 4 encouraging the council to explore options for growing report writing skills at the lower levels of the organisation.	A revised report format will be considered by Leadership team in April, alongside recommendations to refresh report writing support.	Monitoring Officer	Complete	Complete. A new report format has been developed, and engagement has been undertaken to identify report writing needs.		
22	Delivering Best Value	Use of Resources	(EFS) We have raised Recommendation 9 that the council should more clearly articulate its approach to mitigating treasury management risks in the Treasury Management Strategy. From our review we have not identified any significant risk that the council is exposed to but recommend a clearer articulation of the steps taken to mitigate these risks.	Improved TMS taken to Council in February 2025 but further work will be undertaken to strengthen this within a revised TMS half year update to be presented to Executive.	Section 151 Officer	October 2025 Reprofiled to December 2025 following identification of an error with the target date – the update should follow on from completion of the mid-year financial update being provided to Executive.	Ongoing.	In progress. This will be reported to the December meeting of Executive, following consideration of the Quarter Two Financial Outturn report at Executive.	Complete. Agreed by Executive in February 2026.
23a	Delivering Best Value	Use of Resources	(EFS) We have raised Recommendation 11 that the council should progress	The Council has already commenced a soft market testing exercise with	Director of Regeneration	Completion of soft market testing by March 2025	Ongoing. Soft market testing complete. The initial stage has been completed	Completed. Soft market testing has been completed.	

Rec.	Council Plan Ambition	Best Value Theme	Recommendation	Action	Owner(s)	Target date for completion	June 2025 update	October 2025 update	January 2026 update
			external management arrangements for its remaining commercial properties in a timely manner.	Cushman and Wakefield to assess the extent of the commercial portfolio that could be outsourced. Once completed this will inform next steps with a realistic proposal for outsourcing based on market appetite.		Subject to findings, development of an appropriate approach to outsourcing will be undertaken during 2025/26 if the business case is supportive of that outcome.	to assess the appropriateness of arrangements to ensure it is assured that it has the correct management arrangements in place, which included consideration of external management. The Council is currently continuing to review and refine its options appraisal in relation to this to ensure it has a sustainable medium term approach to commercial property management.		
23b				Follow up action: Go live with the new arrangements. Timing is subject to the internal approval processes of the appointed company	Director of Regeneration	April 2026 onwards	n/a	Ongoing. This is a new action agreed following completion of the soft market testing action above. An agreement has now been signed and is on track to go live before the target date.	Complete. Approval has been granted, and arrangements are now in place.

Rec.	Council Plan Ambition	Best Value Theme	Recommendation	Action	Owner(s)	Target date for completion	June 2025 update	October 2025 update	January 2026 update
24	Delivering Best Value	Use of Resources	(EFS) We have raised Recommendation 12 that the council should continue to review and consider the most prudent approach to calculating MRP whilst considering both short-term and long-term impacts on the revenue budget.	The Council will review the MRP methodology and consider the effects on the MTFP as part of the 2026/7 budget setting process.	Section 151 Officer	March 2026	Ongoing. This will be considered within the review of the MTFP as part of the 2026/27 budget setting process which will articulate the Council's considered approach, taking into account the costs of changes in approach, risks and the impact on the Council's Treasury Management Strategy.	Ongoing. See the June 2025 update which sets out the approach that is underway.	Ongoing. To be reviewed following changes in government funding methodologies. The Council's approach is set out in the Treasury Management Strategy considered by Executive in February 2026. This will be kept under review as part of the Council's strong oversight and management of its budget.
25	Delivering Best Value	Continuous Improvement	(EFS) We raise Recommendation 16 that the council should develop a comprehensive change management framework that includes clear objectives, key performance indicators, and a culture of continuous improvement. There should be integrated accountability structures that clearly define roles and responsibilities for transformation initiatives. We also raise Recommendation 17 for the council to	Develop and finalise a Change Management Framework Not applicable as already actions in place to address this within the CIP	Section 151 Officer	December 2025	Ongoing. This will be picked up by the new Strategic Lead for Transformation to put in place a coherent approach to transformation that includes change management.	Ongoing. Will likely be reprofiled with a realistic target date by the incoming strategic lead for Transformation once appointed.	Action cancelled. Replaced by the Council's revised approach to business change and continuous improvement.

Rec.	Council Plan Ambition	Best Value Theme	Recommendation	Action	Owner(s)	Target date for completion	June 2025 update	October 2025 update	January 2026 update
			engage with stakeholders, including employees, residents, and partners, to build support for transformative initiatives and ensure alignment with broader community goals. The council should ensure all stakeholders are aligned with the transformation agenda through effective communication and engagement strategies.						
26	All	All	(EFS) The Council have put in place an improvement plan to address the recommendations within the Care Quality Commission (CQC) report on the Council's Adult Social Care services that was issued in February 2025.	Submit quarterly reports to Department of Health and Social Care following consideration of those items by the People Scrutiny Panel.	Director of Adult Social Care and Health Integration	Ongoing from September 2025 on a quarterly basis (revised from May 2025)	Ongoing. The outcome of the inspection was reported to People Scrutiny Panel in March 2025 The first progress report is now due to go to the Committee in September 2025.	Ongoing. Quarterly update submitted to the Department of Health and Social Care on 21 August 2025, following consideration by the People Scrutiny Panel. The report outlines continued progress against the Adult Social Care Directorate Improvement Plan, aligned to CQC findings. Governance is in place via the Directorate Improvement Board chaired by the Director of Adult Social Care, with	Complete. The Adult Social Care Directorate Improvement Programme continues to progress well, with monthly monitoring through the Improvement Programme Board and quarterly reports submitted to the Department of Health and Social Care throughout 2025. These reports demonstrated sustained improvements against the CQC-related actions, leading DHSC to de-escalate the Council from formal

Rec.	Council Plan Ambition	Best Value Theme	Recommendation	Action	Owner(s)	Target date for completion	June 2025 update	October 2025 update	January 2026 update
								escalation routes to the Leadership Management Team (LMT). A process is currently underway with the Department of Health and Social Care, through Partners in Care and Health to assess whether government oversight can be reduced if they are comfortable with the Council's progress to date, direction of travel and pace of change which would be a very positive endorsement of the Council's approach.	monitoring. This reflects strong governance, a clear direction of travel, and confidence in Middlesbrough's ongoing delivery of the Adult Social Care Improvement Plan
27	Delivering Best Value	Continuous Improvement, Use of Resources and Leadership	(CQC) The CQC inspectors identified concerns that there was not much of a corporate view of adult social care performance data.	Refresh and reestablish a performance management cycle beyond the strategic level, to embed a 'golden thread' of Performance Management from the Council Plan down to departmental level.	Director of Legal and Governance Services – Transferred to Chief Executive following the Senior Management Review.	December 2025 – reprofiled to April 2026	Ongoing. A proposed way forward has been developed. A revised Performance Management Policy will be brought forward for Member decision in December 2025.	Ongoing.	Ongoing. This has been reprofiled slightly to allow the policy and supporting framework to reflect the transition from Transformation to Continuous Improvement that is set out in the Council Plan report at this Executive.

Source key:

CPC	LGA Corporate Peer Challenge January 2025 recommendations
MIIAB	Former Middlesbrough Independent Improvement Advisory Board recommendations
EFS	Exceptional Financial Support Grant Thornton review
CQC	Adult Social Care, Care Quality Commission inspection February 2025

LGA Corporate Peer Challenge – Progress Review

Middlesbrough Council

12-13 November 2025

Feedback

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1. Introduction

Middlesbrough Council (Middlesbrough) undertook a Local Government Association (LGA) Corporate Peer Challenge (CPC) during 13 – 16 January 2025 and promptly published the full report with an action plan.

The Progress Review is an integral part of the CPC process. Taking place approximately ten months after the CPC, it is designed to provide space for the council's senior leadership to:

- receive feedback from peers on the early progress made by the council against the CPC recommendations and the council's RAG rated CPC Action Plan
- consider peers' reflections on any new opportunities or challenges that may have arisen since the peer team were 'on-site' including any further support needs
- discuss any early impact or learning from the progress made to date.

The LGA would like to thank to Middlesbrough for their commitment to sector led improvement. This Progress Review was the next step in an ongoing, open and close relationship that the council has with LGA sector support.

2. Summary of the approach

The Progress Review at Middlesbrough took place onsite on 12-13 November 2025.

The Progress Review focussed on each of the recommendations from the CPC, under the following theme headings:

- strategic vision and partnerships
- governance and continuous improvement
- financial resilience and transformation.

For this Progress Review, the following members of the original CPC team were involved:

- Andrew Lewis, Chief Executive of Liverpool City Council

- Mayor Paul Dennett, Mayor of Salford and Deputy Mayor of Greater Manchester Combined Authority
- Cecillie Booth, Former Executive Director of Corporate Services and Section 151 Officer at Peterborough City Council
- Helen Edwards, Director of Law, Governance, Audit (Monitoring Officer), West Midlands Combined Authority
- Frances Marshall, LGA Senior Regional Adviser and Challenge Manager.

3. Progress Review - Feedback

This report provides a summary of the peer team's reflections on progress made by Middlesbrough against each of the CPC's 12 recommendations since January 2025. It is not an exhaustive record of activity undertaken by Middlesbrough since the CPC, or in response to the CPC. It is a high-level summary of the peer team's reflections based on Middlesbrough's provided pre-reading, pre-engagement meetings, fieldwork meetings and a reflections roundtable. The following summary reflects the peer team's views as fellow local government councillors and officers and is focused solely on the CPC original 12 recommendations.

Executive summary

At the time of the CPC in January 2025, Middlesbrough was emerging from a challenging period marked by weaknesses in corporate governance, culture, and financial management. Since then, the council has maintained a positive trajectory, responding to its CPC recommendations as part of a wide-ranging continuous improvement programme. Of the 23 actions in the CPC action plan, 57 percent were reported as complete, 43 percent were on track, and none were yet to progress, demonstrating a strong commitment to delivery and continuous improvement.

Peers noted that the organisational environment now felt calmer and more confident, with stronger relationships between councillors and officers. Staff and councillors described the council as happier, more outward-looking, and focused on delivering for communities rather than solely on internal improvement. This shift is evident in Middlesbrough's ongoing work to strengthen its partnership approach and improve

external relationships, with a huge opportunity to bring residents, communities, and partners together to shape and become advocates for Middlesbrough. While progress so far is encouraging, the council recognises that defining a clear vision for Middlesbrough, and achieving long-term impact, will take time. As part of this, continuing to build stronger relationships with the Tees Valley Combined Authority (TVCA) as a driver of investment and delivery, is critical.

Financial resilience remains a key priority for Middlesbrough, particularly with national trends of inflationary and service pressures. However, the council has made notable progress: reserves are now less fragile, financial controls have strengthened, and national funding decisions are expected to create modest headroom in the medium-term budget. Despite these improvements, the council continues to face significant financial risks, including a forecast year end overspend of £7.8m at quarter two, driven by demand pressures. The position is managed through a range of contingencies included in the base budget, and as a result, the reported overspend position is reduced to £1.8m. The peer team encouraged Middlesbrough to maintain a prudent and long-term financial approach and move away from centrally controlled contingency budgets for 2026/27 budget, to budget holder accountability. This would promote shared ownership of the financial challenge across the council and avoid overly optimistic assumptions about medium-term risks, which remain significant.

Overall, the peer team commended the council's progress since the CPC and underscored the importance of sustaining its focus on embedding improvements while pursuing its long-term ambition to address deep-rooted economic and social challenges.

Theme 1: Strategic Vision and Partnerships

Recommendations

- Develop – in co-production with communities, partners and businesses - a **long-term vision for the borough** that is inclusive, practical and deliverable.
- Redefine Middlesbrough’s **strategic approach to partnership working** based on principles of timely and meaningful collaboration, co-design and with common purpose.

Middlesbrough has launched a programme to reset its partnership approach and lay the foundations for co-producing a shared long-term vision for the borough. Central to this is the newly established Place Leaders Partnership, which brings together a diverse range of local partners committed to the town. Although still in its early stages, the partnership has begun work on co-designing a multi-generational vision for the borough. There is a huge opportunity to bring residents, communities, and partners together to shape both the vision and its execution, with systems leadership and genuine co-production that produces something more than the sum of its parts.

The peer team commended the Place Leaders Partnership approach, highlighting its wide stakeholder engagement and the council’s careful reflection on its role in shaping this work. Close collaboration with TVCA on development of the town vision will be vital so local ambitions and regional strategies complement and strengthen each other. The emerging vision - centred on young people and extending into early adulthood - signals long-term aspirations for the town and provides a solid foundation for lasting change. This marks a significant shift from a period of internal focus to Middlesbrough taking an active role as the convenor of place.

Building on this momentum, peers encouraged Middlesbrough to explore how the vision can meaningfully engage the public and influence partners’ policy and investment decisions. This will help ensure resources across the town are aligned to deliver the shared ambition for place. Peers also highlighted national developments that could unlock new opportunities for growth, supporting Middlesbrough to turn this vision into tangible outcomes and build wider confidence in the area’s future. These

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included attracting national and regional investment, accelerating housing plans (including those at Middlehaven), capitalising on industrial strategy initiatives, and developing a pro-growth reputation with business. The Pride in Place funding is a clear example of this, offering opportunities to further develop and operationalise Middlesbrough's neighbourhood model and contribute to its emerging vision.

Recommendations

- Develop and seek to **strengthen relationships with TVCA and its other member authorities** to maximise the potential for Middlesbrough and the wider Tees Valley at the forefront of devolution.
- Seek to **resolve the hiatus with the Middlesbrough Development Corporation (MDC)** to unlock its potential as a powerful mechanism for integrating the resources and assets of the council and TVCA, to achieve a shared plan for the town.

Concerted efforts have been made to strengthen relationships with TVCA and address what the peer challenge identified as a hiatus with the MDC. Actions have included proactive engagement by both authorities' political and officer leadership, support for Middlesbrough's Mayor in his TVCA Cabinet role, and direct assistance from Middlesbrough officers to share learning to help TVCA respond to its best value notice.

Peers heard that encouraging progress has been made in resetting relationships and moving toward a more collaborative approach with more proactive engagement now a feature of relationships, and Middlesbrough's Mayor investing significant energy and demonstrating a genuine commitment to this. Significant challenges remain however around partnership arrangements and governance. All parties recognise that building long-term trust will take time and that further work is needed to achieve this. Peers emphasised the importance of Middlesbrough continuing to strengthen this partnership, grounded in a shared purpose and joint enterprise to deliver outcomes for the council and its communities. It is positive that more proactive engagement is now a feature of relations, though continued further development is

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needed and recognised by all.

While there remain issues to be resolved about the MDC's role and focus, steps have been taken to resolve the hiatus with the MDC, including a pragmatic approach to asset transfers, a strong relationship with the new chief operating officer, and better joint working between Middlesbrough and TVCA's officer team. While these are positive developments, the core challenge persists: the MDC is not yet realising its potential to drive investment and delivery in the town. TVCA and Middlesbrough are however now better placed to resolve these issues in partnership.

Recommendation

- Develop and embed a comprehensive approach to **strengthening equality, diversity, and inclusion**, including workforce and democratic representation within strategy, policy, and service delivery; and community engagement.

The council has taken multiple steps to strengthen its approach to equality, diversity, and inclusion, including a refreshed people strategy and work plan designed to improve workforce representation through community engagement. It has updated its impact assessment policy to better capture poverty impacts, enhanced reporting processes, and plans to refresh its member development programme. These changes are supported by initiatives such as a new neighbourhood working model, expanded community engagement capacity, the reintroduction of work-placements for school pupils, and community cohesion activity.

Peers acknowledged the breadth of work undertaken and highlighted the positive feedback they had heard about the council's new neighbourhood working model and its potential to strengthen community engagement. Maintaining this strong focus will be key to turning these measures into lasting impact. Peers highlight the importance of embedding inclusion throughout, particularly in the context of community tensions, ensuring that all voices and needs are represented and the workforce is supported.

Theme 2: Governance and continuous improvement

Recommendations

- Establish a **locally owned assurance and improvement approach** for Middlesbrough post the voluntary improvement Board to provide the council, partners and residents with assurance and support, and embed and sustain continuous improvement.
- Review and **strengthen Middlesbrough's Internal Audit arrangements** and provision to ensure they are fit for purpose and adequately support the council's continuous improvement and assurance journey.
- **Review the Overview & Scrutiny Committee arrangements** to ensure they support robust and impactful scrutiny for the future aligned with best practice.

Middlesbrough has taken decisive steps to strengthen governance and embed continuous improvement through a comprehensive plan that consolidates recommendations from inspections, reviews, and key activities into a single structured framework. Grounded in the Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government's best value guidance, the plan is subject to regular political oversight and scrutiny and fully integrated into senior leadership processes.

Peers commended the council's live, iterative improvement cycle, which they heard is contributing to progress, while observing that maintaining momentum will demand ongoing focus and reinforcement.

Recommendation

- Review and **strengthen Middlesbrough's Internal Audit arrangements** and provision to ensure they are fit for purpose and adequately support MBC's continuous improvement and assurance journey.

Progress in reviewing and strengthening Middlesbrough's internal audit arrangements has moved more slowly than other areas. While the need to reset the relationship with the current provider and increase audit days is recognised,

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discussions on a revised approach remain ongoing. Given internal audit's pivotal role in assurance and improvement, the peer team encouraged Middlesbrough to accelerate action to use audit as a catalyst for organisational change. Doing so could deliver quick wins, lead to tangible improvements, and enhance assurance and confidence in the council's delivery.

Recommendation

- **Review the Overview & Scrutiny Committee arrangements** to ensure they support robust and impactful scrutiny for the future aligned with best practice.

Measures to strengthen overview and scrutiny have been implemented following a review of Middlesbrough's arrangements in March 2025. This has led to a stronger emphasis on pre-decision scrutiny and the creation of an additional committee to increase capacity to scrutinise the key service areas of children's and adults.

The peer team heard that these changes have been welcomed by councillors and have strengthened the ability to scrutinise critical and high spend service areas. However, further work will be required to ensure these changes bed-in effectively and deliver the intended outcomes.

Recommendations

- **Support councillors further** in their roles around:
 - a. supporting the Executive in its roles with administrative support and training
 - b. addressing issues with Councillor Gateway system
 - c. the timings of meetings
 - d. promoting and encouraging good councillor conduct, including on digital platforms.
- Continue to **improve member and officer relationships** with clear understanding of their respective roles, responsibilities and promoting good behaviours.

Improving relationships between councillors and officers has been a long-standing priority for Middlesbrough, with significant work already undertaken. Since the CPC, this focus has continued through ongoing training and development for both groups, supported by regular organisational ‘temperature checks’ via staff surveys.

Those the peer team spoke with described the council as more stable, confident, and calm, reflecting a wider cultural shift. Improved councillor–officer relationships were seen as central to this change, alongside the benefits of a more settled leadership and investment in corporate capacity. Councillors were generally complimentary about officers, and staff survey results and engagement levels almost doubled which indicate improvements in organisational culture compared to the previous year. Whilst this is a positive step, the relatively low response rate shows there is more to do to engage more staff. Continuing to build trust and maintain momentum will be key to sustaining these gains and embedding cultural change.

The peer team heard that additional resource for the Executive has made a significant difference and been widely welcomed. While councillor training sessions have been delivered, attendance has been mixed, suggesting further work is needed

to boost participation and ensure sessions are supported by appropriate technology and accessible to all. The council has made efforts to offer flexible meeting times. The peer team noted however that a more practical balance may be needed between flexibility and sustainability.

The team welcomed initial work planned to facilitate cross-party discussions on the issue of councillors' allowances. To further strengthen support for all councillors, the council should also consider ensuring that an outcome of this ongoing engagement is a cross-party position on councillors' allowances to reflect the time, skills, and responsibilities required for the role. This would help ensure the role remains accessible to people from all backgrounds and recognises the significant commitment involved. Similarly, recognition of appropriate remuneration and support for independent persons on the Audit Committee is important, given the critical skills they bring for assurance and risk management.

Middlesbrough has made concerted efforts to improve the Councillor Gateway casework system and support councillors in using it. However, many councillors continue to express frustrations with its operation. Resolving these issues will be crucial to enabling councillors to access information efficiently and fulfil their roles effectively. The peer team welcomed the decision to restart the gateway project board to address these concerns and encouraged Middlesbrough to identify whether the challenges stem from culture, training, service prioritisation, or back-office processes, and implement targeted solutions accordingly.

Theme 3: Financial resilience and transformation

Recommendation

- Bring further **rigour to financial planning and management** to support savings delivery and financial resilience by:
 - reviewing the MTFP assumptions and updating on a quarterly basis, with clear plans for managing demand and delivering savings reported in monthly budget reports
 - embedding understanding and ownership of the financial position with budget holders to ensure the on-going delivery of transformation, savings and efficiencies
 - supporting the Executive to own and shape the overall financial position, ensure that scrutiny and audit oversight is effective, transparent, and supports understanding beyond the council with key partners and the public
 - reviewing pay scales to support recruitment and retention of key staff, linked to workforce and succession planning, with the right balance of internal promotion and external appointments.

Middlesbrough has implemented a series of measures to strengthen the rigour of its financial planning and management. These include reviewing MTFP assumptions and incorporating changes in quarterly executive reports, providing financial training for councillors, monthly budget reports for leadership team review, completing an audit committee self-assessment against Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) good governance guidance, and progressing recruitment of a pay and reward specialist to support workforce retention. Plans to integrate performance and finance reporting are on hold while the council resets its performance management approach, with a new framework expected from 2026/27.

The peer team heard that these measures have delivered a more consistent level of financial grip across the council, resulting in greater confidence in financial

management. Greater stability in the finance team was evident resulting from successful recruitments, and with steps underway to build future capacity. Financial resilience has also been strengthened by replenishing useable and earmarked reserves from £13.2m to £17.9m, and with plans in place to increase this to £30m. This is good news, with maintaining a sound level of reserves to meet unexpected in-year pressures - particularly in social care - essential. A better-than-historic settlement has created scope for modest headroom in the medium-term budget.

Peers commended Middlesbrough's considerable efforts and progress achieved, while stressing the need for continued caution and sustained focus on financial resilience. Despite improvements, risks remain in the medium-term, with a current budget overspend of £4.5m at quarter one and significant demand pressures, particularly in children's services. Careful management and maintaining healthy reserves will be essential to mitigate unexpected pressures. The council is managing the overspend using contingency budgets and reported confidence in addressing these pressures, with the reported forecast overspend at quarter two reduced to £1.8m, however the reduced forecast is mainly due to the release of contingencies. While it is prudent for the Section 151 Officer to keep a tight grip on the overall financial position, the use of built-in contingencies reduces accountability and responsibility at the budget-holder level. The peer team encouraged Middlesbrough to reduce reliance on contingencies and adopt a more sustainable, transparent approach that gives budget holders greater responsibility and clarity on the financial position. For the 2026/27 budget process, budgets should be accurately allocated to holders, who are accountable for managing their budgets within the set envelope without central control. Peers also highlighted scope to strengthen budget scrutiny to ensure oversight remains robust as pressures evolve.

The peer team recognised that the potential headroom in the budget represents a pivotal opportunity for the council. However, given the sustained financial pressures on local authorities, particularly those serving areas with higher socio-economic need, it would be prudent to avoid overly optimistic assumptions about the future. The council will want to invest this headroom carefully, focusing on key community challenges while safeguarding long-term financial sustainability.

Recommendation

- **Reframe your approach to transformation**, shifting from tactical savings during a crisis to long term financial sustainability and continuous improvement to deliver better outcomes by:
 - undertaking a cross-council reset and relaunch of the transformation priorities alongside the Council Plan and council values, underpinned by strong leadership, a robust communications and engagement plan, and an organisational development strategy
 - creating a senior transformation officer to lead consolidate and prioritise the current programme, identify new areas for transformation, and track progress and delivery of desired outcomes
 - reviewing capacity to deliver Middlesbrough's transformation ambitions, including corporate services and supporting data and analysis, to ensure that all relevant services are adequately resourced to support transformation outcomes.

Middlesbrough has made some headway in advancing its transformation programme. Progress however has been slower than expected due to challenges in recruiting a strategic lead for transformation. Progress to date includes reviewing and relaunching the transformation approach to align with council plan priorities, alongside resource investment and recruitment of additional roles. Middlesbrough has also strengthened its leadership capacity around digital and housing through the appointment of a new head of digital and ICT, and head of strategic housing.

The peer team noted that recruitment difficulties in appointing a dedicated lead officer had understandably slowed momentum. With significant pressures on demand-led services and a fragile financial context, maintaining a clear and sustained focus on transformation - particularly in adults' and children's services - will be critical to meeting these challenges and securing financial sustainability. As the council enters a new phase of its transformation journey, shifting to embed continuous

improvement, this is a timely opportunity to reassess the capacity and leadership needed to deliver its transformation objectives.

4. Final thoughts and next steps

The LGA would like to thank Middlesbrough for undertaking an LGA CPC Progress Review. We commend Middlesbrough for the positive response to the CPC and were pleased to see evidence of its positive contribution to the council's ongoing improvement journey.

We appreciate that senior managerial and political leadership will want to reflect on these findings and suggestions to determine how the organisation wishes to take things forward.

Under the umbrella of LGA sector-led improvement, there is an on-going offer of support to councils. The LGA is well placed to provide additional support, advice and guidance on the areas identified for development and improvement, and we would be happy to discuss this.

Mark Edgell (Principal Adviser) is the main point of contact between the council and the LGA and his e-mail address is mark.edgell@local.gov.uk.

Report of:	Chief Executive, Erik Scollay
Relevant Executive Member:	Mayor, Chris Cooke
Submitted to:	Executive
Date:	11 March 2026
Title:	Corporate Performance Quarter Three 2025/2026
Report for:	Decision
Status:	Public
Council Plan priority:	All
Key decision:	No
Why:	Decision does not reach the threshold to be a key decision
Subject to call in?	Yes
Why:	Non-Urgent Report

Proposed decision(s)

That Executive:

- **APPROVES** proposed changes to the Executive actions, detailed at Appendix 1
- **NOTES** delivery status of the Council Plan 2024-27 supporting workplan, detailed at Appendix 2
- **APPROVES** the proposed changes to the Council Plan 2024-27 supporting workplan actions, detailed at Appendix 3
- **NOTES** the progress and position of the corporate performance disciplines
- **NOTES** that following agreement of the refreshed Council Plan 2026-29, that activities in the work plan will be embedded within Directorate Plans, once developed
- **NOTES** the Strategic Risk Register, at Appendix 4.

Executive summary

This report advises the Executive of progress against corporate performance at Quarter Three 2025/26, providing the necessary information to enable the Executive to discharge its performance management responsibilities against the following performance disciplines:

- Actions pertaining to decisions approved via Executive reports
- Delivery of the Council Plan 2024-27 and associated outcome measures
- Strategic Risk Register performance
- Programme and Project management performance

- Transformation progress and performance, and
- Other matters of compliance.

1. Purpose of this report and its contribution to the achievement of the Council Plan ambitions

1.1 This report advises the Executive of corporate performance at the end of Quarter Three 2025/2026, and where appropriate seeks approval of any changes, where these lie within the authority of the Executive. The primary purpose of the report is to set out how effectively the Council is delivering activity to deliver against each of the current Council Plan priorities, aims and underpinning workplan activities.

Our ambitions	Summary of how this report will support delivery of these ambitions and the underpinning aims
A successful and ambitious town	13 Council Plan Workplan initiatives are supporting delivery of the Council Plan's ambitions and aims to achieve a successful and ambitious town which are reported within this report.
A healthy place	22 Council Plan Workplan initiatives are supporting delivery of the Council Plan's ambitions and aims to achieve a healthy place which are reported within this report.
Safe and resilient communities	8 Council Plan Workplan initiatives are supporting delivery of the Council Plan's ambitions and aims to achieve safe and resilient communities across Middlesbrough which are reported within this report.
Delivering best value	13 Council Plan Workplan initiatives are supporting delivery of the Council Plan's ambitions and aims to achieve safe and resilient communities across Middlesbrough which are reported within this report.

2. Recommendations

2.1 That the Executive:

- **APPROVES** proposed changes to the Executive actions, detailed at Appendix 1
- **NOTES** delivery status of the Council Plan 2024-27 supporting workplan, detailed at Appendix 2
- **APPROVES** the proposed changes to the Council Plan 2024-27 supporting workplan actions, detailed at Appendix 3
- **NOTES** the progress and position of the corporate performance disciplines
- **NOTES** that following agreement of the refreshed Council Plan 2026-29, that activities in the work plan will be embedded within Directorate Plans, once developed
- **NOTES** the Strategic Risk Register, at Appendix 4.

3. Rationale for the recommended decision(s)

3.1 To enable the effective management of performance and risk in line with the Council's Local Code of Corporate Governance.

4. Background and relevant information

4.1 The Council's Scheme of Delegation gives the Executive collective responsibility for corporate strategic performance, together with associated action.

4.2 This report provides the necessary information to enable the Executive to discharge its performance management responsibilities, setting out progress against priority performance disciplines and other key associated items, together with actions to be taken to address any issues identified.

4.3 The projected financial outturn at Quarter Three 2025/2026 is presented separately to this meeting of the Executive currently. During 2026/2027 steps will be taken to deliver integrated reporting.

Overall progress at Quarter Three 2025/26

4.4 The Council's performance overall at the end of Quarter Three 2025/26 saw progress towards expected performance standards, as set out in the Council's risk appetite, achieved in one of the five corporate performance disciplines.

Performance discipline	Q3 2025/26	Q2 2025/26	Q1 2025/26	Expected standard	Standard achieved	Trend
Executive actions	73% (94/129)	75% (60/80)	69% (50/72)	90%	No	↓
Council Plan 2024-27 outcome measures	33% (13/40)	25% (10/40)	20% (8/40)	90%	No	↑
Council Plan workplan	93% (52/56)	97% (54/56)	88% (44/56)	90%	Yes	↓
Strategic Risk Register	88%	95%	93%	90%	No	↓
Programme and Project Management	81% (33/41)	79% (34/43)	100% (17/17)	90%	No	↑

4.5 It should be noted that performance against Programme and Project Management from Quarter Three 2025/26, is against all programmes and projects within the overarching portfolio.

4.6 It should be noted that performance against Council Plan outcomes for Quarter Three 2025/26 is measured by tracking progress against baseline key performance indicators, as outlined in the Council Plan 2024-27 and its associated workplan. It is expected that, over time, 90% of the outcome measures will be achieved.

Progress in delivering Executive actions

4.7 Actions agreed by the Executive to deliver approved decisions are tracked by LMT each month. If, following Executive approval, any action is found to be no longer feasible, appropriate, or cannot be delivered within the approved timescales, this report will be used to advise the Executive of such, and to seek approval of alternative actions or amended timescales.

- 4.8 At Quarter Three 2025/26, 94 of 129 live actions (73%) were reported as being on target to be delivered by the agreed timescales; a slight decrease from the 75% reported at Quarter Two 2025/26, though continuing to remain below the 90% expected standard of achievement of actions.
- 4.9 There are six proposed amendments to Executive actions presented for approval at Quarter Three, which are detailed at Appendix 1. It is assumed that the remainder of Executive actions will be achieved within originally approved timescales and a further update on progress against plans will be provided at Quarter Four 2025/26.
- 4.10 Of the six proposed amendments detailed in Appendix 1, the reasons for the proposed amendments are as follows:
- The Residential and Supported Accommodation for Children in Our Care and Care Leavers Update report has an action relating to providing an update on the new approach and impact, delayed from 30/09/2025 to 31/12/2025 due to plans to remodel the service over time.
 - The *Waste Disposal Contract: Tees Valley Energy Recovery Facility* report has two actions relating to Incorporation of the LA SPV, delayed from 31/12/2025 to 30/04/2026 due to legal process.
 - The *Recovery Solutions Delivery Model* report has an action relating to securing formal approval for the central site from TEWV and complete lease documentation, delayed from 30/11/2025 to 31/03/2025 due to awaiting Heads of Terms to be agreed.
 - The *Final Report of the People Scrutiny Panel - Children Missing Education* report has two actions relating to establishing working groups in respect of the transient community and the issues of school roll turnover and the higher rate of CME in the Romanian community, delayed from 30/11/2025 to 30/03/2026 due to additional time needed to fully understand the needs and requirements of stakeholders and communities.

Progress in delivering the Council Plan 2024-27

- 4.11 The Council Plan is the Council's overarching business plan for the medium-term and sets out the priorities of the Elected Mayor of Middlesbrough and the ambitions for our communities and the ways in which we seek to achieve them.
- 4.12 The Leadership Team collaborated with the Mayor and the Executive to develop and shape the Mayor's priorities for the town, to inform the Council Plan 2024-27.
- 4.13 The Council Plan articulates the four priorities of the Mayor and outlines the approach that will be taken to addressing those priorities:

Mayor's Priority	Description
A successful and ambitious town	Maximising economic growth, employment, and prosperity, in an inclusive and environmentally sustainable way.
A healthy place	Helping our residents to live longer and healthier lives, improving life chances and opportunities to thrive.

Safe and resilient communities	Creating a safer environment, where residents can live more independent lives.
Delivering best value	Changing how we operate, to deliver the best outcomes for residents and businesses.

4.14 The underpinning initiatives and workplans which enable effective delivery of the Council Plan 2024-27 ambitions and measures of success, that were monitored in Quarter three 2025/6 were those set by Executive in November 2024. There is a report on this agenda which seeks agreement of the refreshed key performance indicators that measure the Council Plan success for the refreshed outcomes that were agreed by Executive in December 2025. Once agreed, the underpinning activity will be refreshed that comprised the work plan and delivery of it will be embedded within Directorate Plans which will be in place for 2026/27. The year end outturn report will provide an overview of delivery against the 2024-27 Plan. The Quarter One Outturn report for 2026/27 will set out progress against the refreshed plan.

Council Plan 2024-27: outcomes

4.15 Progress of delivery of the Council Plan 2024-27 is monitored via detailed milestone plans which support each initiative under the four priorities and link to success measures determining the impact upon:

- the types of businesses being established in Middlesbrough, to ensure that we attract those which will give residents access to well-paid and rewarding careers,
- healthy life expectancy of residents of Middlesbrough, who currently experience ill-health much earlier than wealthy areas across the UK,
- community safety, as part of our plans to reduce crime and make residents and communities feel safer,
- progress against the Council's governance improvement journey, to provide assurance to members of the public and our partners that the services we are providing are value for money.

4.16 Performance management and monitoring of the Council Plan adheres to the corporate programme and project management framework where applicable and is reported to all senior managers and Members as part of this quarterly corporate performance results report, presented to Executive for noting and decision, where applicable.

4.17 Performance overall against the Council Plan 2024-27 outcome measures at Quarter Three 2025/26, were reported as 13 of 40 (33%) of an improving trend, against the 90% performance standard, detailed in the table below:

Outcome Status	Q3 2025/26	Q2 2025/26	Q1 2025/26	Expected standard	Standard achieved	Trend
Number (%age) GREEN	10/40 (25%)	8/40 (20%)	8/40 (20%)	90%	No	↑
Number (%age) AMBER	3/40 (8%)	2/40 (5%)	0/40 (0%)	N/A	N/A	↑
Number (%age) RED	27/40 (68%)	30/40 (75%)	32/40 (80%)	N/A	N/A	↓

- 4.18 It should be noted that trends fluctuate throughout the year, influenced by a range of factors such as seasonal variations and a time lag in published data sets being updated. The expectation is that, over time and the duration of the Council Plan, 90% of the outcome measures will be achieved, as these are outcome measures predicted over the period of the Council Plan 2024-27.
- 4.19 Current and previous outcome measures have generally focused on existing published data sets which, whilst they provide consistency and regional and national comparators, meaningful localised data and insights would be more impactful.
- 4.20 A level of strategic cohesion and planning is required to ensure delivery of all Council activity, contributes towards effective and successful delivery of the Council Plan priorities through articulation of what it is we want to achieve / impact / change (the outcomes) and how we then deliver that change (through an enabling strategy) for each Priority. Those outcomes then drive our direction and intention as a Council.
- 4.21 Outcome measures for the next iteration of the Council Plan are currently being developed in collaboration with services, to understand and evidence the impactful work that we as an authority have influence over in shaping and affecting.

Council Plan 2024-27: workplan

- 4.22 At Quarter Three 2025/26, performance against the Council Plan workplan was above the corporate standard of 90%, with 93% of all initiatives on target to be achieved in full, within approved timescales, with further detail provided at Appendix 2.

Status	Q3 2025/26	Q2 2025/26	Q1 2025/26	Expected standard	Standard achieved	Trend
COMPLETED	54% (30/56)	50% (28/56)	36% (20/56)	90%	Yes	↓
GREEN	39% (21/56)	46% (26/56)	50% (28/56)			
AMBER	0% (0/56)	0% (0/56)	0% (0/56)	n/a	n/a	↔
RED	7% (4/56)	4% (2/56)	14% (8/56)	n/a	n/a	↑

5. There were four Council Plan initiatives reporting as off-track at Quarter Three 2025/26, summarised below:
- An initiative relating to *‘Prevent and / or delay the need for formal service provision through improved access to reliable and timely advice and information, to support independent and healthy living’*, delayed from 31/12/2025 to 31/07/2026 due to a delay in completing the testing and go-live of the professional portal.

- An initiative relating to *‘Increasing the effectiveness of prevention through the development of more signposting and a consistent strengths-based approach to the promotion of independence at the “front door” of ASC’*, delayed from 31/03/2026 to 31/12/2026 due to review of Access Team structure.
- An initiative relating to *‘Implementing a new delivery model for Procurement and Contract Management across Council services’*, delayed from 31/12/2025 to 31/03/2026 due to further consideration of options appraisal to deliver a solution.
- An initiative relating to *‘Develop and progress a new Local Plan for Middlesbrough which balances growth aspirations with the longer-term needs of the Middlesbrough community’*, delayed from 31/12/2025 to 31/12/2026 due to awaiting the outcome of examination hearings and likely requirement do undertake further consultation and technical work before taking back to Council.

5.1 There are five proposed amendments to Council Plan workplan actions presented for approval at Quarter Three 2025/26 as detailed at Appendix 3. It is assumed that the remainder of Council Plan workplan actions will be achieved within originally approved timescales and a further update on progress against plans will be provided at Quarter Four 2025/26. As set out above, actions that are still live will be reviewed against the refreshed Outcomes agreed by Executive in December and included in Directorate Plans, where appropriate, for continued delivery, alongside new key actions identified.

Strategic Risk Register (SRR)

5.2 The Strategic Risk Register (SRR) sets out the key risks which, if they occurred, could stop the Council achieving its objectives as set out in the Council Plan.

5.3 The Register also sets out control measures in place to reduce the impact and / or likelihood of a risk occurring, as well as further planned actions to manage the risk. Risks in the SRR are identified and managed by the Council’s LMT in line with the Risk and Opportunity Management Policy, agreed by Executive in 2023. Progress in managing these risks is reported to the LMT monthly, with a full review of the SRR conducted on a quarterly basis.

5.4 The more volatile the risk, the more closely it must be monitored and managed. Managers are responsible for identifying and recording the countermeasures / actions required to address risks and opportunities and maintaining those details within the Council’s risk management solution. Countermeasures to risk will include actions to terminate, transfer, treat or tolerate the risk. Actions in relation to opportunity will include exploitation (fully or partially) or avoidance.

5.5 The SRR contains 15 risks at the end of Quarter Three 2025/26. Risks within the SRR are scored three times, using the following table: the first score assesses the likelihood and impact of the risk occurring without any control measures in place; the second assesses the impact of the control measures currently in place; and the third sets a target for the management of the risk.

Likelihood (Probability)	Almost Certain >80%	5	Low (5)	Medium (10)	High (15)	High (25)	High (35)
	Likely 51% - 80%	4	Low (4)	Medium (8)	High (12)	High (20)	High (28)
	Possible 21% - 50%	3	Low (3)	Medium (6)	Medium (9)	High (15)	High (21)
	Unlikely 6- 20%	2	Low (2)	Low (4)	Medium (6)	Medium (10)	High (14)
	Rare <6%	1	Low (1)	Low (2)	Low (3)	Low (5)	Medium (7)
			1	2	3	5	7
			Insignificant	Minor	Moderate	Major	Extreme
			Impact				

5.6 In Quarter Three two new strategic risks were added as detailed below:

- **SR-17** - Funding for key external projects led by Tees Valley Combined Authority (TVCA) or Middlesbrough Development Corporation (MDC) - If there is a funding gap for key projects led by the Tees Valley Combined Authority (TVCA) and its Mayoral Development Corporation (MDC) that results in a risk of delays, disruption, or failure to deliver on key regeneration sites in the town centre. This could negatively affect economic growth, community development, and investor confidence in the region.
- **SR-18** - Ineffective governance of the Tees Valley Combined Authority (TVCA) - The governance arrangements of the Combined Authority (CA) are not fit for purpose, creating barriers to effective collaboration with the Council and adversely impacting the Council's ability to achieve its ambitions for the town. This misalignment could hinder regional development, compromise strategic initiatives, impact financially on the Council and damage stakeholder confidence.
- The following actions were identified to manage these risks:
 - **SR-17a** Working with TVCA/MDC to develop a realistic delivery plan against essential projects.
 - **SR-18a** Review the reports of the improvement panel as they are published to identify actions that Middlesbrough Council can take to support the TVCA to improve governance and relationships
 - **SR-18b** Regular provision of advice to Middlesbrough Council representatives who sit on various TVCA bodies to ensure they are able to deliver their roles in full and with regard to good governance

5.7 In Quarter Three one strategic risk had been deescalated and moved from strategic risk to directorate risk as detailed below:

- **SR-07** - Unable to recruit and retain key staff - If the Council is unable to recruit and retain key staff, then this could impact on its ability to deliver critical services which could cause harm to people and could result in government intervention.
- This risk is now held under Legal and Corporate Services as - **DR-08-076**.

Directorate Risk Registers

5.8 The SRR has a supporting suite of Directorate Risk Registers. The Council's Leadership team agrees escalations and de-escalations of risk. In addition, Directorate management teams review their risks monthly. This and other measures ensure the Council has a grip on its risk management approach.

5.9 Below is a summary position of actions taken at Directorate level during Quarter Three 2025/26, to manage risks:

Directorate Risk Register	Regeneration and Housing	Adult Social Care and Health	Public Health	Children's Services	Environment, Community and Culture	Finance	Legal and Corporate Services
New Risks	0	0	0	3	0	2	6
New Actions	0	0	2	31	2	7	27
Completed Actions	3	10	0	2	2	5	5
New Assessments	2	4	1	1	2	3	6
Deactivated Risks	0	0	3	0	1	3	1

Progress in delivering Programmes and Projects

5.10 The Council currently maintains a portfolio of corporate and transformation programmes and projects in support of achievement of the Council's strategic priorities.

5.11 This report provides an overview of all corporately monitored projects. At Quarter Three 2025/26, 81% of projects (corporate and transformation) were on-track to deliver against project time, cost, scope, and benefits, which is below the expected combined standard of 90%.

Status	Q3 2025/26 position	Q2 2025/26 position	Q1 2025/26 position	Expected standard	Standard achieved	Trend
GREEN	64% (27/41)	70% (30/43)	100% (17 / 17)	90%	No	↑
AMBER	17% (6/41)	9% (4/43)	0% (0 / 17)			
RED	19% (8/41)	21% (9/43)	0% (0 / 17)	N/A	N/A	↓

Corporate projects progress and performance

5.12 At Quarter Three 2025/26, 83% of corporate projects were on-track to deliver against project time, cost, scope, and benefits, which is below the expected combined standard of 90%.

Status	Q3 2025/26 position	Q2 2025/26 position	Q1 2025/26 position	Expected standard	Standard achieved	Trend
GREEN	66% (23/35)	73% (27/37)	100% (17 / 17)	90%	No	↑
AMBER	17% (6/35)	8% (3/37)	0% (0 / 17)			
RED	17% (6/35)	19% (7/37)	0% (0 / 17)	N/A	N/A	↓

5.13 A further breakdown of the RAG status of corporate projects by Directorate is summarised as follows:

RAG definition	Adults		Children's		ECS		LGS		Finance		Regeneration		Portfolio total no. projects	Portfolio total % projects
Project on-track against time, scope, cost and benefit, with assured plans in place.	1	100%	4	44%	6	67%	0	0%	0	0%	12	100%	23	66%
Some risk to project time, scope, cost and benefit, with mitigation in place, or in development.	0	0%	2	22%	2	22%	1	100%	1	33%	0	0%	6	17%
High risk to project time, scope, cost and benefit, with limited scope for mitigation.	0	0%	3	33%	1	11%	0	0%	2	67%	0	0%	6	17%
Portfolio totals as no. and %	1	3%	9	26%	9	26%	1	3%	3	9%	12	34%	35	100%

Transformation projects progress and performance

5.14 At Quarter Three 2025/26, 67% of transformation projects, were on-track to deliver against the approved project timescales, costs to deliver, scope and remit, and financial and non-financial benefits, which is below the expected combined standard of 90%.

Status	Q3 2025/26 position	Q2 2025/26 position	Q1 2025/26 position	Expected standard	Standard achieved	Trend
GREEN	50% (3/6)	50% (3/6)	N/A	90%	No	↔
AMBER	17% (1/6)	17% (1/6)	N/A			
RED	33% (2/6)	33% (2/6)	N/A	N/A	N/A	↔

5.15 A further breakdown of the RAG status of projects by transformation programme is summarised as follows:

RAG definition	Customer		Neighbourhoods		Digital		Housing		Portfolio total no. projects	Portfolio total % projects
Project on-track against time, scope, cost and benefit, with assured plans in place.	2	67%	0	0%	1	50%	0	0%	3	50%
Some risk to project time, scope, cost and benefit, with mitigation in place, or in development.	1	33%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	1	17%
High risk to project time, scope, cost and benefit, with limited scope for mitigation.	0	0%	0	0%	1	50%	1	100%	2	33%
Portfolio totals as no. and %	3	50%	0	0%	2	33%	1	17%	6	100%

5.16 The focus on transformation has been two-fold; to deliver essential savings and achieve change. Moving forward there will be a new approach to Performance

Management where there will be a stronger focus on the outcomes to be delivered, which represent measurable results or impacts of contributing initiatives and activities. This will be detailed in a report to Executive in April 2026.

5.17 Becoming outcome-focused ensures that everything the organisation does is directed towards making a measurable and lasting difference for residents, communities and businesses. An outcome-based approach provides a clear line of sight between strategic priorities, service delivery, and the changes we aim to achieve across the town. It allows us to set clear goals, measure progress and make evidence-based decisions about where to target resources and for the greater benefit. This approach supports effective performance management and continuous improvement, ensuring value for money, as well as meeting the needs of its communities.

Project gateway approvals

5.18 Project gateway approvals are required throughout the life of a project to ensure appropriate and robust assurance and challenge has been applied to the scoping, planning, development and delivery of the necessary project documentation and delivery plans, which are monitored through the recently introduced Directorate and Corporate Performance Boards.

5.19 Delegated decision-making powers relating to proposed changes to the approved time, scope, cost and benefit of individual programmes and projects are in place, enabling those that are off-track to be brought back within agreed tolerances, as set out in the Programme and Project Management Framework (PPMF). This is with the exception of any key changes or urgent decisions that require Executive approval, which require an additional report.

5.20 In Quarter Three 2025/26, there are 12 project gateway approvals as summarised below:

Directorate / Programme	Project name	Gateway type	Approved
Children's Services	Improvement of internal residential capacity	Change Control	Oct
Legal and Governance Services	SharePoint Implementation	Change Control	
Environment and Community Services	Fleetwave	Change Control	
Environment and Community Services	Central Library	Change Control	
Customer	Cisco Finesse	Change Control	Nov
Customer	Rationalisation of Websites	Project Brief	
Adult Social Care	ASC11: Re-provision use of Levick Court	Business Case	
Neighborhood	Neighbourhood Model	Programme Definition Document	
Regeneration	Property Rationalisation	Closure Report	Dec
Regeneration	Hemlington Grange South	Change Control	

Environment and Community Services	Improving Parks and Play Areas	Project Brief	
Digital	Artificial Intelligence (AI) Discovery Assessment	Change Control	

Progress in other corporate performance matters

Status	Q3 2025/26 position	Q2 2025/26 position	Q1 2025/26 position	Expected standard	Standard achieved	Trend
P 1 / 2 audit actions in time	82%	78%	73%	90%	No	↑
FOI / EIR responded to <20 days	74%	61%	68%	90%	No	↑
% live SARs overdue	19%	20%	16%	90%	No	↓
Information security incidents	45	30	27	N/A	N/A	↑
Incidents reported to the ICO	2	0	1	N/A	N/A	↑
% complaints closed in time	71%	74%	80%	90%	Yes	↓

5.21 In addition to the above performance and risk issues, the Leadership Management Team now review a range of other performance measures on a quarterly basis, including compliance with agreed actions from internal audits, responsiveness to statutory information requests, information security incidents and complaints.

5.22 At the end of Quarter Three 2025/26, the key points of note in matters of compliance, are:

- Five Priority Two actions from the Domestic Abuse audit of Adult Social Care and Children's Services were not completed within the expected timescales. A new lead has now been assigned to ensure these actions are delivered. Additionally, one further Priority Two action, related to the Declarations of Interests and Members' Allowances audit, became overdue on 30/09/2025 though supporting evidence has since been submitted to Veritau. All remaining actions were completed within 14 days of their due dates.
- There has been a slight decline in compliance with statutory timescales for FOI and EIR requests. Capacity challenges within services continue to be a key contributing factor to this ongoing issue. The new system, previously referenced in the Quarter Four 2024/25 report, is scheduled to go live during Quarter Four 2025/26. It is expected that the enhanced functionality and streamlined processes introduced by the system will support services in improving response times and overall compliance.
- Compliance with the legal timescales in relation to Subject Access Requests (SARs) continues to relate to a very small number of complex SARs. Capacity within the central team has now increased, this will support improving the compliance in this area.

5. Ward Member Engagement if relevant and appropriate

5.1 Not applicable.

6. Other potential alternative(s) and why these have not been recommended

6.1 The Council is required to operate a performance management framework in order to ensure delivery of its best value duty; to not do so would place the council at risk of failing in its statutory responsibility in this regard.

7. Impact(s) of the recommended decision(s)

Topic	Impact
Financial (including procurement and Social Value)	There are no direct financial implications arising from the recommendations set out in this report.
Legal	There are no legal impacts of the proposed decisions or recommendations, and they are consistent with and will promote the achievement of the Council's legal duty to achieve Best Value.
Risk	The proposed recommendations are key to and consistent with supporting delivery of the Council's strategic priorities and risks, as set out in the Council Plan.
Human Rights, Public Sector Equality Duty and Community Cohesion	The ambitions of the Council Plan set out how the Council will improve outcomes for all its residents and highlight where additional activity is required to address inequalities in outcomes that exist across groups and individuals. This approach was impact assessed as part of the development of the 2024-2027 Council Plan, which found that the plan would have a positive impact by addressing inequalities.
Reducing Poverty	The ambitions of the Council Plan set out how the Council will work with partners to support our residents out of poverty and improve community resilience to prevent people falling into poverty. Meeting this challenge is central to all of the ambitions within the Council Plan.
Climate Change / Environmental	The ambitions of the Council Plan set out how the Council will protect and improve our environment, as part of the "A healthy place" priority which focuses on improving levels of recycling, protecting and improving parks and open spaces, and improving environment standards of the town. There are no direct impacts on this theme as a result of this and performance to date is reflected in Appendix 2: Council Plan workplan; progress at Quarter Two 2025/26. Where impact on climate change and environment is considered as part of wider programmes, projects or Executive reports, these will be referenced within the detail of the report.
Children and Young People Cared for by the Authority and Care Leavers	The ambitions of the Council Plan set out how the Council will respond and react to Children and Young People cared for by the authority and care leavers, across the "A successful and ambitious town", "A healthy place," and "Safe and Resilient Communities" priorities. There are no direct impacts on this theme as a result of this and performance to date is reflected in Appendix 2: Council Plan workplan; progress at Quarter Two 2025/26. Where impact on Children and Young People cared for by the authority and care leavers is considered as part of wider programmes, projects or Executive reports, these will be referenced within the detail of the report.
Data Protection	Whenever the council delivers activities and uses data to assess impact, it takes the necessary steps to ensure it complies with the requirements of GDPR in any use of personal data that is undertaken within that work.

Actions to be taken to implement the recommended decision(s)

Action	Responsible Officer	Deadline
Performance management feeder systems to be updated according to approval from Executive.	J Chapman	31/03/2026

Appendices

1	Executive actions proposed amendments at Quarter Three 2025/26
2	Council Plan workplan progress at Quarter Three 2025/26
3	Council Plan Workplan; proposed amendments at Quarter Three 2025/26
4	Strategic Risk register progress at Quarter Three 2025/26

Background papers

Body	Report title	Date
Council	The Council Plan 2024-27	08/03/2024
Council	Approach to Transformation of Middlesbrough Council	27/03/2024
Council	Transformation of Middlesbrough Council	24/04/2024
Executive	Quarter One 2024/25 Corporate Performance Report	04/09/2024
Executive	Quarter Two 2024/25 Corporate Performance Report	04/12/2024
Executive	Quarter Three 2024/25 Corporate Performance Report	05/03/2025
Executive	Middlesbrough Priorities Fund	30/04/2025
Executive	Middlesbrough Priorities Fund	16/07/2025
Executive	Quarter Four and Year End 2024/25 Corporate Performance Report	11/06/2025
Executive	Quarter One 2025/26 Corporate Performance Report	03/09/2025
Executive	Quarter Two 2025/26 Corporate Performance Report	03/12/2025

Contact: Ann-Marie Johnstone, Head of Chief Executive's Department

Email: ann-marie_johnstone@middlesbrough.gov.uk

Appendix 1: Executive actions proposed amendments at Quarter Three 2025/26

Executive of	Report	Action	Owner	Original Due date	Current Due Date	Proposed Revised Due Date
08/10/2025	Waste Disposal Contract: Tees Valley Energy Recovery Facility	LA SPV to enter into: a. Waste Supply and Support Agreement (including Contract Waste Forecast Protocol) b. Service Level Agreement c. Secondment Agreement d. Project Agreement e. Council Guarantee of Project Agreement f. Novation of Option Agreement g. Lease (pursuant to Option Agreement) h. Side Deed (direct agreement with estate owner)	ECS	31/12/2025	31/12/2025	31/03/2026
08/10/2025	Waste Disposal Contract: Tees Valley Energy Recovery Facility	Incorporation of the LA SPV - This is expected to take place by 31st November 2025.	ECS	31/12/2025	31/12/2025	30/04/2026
30/11/2025	Recovery Solutions Delivery Model	Secure formal approval for the central site from TEWV and complete lease documentation	PH	30/11/2025	30/11/2025	31/03/2026
08/10/2025	Residential and Supported Accommodation for Children in Our Care and Care Leavers Update	After 6 months we will provide an updated position Executive Director of Children's Services 6 months on the new approach strategy and its impact.	CS	31/10/2025	31/12/2025	Request to close as the service is being remodelled
08/10/2025	Final Report of the People Scrutiny Panel - Children Missing Education	Establish a Working Group between Primary Schools in the Central areas of Middlesbrough, Education and Partnerships, Stronger Communities and local Councillors (in respect of the large transient community and the issues of school roll turnover)	CS	30/11/2025	30/11/2025	31/03/2026
08/10/2025	Final Report of the People Scrutiny Panel - Children Missing Education	Establish a Working Group between Primary Schools in the Central areas of Middlesbrough, Education and Partnerships, Stronger Communities and local Councillors (in respect of the higher rate of CME in the Romanian community)	CS	30/11/2025	30/11/2025	31/03/2026

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Appendix 2: Council Plan workplan progress at Quarter Three 2025/26

We will attract and grow businesses to increase employment opportunities	Q1 2025/26 position	Q2 2025/26 position	Q3 2025/26 position
Implementation of an Economic Growth Strategy and Masterplan for the town, articulating both the aspirations of the Council and key partners and the key future investment priorities.	G	G	G
Expand the towns cultural offer through creation of a Cultural Masterplan, alongside exploration of external investment to ensure long term sustainability.	G	G	G
Increase the local economic impact of new job creation in key sectors.	R	G	G
Improve the range of health and employment related services offered to the public through successful delivery of the Levelling Up Partnership funds.	G	G	G

We will improve attainment in education and skills	Q1 2025/26 position	Q2 2025/26 position	Q3 2025/26 position
Transform Middlesbrough's approach to delivery of learning through implementation of the Council's Education and Skills Strategy.	G	G	G
Improve outcomes through delivery of the Priority Education Area action plan at key stages 1, 2 and 4.	C	C	C
Increase parental understanding of the importance of literacy for under 5's through a programme of learning	G	C	C
Improve life chances by increasing children's and young people's access to high quality education through delivery of the Learning and Education Strategy.	G	C	C
Develop and deliver a programme of qualifications and learning to support people into / back into employment through Middlesbrough Community Learning.	G	G	G

We will ensure housing provision meets local demands	Q1 2025/26 position	Q2 2025/26 position	Q3 2025/26 position
Develop and progress a new Local Plan for Middlesbrough which balances growth aspirations with the longer-term needs of the Middlesbrough community.	G	G	R
Continue to grow housing sites and opportunities in Middlesbrough, to enable the development of 450 units of new housing per year.	G	G	G
Establish a strategic leadership role for the provision of housing to ensure that the provision aligns with needs.	C	C	C
Increase pathways offer for homeless households that embody choice; safety and dignity and provide routes into sustainable, long-term accommodation.	R	G	G

We will improve life chances of our residents by responding to health inequalities	Q1 2025/26 position	Q2 2025/26 position	Q3 2025/26 position
Boost recruitment and retention of practitioners through delivery of the childcare expansion in Early Years	C	C	C
Roll-out the extended childcare entitlement to increased number of children from 9months+, who have access to Early Years provision	C	C	C
Increase outcomes for under 5's through successful delivery of the Best Start Pathway.	G	C	C

Develop research architecture and attract funding, to support development of our local understanding of key issues affecting health inequalities.	G	G	R
Reduce health inequalities caused by excess weight, through implementation of the core Healthy Weight Declaration commitments.	C	C	C
Improve wellbeing in Middlesbrough through embedding a 'health in all' policies approach in all planning and transport decision-making.	G	C	C
Improve health literacy through delivery of a Healthy Start pilot model for prevention of ill-health in schools.	R	G	G
Reduce inequalities through improvements to cancer screening programmes uptake	G	G	G
Improve prevention services delivered in primary and secondary care to increase uptake	G	G	G

We will protect and improve our environment	Q1 2025/26 position	Q2 2025/26 position	Q3 2025/26 position
Increase the levels of recycling in Middlesbrough from 30% to 38%.	G	G	G
Protect and improve our parks and open spaces through retention of Green Flag Status	G	G	G
Improve environmental standards of the town, through increased levels of environmental enforcement.	C	C	C

We will promote inclusivity for all	Q1 2025/26 position	Q2 2025/26 position	Q3 2025/26 position
Strengthen our approach to supporting dementia friendly communities programme through increasing voluntary and community sector capacity	C	C	C
Prevent and / or delay the need for formal service provision through improved access to reliable and timely advice and information, to support independent and healthy living	R	G	R
Develop and implement a pilot approach to housing and support, for inclusion health groups ensure this is reflected in the Supported Housing Strategy	C	C	C

We will reduce poverty	Q1 2025/26 position	Q2 2025/26 position	Q3 2025/26 position
Relaunch Welfare Strategy to support Middlesbrough's vulnerable residents who need financial assistance, advice and support	C	C	C

We will provide support for adults to be independent for longer	Q1 2025/26 position	Q2 2025/26 position	Q3 2025/26 position
Increase the effectiveness of prevention through the development of more signposting and a consistent strengths-based approach to the promotion of independence at the "front door" of Adult Social Care	R	G	G
Increase the amount of reablement provided to reduce the need for on-going care	G	C	C
Develop an enhanced range of accommodation and support options for adults with a learning disability to promote independence and reduce the reliance on residential care provision	G	G	G

Reduce the need for on-going care through the expanded use of the Connect Service, assistive technology and digital solutions	G	C	C
Re-locate and expand our specialist autism Day Care service	G	C	C
Develop a Community Capacity Building Strategy with focus on social capital and community wealth building	G	R	C

We will Improve transport and digital connectivity	Q1 2025/26 position	Q2 2025/26 position	Q3 2025/26 position
Implementation of a transformed customer model to achieve improved customer access, outcomes and savings	G	G	G
Improve public highways and infrastructure to support connectivity across Middlesbrough and the Tees Valley	G	G	G

We will promote new ideas and community initiatives	Q1 2025/26 position	Q2 2025/26 position	Q3 2025/26 position
Introduce a neighbourhood working model to ensure Council services are more closely aligned to community needs	C	C	C

We will reduce crime and antisocial behaviour	Q1 2025/26 position	Q2 2025/26 position	Q3 2025/26 position
Reduce Crime and Anti-Social behaviours across Middlesbrough through the continued working with the Community Safety Partnership	G	C	C
Improve the safety and health of the public and the environments in which they live and work through review of public protection policies and interventions	G	G	G
Implement a multidisciplinary approach (SHIFT) to increase prevention opportunities through early intervention	C	C	C
Work with partners to ensure safe and effective systems and processes are in place for the protection of victims of domestic abuse and their children	R	G	C

We will ensure robust and effective corporate governance	Q1 2025/26 position	Q2 2025/26 position	Q3 2025/26 position
Implement and embed a Member Development Strategy and Programme to extend learning and development opportunities	G	G	G
Develop and implement approach to achieve organisational change through implementation of transformation portfolio of programme and projects and associated governance structure	C	C	C
Refresh the Information Strategy to ensure legal compliance in regard to information governance	C	C	C

We will set a balanced revenue budget and Medium-Term Financial Plan to restore financial resilience and sustainability	Q1 2025/26 position	Q2 2025/26 position	Q3 2025/26 position
Increase internal residential capacity through the purchase of suitable properties	G	G	G
Improve recruitment and retention of social worker related posts through more targeted and effective marketing	G	C	C
Maximise grant opportunities to support service delivery	C	C	C
Implementation of a People Strategy to underpin the Council's cultural transformation ambitions and financial stability	C	C	C
Increase sales and maximise rental income of the Council's asset portfolio to ensure financial sustainability and promote economic growth	G	G	G
Remodel the Council's Planning Service to reflect increasing demand and complexity, address recruitment and retention difficulties, and deliver improved customer service	G	C	C
Implement new delivery model for Procurement and Contract Management across Council services	R	G	R
Increase level of grant income to support development of new service delivery initiatives	R	R	G
Retender pensions administration service, to ensure value for money for fund and scheme members	C	C	C
Implementation and review effectiveness of demand and cost modelling forecast, for high-spend areas to feed into MTFP assumptions	C	C	C
Review of Children's and Young People placements, including processes and procedures to ensure robust decision-making and allocation	C	C	C

Key:	
C	Complete
G	On-track
A	Some slippage
R	High risk of deliverability
U	Undeliverable

Appendix 3: Council Plan Workplan; proposed amendments at Quarter Three 2025/26

Initiative	Owner	Original Due Date	Current Due Date	Reason for (R) / Impact (I) of delay	Proposed Due Date
CP-ASC-01 Prevent and / or delay the need for formal service provision through improved access to reliable and timely advice and information, to support independent and healthy living	ASC	31/12/2025	31/12/2025	(R) Delay to testing of professional portal which will go live in February 2026. (I) No impact other than timescales.	31/07/2026
CP-ASC-03-04 Increase the effectiveness of prevention through the development of more signposting and a consistent strengths-based approach to the promotion of independence at the "front door" of ASC	ASC	31/10/2025	31/12/2025	(R) Delay reviewing Access Team structure (I) No impact other than timescales.	31/12/2026
CP-FIN-07 Implement new delivery model for Procurement and Contract Management across Council services	FIN	31/12/2025	31/12/2025	(R) Delayed due to further consideration of options appraisal to deliver solution (I) None other than timescales. Expected to complete by 31/03/2026	31/03/2026
CP-REG-01 Implementation of an Economic Growth Strategy and Masterplan for the Town, articulating both the aspirations of the Council and key partners and the key future investment priorities	REG	31/03/2026	31/03/2026	(R): Delay due to change in approach to ensure strategy is co-designed with key external stakeholders. (I): 2mth delay to delivery of strategy	31/05/2026
CP-REG-05 Develop and progress a new Local Plan for Middlesbrough which balances growth aspirations with the longer-term needs of the Middlesbrough community	REG	31/08/2024	31/12/2025	(R): Provisional dates for examination hearings (March/April 26). There is likely to be a requirement to do further consultation and technical work on modifications before taking back to council for adoption. (I): Up to a 12mth delay for adoption of a new Local Plan	31/12/2026

Appendix 4: Strategic Risk register progress at Quarter Three 2025/26

Code	Risk Description	Original Score	Current Score	Target Score	Managed By
SR-01	<p>Failure to set a legal and balanced annual budget and to maintain a sustainable Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP)</p> <p>The Council is required to set a legally balanced revenue budget by 11 March in advance of each forthcoming financial year. Failure to achieve this objective will require the s151 Officer to issue a statutory s114 Notice to the Council.</p> <p>The Council has a best value duty to set and maintain a sustainable and balanced Medium Term Financial Plan including maintenance of its reserves position to demonstrate financial resilience to be able to respond to unforeseen and complex financial challenges presented by the wider economic environment.</p>	 <p>35</p>	 <p>21</p>	 <p>21</p>	Director of Finance and Transformation
Current Mitigation		Future Mitigation	Responsible Officer	Director	Target Date
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Responsibility and Accountability for Financial Management reinforced by budget clinics. Monthly budget monitoring, forecasting, and tracking of savings delivery by Directors with accountability to the CEX through LMT and development and delivery of financial recovery plans to control within approved budget Monthly budget clinics chaired by Director of Finance for all Directorates (subject to review by Director of Finance) to enable development of insight, understanding and wider collaboration of colleagues in order to address significant financial risks. Timely briefing of Mayor and Executive Members on significant financial challenges with agreement for action. Quarterly member led budget clinics chaired by the Executive Member for Finance to engage Executive Members. 		<p>Failure of the Recover, Reset, Deliver Transformation Portfolio to identify further savings</p>	<p>Chief Executive</p> 	<p>Director of Finance and Transformation; Chief Executive</p>	<p>31-Mar-2026</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monthly monitoring of income budgets, council tax and business rates collection rates and debt levels. Update MTFP regularly ahead of Council Planning and annual budget setting process. Further development of budget management Power BI dashboard over Business World financial management system in order to improve accessibility of financial information for Directors, Heads of Service and Budget Manager. Implementation and expansion of purchase to pay compliance dashboards for use by Directors, Heads of Service and Budget Managers to drive increase in compliant procurement in relation to retrospective ordering, on vs off contract spend and use of purchase cards. Corporate and Strategic Capital boards to monitor capital expenditure and develop future capital plans. 					
Code	Risk Description	Original Score	Current Score	Target Score	Managed By
Page 12 of 24	<p>Volatility in the demand, complexity and cost of children's social care.</p> <p>The risk that demand and cost of and children's social care continues to escalate on the scale experienced in 2024/25, is the single biggest risk to the Councils financial viability. More financially sustainable solutions for meeting social care needs of children need to be secured with urgency to ensure delivery within the approved budget for 2025/26.</p>	 <p>35</p>	 <p>28</p>	 <p>21</p>	Director of Children's Care; Director of Children's Services; Chief Executive
Current Mitigation	Future Mitigation	Responsible Officer	Director	Target Date	
<p>Children's input</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Weekly activity data through Chat reports/ data Weekly financial monitoring with Finance Business Partner Placement review has taken place to manage costs associated with young people. MOU surrounding agency costs as a region was implemented in April 2025. Recruitment and retention strategy reviewed to increase permanent staff within the local authority. Spending controls in place as per scheme of delegation. 			Director of Children's Care; Director of Children's Services; Director of Education and Partnerships		

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monthly Member and Officer meetings. Director Children's Care reviewing placements to ensure VFM. Future proofing for savings for Children's Services to ensure effective financial planning. 					
Code	Risk Description	Original Score	Current Score	Target Score	Managed By
SR-03	Volatility in the demand and cost of adult's social care The potential for underlying demand and cost pressures to arise in adult social care presents a significant risk to the Council's overall financial viability and measures must be put in place to manage within approved budget.	 35	 15	 9	Director of Adult Social Care and Health Integration
Current Mitigation		Future Mitigation	Responsible Officer	Director	Target Date
Local Government settlement Budget Management process Contract management processes Savings programme in place Demand model in place Monthly demand reported to DMT - activity not just finance		Develop a demand model, that monitors performance across activity demand and unit costing, to understand 'current state'.	Director of Adult Social Care and Health Integration; Dee Evans; Victoria Holmes 	Director of Adult Social Care and Health Integration; Adult Social Care and Public Health Senior Managers ; Chief Executive	31-Mar-2026
		Develop a forecast model, that uses the 'current state' model, to predict activity demand and financials across Adults Social Care in the next 1/2/5 years.	Dee Evans; Victoria Holmes 		31-Mar-2026
Code	Risk Description	Original Score	Current Score	Target Score	Managed By
SR-04	Unlawful decision by the Council If the Council took a decision that was unlawful then there is a risk of legal challenge or regulatory action that could damage its reputation and its financial position.	 35	 10	 6	Director of Legal and Governance
Current Mitigation		Future Mitigation	Responsible Officer	Director	Target Date
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Council constitution and supporting policy framework Corporate policies and procedures Compliance checks across key areas including HSE, Risk etc, covering the corporate governance framework Standard report formats Statutory officer posts to oversee governance Annual Governance Statement assessment process Internal and external audit processes 		deliver the Continuous Improvement Plan quarterly updates to Executive from October 2025.	Ann-Marie Johnstone 	Director of Legal and Governance; Chief Executive	31-Oct-2026
		Deliver the Annual Governance Statement for 2024/25	Ann-Marie Johnstone 		28-Feb-2026

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refreshed whistleblowing policy • Report development process • Regular review of the Council Constitution. • Corporate training provided for all officers. 					
Code	Risk Description	Original Score	Current Score	Target Score	Managed By
SR-05	<p>Serious accident or death occurred as a result of failure to comply with Health and safety legislation and regulations</p> <p>If a serious accident or death occurred as a result of failure to comply with Health and safety legislation and regulations then this could result in financial and reputational damage and individual prosecutions of staff.</p>	 35	 15	 10	Chief Executive
Current Mitigation		Future Mitigation	Responsible Officer	Director	Target Date
<p>Comprehensive suite of Health and Safety policies and procedures.</p> <p>Mandatory and complimentary Health and safety training for all Council staff.</p> <p>Dedicated HSE Advisor team</p> <p>Incident investigation system (My Compliance) to learn from incidents.</p> <p>HSE intranet page with important HSE information</p> <p>Audit schedule</p> <p>Service area audit schedule</p> <p>HSE steering group</p> <p>Fire Management System implemented across Council premises.</p>				<p>Director of Legal and Governance;</p> <p>Director of Regeneration; Chief Executive</p>	
Code	Risk Description	Original Score	Current Score	Target Score	Managed By
SR-08	<p>Fail to ensure an approach to cyber security that meets good practice standards as set out by the National Cyber Security Centre and other bodies</p> <p>If the Council fails to ensure a sound approach to cyber security (technology, processes and awareness), then this could result in a cyber-attack which disrupts service delivery, increases risks to service users and incurs significant financial costs to respond to and recover from an attack.</p>	 35	 14	 10	<p>Director of Legal and Governance; Nigel Eden; John O'Leary; Lynsey Zipfell</p>

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Current Mitigation	Future Mitigation	Responsible Officer	Director	Target Date
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual Information and Communications Technology (ICT) health checks are conducted, including both internal and external penetration testing. Compliance is maintained with Public Services Network (PSN) and Payment Card Industry (PCI) standards. Internal vulnerability scanning is performed whenever new systems are introduced. Strong defensive systems are in place, including network firewalls, web content filtering, and endpoint protection solutions. A rigorous sixty-day cycle is followed for applying software patches and performing system maintenance. Security testing is completed and continuously repeated to ensure ongoing protection. Recommendations from health checks are reviewed and implemented as appropriate. The organisation is an active member of the North East Warning, Advice and Reporting Point (WARP) and the Cyber Security Information Sharing Partnership (CiSP). Protective Domain Name System (DNS) services are utilised to prevent access to malicious websites. A robust data backup strategy is in place, including offline tape backups to support full recovery in the event of data loss. A Cyber Incident Response (CIR) partner is contracted to provide expert support in the event of a security breach. Infrastructure inspections are carried out every quarter to minimise the risk of disruption to service delivery. Comprehensive overview to benchmark our current security position. Purchase of Cloudflare to enhance the security of the local authority against Distributed Denial of Service (DDOS) attacks. 			Director of Legal and Governance; Chief Executive	

Code	Risk Description	Original Score	Current Score	Target Score	Managed By			
SR-09	<p>Corporate Governance arrangement not fit for purpose</p> <p>If the Council's Corporate Governance arrangements are not fit for purpose and appropriate action is not taken to rectify this at pace, this could result, censure from the Council's auditors within a public interest report that would damage the</p>	 Probability Impact	15	 Probability Impact	10	 Probability Impact	9	Ann-Marie Johnstone

		Council's reputation and/or in government formal intervention including removal of powers from officers and members and direction of council spend.				
Current Mitigation		Future Mitigation	Responsible Officer	Director	Target Date	
<p>Page 10</p> <p>Internal reports commissioned on Corporate governance and findings reflected within a Corporate Governance Improvement Board in place Detailed improvement plan in place that has delivered a range of changes to corporate governance processes Annual Governance Statement process and supporting action plan. Draft AGSs in place for both 2024/25 and 2025/26 Regular reports to Audit Committee on aspects of corporate governance to provide assurance</p>		Community Engagement strategy and approach to be developed	Marion Walker		Director of Legal and Governance; Chief Executive	30-Jul-2026
		Ensure the Company is fully liquidated during 2025/26.	Justin Weston			09-Dec-2025
		Review of the Internal Audit function	Director of Finance and Transformation			30-Apr-2026
		Continue to implement a scheme of sub-delegations where appropriate to further improve governance around officer delegated decisions.	Director of Legal and Governance			31-Jan-2026
		A robust officer scheme of delegations and sub-delegations is required to ensure effective, appropriate and timely taking of decisions that can be taken by officers. (20/21 action). This will be addressed following the review of the constitution in 2024.	Director of Legal and Governance			31-Jan-2026
		Continually review the Community Engagement policy to ensure it aligns with the wider needs of the organisation that will emerge from the Transformation Programme.	Marion Walker			28-Feb-2026
		Put in place a strategic Partnerships Strategy.	Chief Executive			28-Feb-2026
		A clear Asset Acquisition Policy reflecting these requirements is integrated into the Corporate Landlord Model framework that will be considered by Executive.	David Velemir			17-Mar-2026
		Refresh the Performance Management Policy and the supporting Performance Management Framework to embed a 'golden thread' of Performance Management from the Council Plan down to departmental level.	Director of Legal and Governance			30-Apr-2026
Code	Risk Description	Original Score	Current Score	Target Score	Managed By	

SR-11	Failure to have strategic partnership working.	If the Council does not work with its partners to establish a strategic approach to partnership working based on principles of timely and meaningful collaboration, co-design and with common purpose to inspire and build a team beyond the council that are galvanised to deliver for the town, it is unlikely to achieve delivery of the Council plan ambitions and outcomes for our residents will not improve.	 35	 6	 10	Chief Executive
Current Mitigation		Future Mitigation	Responsible Officer	Director	Target Date	
Partnership governance register in place. Partnership governance annual assurance report and supporting register in place to assess the health of key partnerships. Children's Controls All partnerships contain TOR - Partners contribute. External scrutiny of partnerships. New Mayor to chair Corporate Parenting Board. Formal reporting process in place - record of discussion and decision making. Adults Controls Victim support for those within ASC who require it. Additional resources as required,		Put in place a strategic Partnerships Strategy.	Chief Executive	▶ Chief Executive	28-Feb-2026	
Code	Risk Description	Original Score	Current Score	Target Score	Managed By	
SR-12	Fail to deliver quality practice within children's safeguarding services	If the Council fail to deliver quality practice within children's safeguarding services then this may result in further government intervention, serious harm to individuals and loss of financial control.	 35	 15	 10	Director of Children's Care; Director of Children's Services
Current Mitigation		Future Mitigation	Responsible Officer	Director	Target Date	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implemented Children's services improvement plan Monthly performance monitoring boards in place Review to be undertaken of Children's Care Monthly audit activity and reports undertaken to consider the quality of practice. Implementation of children's improvement board. Commitment to SHiFT, to improve quality and management of practice. 		Complete delivery of the ILACs improvement	Director of Adult Social Care and Health Integration; Director of Children's Care; Director of Children's Services	▶ Director of Children's Care; Director of Children's Services; Chief Executive	31-Jan-2026	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing monitoring via OFSTED with a focused visit due the fiscal year. • OFSTED future inspections to continue. • Internal audit to review working practices. 							
Code	Risk Description		Original Score	Current Score	Target Score	Managed By	
SR-13	Failure to deliver transformation successfully	If the Council fails to transform its service delivery model to a model that can deliver outcomes for residents at a reduced cost base, then the Council's financial position will become untenable and may result in the issuing of a S114 Notice.	 Probability Impact 35	 Probability Impact 15	 Probability Impact 5	Director of Finance and Transformation; Chief Executive	
Current Mitigation			Future Mitigation	Responsible Officer	Director	Target Date	
<p>PPMF in place</p> <p>1 page projects</p> <p>Project documentation - Highlight reports, Business Cases, Change Controls against time, cost, scope and benefit.</p> <p>Risk and issues logs.</p> <p>Corporate performance board - programme level risks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Escalation procedures in place at directorate and programme level • Transformation governance arrangements and reporting cycle agreed • Boards in place setup at directorate level approach • Transformation monies agreed at 26million for period 2024/5 to 2027/8 to fund transformation work. This is continually being monitored. 			Failure of the Recover, Reset, Deliver Transformation Portfolio to identify further savings	Chief Executive	▶	Chief Executive	31-Mar-2026
Code	Risk Description		Original Score	Current Score	Target Score	Managed By	
SR-14	Failure to ensure effective governance of the Middlesbrough Development Corporation	If the Middlesbrough Development Corporation fails to reflect the relevant findings from the review of Teesworks governance in its structures, then there is a risk that it could fail to ensure value for money or good governance in its decision making, which will have	 Probability Impact 35	 Probability Impact 6	 Probability Impact 10	Director of Regeneration	

		an adverse impact on the economic vitality of the Town Centre.				
Current Mitigation			Future Mitigation	Responsible Officer	Director	Target Date
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teesworks report and commitment from TVCA to reflect findings in the governance arrangements of the MDC • Council representatives on the MDC Board - Mayor • Monthly meetings arranged with the CEX MDC (Bev Bearn) with Director Regeneration. • Collaboration of Regenerations Director via LMT, TVCA and MDC setting out Council's priorities and concerns. • Effective communication between key stakeholders. • Direct risks which could impact on the local authority will be escalated to LMT 					Director of Regeneration; Chief Executive	
Code	Risk Description		Original Score	Current Score	Target Score	Managed By
Page 131 R-15	Threats to Social Cohesion and Democratic Resilience	If Communities feel disconnected and that they do not live in a safe and resilient environment that promotes the best outcomes for citizens of the town. This could lead to local flashpoints which would be damaging to community relations, the reputation and image of a multi-cultural Middlesbrough.	 35	 15	 14	Director of Environment & Community Services; Marion Walker
Current Mitigation			Future Mitigation	Responsible Officer	Director	Target Date
Internal Controls (Current Mitigations in place): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community tension monitoring undertaken. • Community engagement undertaken. • Neighbourhood safety liaison in place. • Prevent operational group risk plans in place • Liaison with policing partners to verify validity of possible demonstrations. • Initial credibility verification through visual audits using CCTV operations and open sources. • Gatekeeping protocols with marketing and communications for potentially controversial communications 			Repair relationships and engagement between local communities where they have broken down following serious conflict and flashpoint incidents.	Marion Walker	 Director of Environment & Community Services; Chief Executive	31-Aug-2026

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing promotion of education around disinformation and building of media literacy by partners within the local authority and via social media • Monthly meetings held with senior leadership. • Gold and Silver recovery group meetings with senior leadership teams across the organisation and partners. • Action plan developed by silver group to be reported to gold with escalations. • Community safety partnership reconstituted to provide greater strategic oversight. • MBC have secured £600k to be spent in response to community tensions as a further control. • BELONG employed to support delivery of the community cohesion strategy. 					
Code	Risk Description	Original Score	Current Score	Target Score	Managed By
SR-16	<p>Removal of the statutory override preventing the Designated School Grant (DSG) deficit from being met from general fund resources.</p> <p>If the statutory override issued by central government expires as planned on 31 March 2026, without providing a national solution to the current shortfall in funding compared to demand and cost of high needs provision, this will mean that the High Needs Funding Deficit will be required to be met from the Council's general fund resources. Based upon the current projection of the DSG high needs deficit compared to the level of revenue reserves, this will result in the Council's reserves being exhausted and the Council's s151 Officer potentially being required to issue a s114 Notice. This is likely to be the case for the majority of local authorities nationally.</p>	 15	 15	 9	Director of Education and Partnerships; Emma Cowley
Current Mitigation		Future Mitigation	Responsible Officer	Director	Target Date
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . Lobbying Government to resolve the funding issue and provide a long term solution to the DSG deficit issue . Delivering DBV (Delivering Better Value) action plan. . Liaising with DofE regularly 		<p>Lobbying Government to resolve the funding issue and provide a long term solution to the DSG deficit issue</p> <p>Ongoing monitoring of the HNF budget</p>	<p>Director of Finance and Transformation</p> <p>Director of Education and Partnerships</p>	<p>▶</p> <p>▶</p>	<p>Director of Children's Services; Director of Education and Partnerships</p> <p>31-Mar-2026</p> <p>31-Mar-2026</p>

Working with schools and settings to continuously review the funding models.		Work with schools and settings to reduce the number of children and young people who are excluded.	Director of Education and Partnerships	▶		31-Mar-2026
		Promote greater inclusion within mainstream settings.	Director of Education and Partnerships	▶		31-Mar-2026
		Reduce the number of children and young people on out of area provision.	Director of Education and Partnerships	▶		31-Mar-2026
Code	Risk Description	Original Score	Current Score	Target Score	Managed By	
SR-17	Funding for key external projects led by TVCA or MDC If there is a funding gap for key projects led by the Tees Valley Combined Authority (TVCA) and its Mayoral Development Corporation (MDC) that results in a risk of delays, disruption, or failure to deliver on key regeneration sites in the town centre. This could negatively affect economic growth, community development, and investor confidence in the region.	 6	 6	 6	Director of Regeneration	
Current Mitigation		Future Mitigation	Responsible Officer	Director	Target Date	
<p>Tees Valley Investment Strategy.</p> <p>Monthly meeting with CEX of MDC to discuss project developments.</p> <p>Collaboration of Regenerations Director via LMT, TVCA and MDC setting out Council's priorities and concerns.</p> <p>Effective communication between key stakeholders.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Direct risks which could impact on the local authority will be escalated to LMT. - Mayor Middlesbrough Council is a board member of the TVCA and MDC with the CEX present as observer. - Scrutiny committee for the TVCA of which Middlesbrough Council have Councillor representation. 		Working with TVCA/MDC to develop a realistic delivery plan against essential projects.	Richard Horniman	▶	Director of Regeneration; Directors	30-Apr-2026
Code	Risk Description	Original Score	Current Score	Target Score	Managed By	
SR-18	Ineffective governance of the Tees Valley Combined Authority (TVCA) The governance arrangements of the Combined Authority (CA) are not fit for purpose, creating barriers to effective collaboration with the Council and adversely impacting the Council's ability to achieve its ambitions for the town. This misalignment could hinder regional development, compromise strategic initiatives, impact	 35	 35	 14	Chief Executive	

		financially on the Council and damage stakeholder confidence.				
Current Mitigation		Future Mitigation	Responsible Officer	Director	Target Date	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LGA improvement panel with independent oversight and planned publication of improvement panel reports to increase public scrutiny and transparency • Improvement plan (TVCA). • Best Value Inspection Notice issued April 25 resulting in increased government oversight. • Key officer relationships between Monitoring Officers and Directors of Finance • Interim appointments for the Director of Finance and Monitoring Officer roles • Reset discussions undertaken with the new Chief Executive 		Review the reports of the improvement panel as they are published to identify actions that Middlesbrough Council can take to support the TVCA to improve governance and relationships	Chief Executive 	Directors; Chief Executive	31-Oct-2026	
		Regular provision of advice to Middlesbrough Council representatives who sit on various TVCA bodies to ensure they are able to deliver their roles in full and with regard to good governance	Director of Legal and Governance 		10-Oct-2026	

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MIDDLESBROUGH COUNCIL



Report of:	Andrew Humble, Corporate Director of Finance
Relevant Executive Member:	Councillor Nicky Walker, Executive Member for Finance
Submitted to:	Executive
Date:	11 March 2026
Title:	Tender Pipeline 2026/27
Report for:	Decision
Status:	Public
Council Plan priority:	Delivering Best Value
Key decision:	Yes
Why:	Decision(s) will incur expenditure or savings above £250,000 and have a significant impact in two or more wards
Subject to call in?	Yes
Why:	Non-Urgent Report

Proposed decision(s)

That the Executive

- Approves the Middlesbrough Council tender pipeline for 2026/27.
- Approves delegation of the contract award to the relevant Director who will update their Executive Member.
- Notes that any above threshold tender with a contract value over £2million will have a Tender Pipeline Notice published in line with Procurement Act 2023.
- Notes that any above threshold tender with a contract value below £2million will be published on the Council's website only.
- Notes that below threshold quotations, direct awards and framework call offs will not be published as they are closed competition opportunities.

Executive summary

To seek Executive approval of the Middlesbrough Council tender pipeline for 2026/27, which is used to provide the market with an understanding of the potential future open procurement activity the Council may undertake in the next 12-18 months. This includes the delegation of responsibility for the contract award to the relevant Director who will update their Executive Member.

Above threshold tenders that have a contract value over £2million will have a formal Tender Pipeline Notice published in line with the Procurement Act 2023 requirements.

Above threshold tenders that has a value below £2million will be published on the Council's website page only.

Below threshold quotations, direct awards or framework call off will not be published as these are closed opportunities.

The recommendation is proposed as it allows strong governance arrangements for procurement activity carried out by the Council and will ensure the Council are compliant with the new Procurement Act 2023. The only other option would be to not have a tender pipeline which is not something the Council would be supportive of. The implications of the recommendations have been considered by the appropriate officers of the Council and are set out in the main body of the report.

1. Purpose of this report and its contribution to the achievement of the Council Plan ambitions

1.1 To seek Executive approval of Middlesbrough Council’s tender pipeline for 2026/27 and agree delegation of the contract award to the relevant Director who will update their Executive Member.

Our ambitions	Summary of how this report will support delivery of these ambitions and the underpinning aims
A successful and ambitious town	Aims within this ambition are to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - stimulate the local market where possible ensuring funding is spent locally.
A healthy Place	Aims within this ambition are to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - support the Council to procure services that will improve the health outcomes of Middlesbrough residents.
Safe and resilient communities	Aims within this ambition are to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - support the Council to procure services that will make our communities safer and more resilient as required.
Delivering best value	Aims within this ambition are to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ensure robust and effective procurement governance.

2. Recommendations

2.1 That the Executive

- Approves delegation of the contract award to the relevant Director who will update their Executive Member.
- Notes that any above threshold tender with a contract value of £2million or more will have a Tender Pipeline Notice published in line with Procurement Act 2023.
- Notes that any above threshold tender with a contract value below £2million will be published on the Council’s website only.
- Notes that below threshold quotations, direct awards and framework call offs will not be published as they are closed competition opportunities.

3. Rationale for the recommended decision(s)

3.1 To continue to have strong governance arrangements in place for procurement activity carried out by the Council.

3.2 To be compliant with the Procurement Act 2023.

4. Background and relevant information

4.1 For clarity this report is not the Corporate Procurement Strategy and that issues such as social value are included in that Strategy. A tender pipeline is used to provide the market with an understanding of the potential future open procurement activity the Council may undertake in the next 12-18 months.

4.2 The new Procurement Act 2023 requires the Council to formally publish tender pipeline notices for any procurement where the contract value is over £2million. As there are limited contracts that will meet that criteria then the Council will continue to publish open procurement opportunities on its own website.

4.3 The Council's Corporate Procurement Strategy 2024 - 2026 sets out the strategic direction for the implementation of the Contract Procedure Rules, which are the regulatory framework for all staff to follow in respect of purchasing goods, services and works regardless of value.

4.4 The Strategy supports the aims and priorities of the Council. It sets out how the Council will:

- Strive to make procurement easier for suppliers and the Council alike
- Challenge and drive value for money from all procurement activity.
- Maximise innovation, sustainability, and collaboration in our procurement activities to support the Council's strategic objectives
- Ensure social value and local return is at the heart of our procurement opportunities
- Continue to increase the visibility of our tender opportunities to our local and SME suppliers
- Make the best use of local, sub-regional, regional and national collaborative arrangements where significant benefits for Middlesbrough can be evidenced.

4.5 Within that Corporate Procurement Strategy, a tender pipeline is used to provide the market with an understanding of the potential future open procurement activity the Council may undertake in the next 12 months and increases the visibility of tender opportunities.

4.6 The tender pipeline may be of particular benefit to small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) and voluntary, community and social enterprises as it provides them time to plan for future work, ensuring a competitive and diverse market.

4.7 Middlesbrough Council's tender pipeline for 1st April 2026 to 31st March 2027 has been developed as part of our governance processes. This report seeks Executive approval for the planned procurement activity and delegates authority for the contract award to the relevant Director who will then update their Executive Member.

4.8 In order to be transparent, the pipeline includes all known procurement activity and not just contracts over the Key Decision threshold, please note this means that not all of these opportunities will be on the publicly published as not all opportunities are available to the full market.

4.9 The Middlesbrough Council tender pipeline for 2025/26 had 119 procurements proposed and below is an update on progress:

- 60 – Contracts have been awarded
- 24 – procurement is in progress
- 9 – did not progress as no longer needed
- 25 – procurements have been delayed and will now be published in 26/27 pipeline
- 1 – duplication on the pipeline

4.10 The tender pipeline will be a live record which will be maintained by the Commissioning and Procurement Team and will be available for the supplier market to view on the Council website and via the Central Digital Platform if a Tender Pipeline Notice is required.

4.11 Any new procurement with a contract value of £250,000 or more identified during the year will require the appropriate Executive approval for it to be progressed. This should be minimal, as all known procurements are captured within the pipeline work programme, however, this may occur if new funding is made available, i.e. through grant income

5. Ward Member Engagement if relevant and appropriate

5.1 As the tender pipeline activity can potentially affect every ward this section is not appropriate.

6. Other potential alternative(s) and why these have not been recommended

6.1 Do nothing but this is not an option as this would not support strong governance or allow us to be compliant with the upcoming new Procurement Act requirements to publish a tender pipeline.

7. Impact(s) of the recommended decision(s)

Topic	Impact
Financial (including procurement and Social Value)	<p>Activity within the procurement pipeline work programme will be progressed in accordance with the Contract Procedure rules as detailed in the Council’s Constitution and in line with Procurement Act 2023 requirements and Public Contract Regulations 2015 where applicable. All activity within the procurement pipeline is known activity that is factored within service area budgets, or funding sources have been agreed.</p> <p>This pipeline report does not provide any additional pressures to the budgetary position.</p> <p>Social value is considered and included in all our tenders and is presently bespoke to each individual tender.</p> <p>Middlesbrough Council’s Social Value Charter is now part of our standard tender documentation moving forward and</p>

	bidders are required to provide their commitment to support the Council in delivering it.
Legal	This decision will enhance governance of procurement, and processes will be compliant with the authorities Contract Procedure Rules, Procurement Act 2023 and the Public Contract Regulations 2015.
Risk	In accordance with the Contract procedure rules, any procurement in excess of the Executive key decision threshold must be approved by Executive, to ensure governance is followed the pipeline report identifies all potential procurement activity for 2026/2027 and seeks approval to progress with the appropriate procurement routes. Sign off to a successful procurement and contract award is delegated to the relevant Director who will then update their Executive member.
Human Rights, Public Sector Equality Duty and Community Cohesion	An Impact Assessment has been completed and found no concerns that the Tender Pipeline and delegation of responsibility could have any adverse effects, and the assessment is attached as Appendix B.
Reducing Poverty	There are no adverse effects for reducing poverty from this report.
Climate Change / Environmental	There are no adverse effects for Climate Change / Environmental from this report, however sustainability is a key factor within procurement processes.
Children and Young People Cared for by the Authority and Care Leavers	There are potentially positive impacts for Children and Young People Cared for by the Authority and Care Leavers from this report in some of the tender pipeline projects for 2025/26 for Children's Services.
Data Protection	There are no data protection or GDPR implications from this report. The procurement process within the authority has embedded with it appropriate procedures for ensuring compliance with GDPR where appropriate.

Actions to be taken to implement the recommended decision(s)

Action	Responsible Officer	Deadline
Tender Pipeline Notices to be published as appropriate	Interim Head of Commissioning & Procurement	30 th April 2026
Tender Pipeline to be published on the Council intranet	Interim Head of Commissioning & Procurement	30 th April 2026

Appendices

1	Appendix A - Tender Pipeline 2026/27
2	Appendix B - Equality Impact Assessment
3	

Background papers

Body	Report title	Date

Contact: Claire Walker

Email: Claire.Walker@middlesbrough.gov.uk

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**TENDER PIPELINE 2026/27
DIRECTOR OF ADULT SOCIAL CARE**

PROJECT TITLE	DESCRIPTION OF SERVICE	ANTICIPATED PUBLISH DATE*	ANTICIPATED PURCHASE ROUTE
South Tees All Ages Carer Support Services	Information, advice and support for unpaid carers in Middlesbrough and Redcar & Cleveland *Procurement being undertaken by R&C LA*	Jun-26	Tender
South Tees Carers Forum Chair	Chair and coordinate the work of the South Tees Carers' Forum	Jun-26	Tender
We Care You Care	Online information and advice for unpaid carers	Jun-26	Direct Award
Dementia Hub & Adviser Service	Information, advice and support for people with dementia and their unpaid carers in Middlesbrough	Sep-26	Tender
Answerlink	New call handling system for staff working with vulnerable clients providing 24 hr support.	Jan-27	Framework
Electronic Care Management system	Electronic care management/rota system	Apr-26	Framework
Domestic Abuse Services (Lots 1-3)	As per exec report - do all of the details still need including here even though full exec have signed off the commissioning intentions?	Mar/Aug 26	Tender
Homelessness Services	The proposed services to be commissioned will be as a result of the Housing and Homelessness Needs Assessment being undertaken during 2026/27 -	TBC	TBC

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**TENDER PIPELINE 2026/27
DIRECTOR OF ADULT SOCIAL CARE**

PROJECT TITLE	DESCRIPTION OF SERVICE	ANTICIPATED PUBLISH DATE*	ANTICIPATED PURCHASE ROUTE
	<p>details current unknown.</p> <p>In scope likely to cover: Young persons supported housing and dispersed accommodation, Family supported accommodation and vulnerable women's supported accommodation</p>		
Residential Options for Adults	To allow for further supplier inclusion of new care homes opening during 2026/27	Oct-26	Direct Award
Community Step-up Step Down Housing Provision	To provide 6-8 supported accommodation units for people with learning disabilities and/or autistic people with enhanced and complex care needs from across the Tees Valley (5) local authorities	Oct-26	Framework
Mental Health Assessors (Section 12 Assessments)	To allow for further supplier inclusion - current opportunity expires 2033	Continues to remain open	PSR Route B
The Provision of care within extra care housing schemes	Provision of care and support services to be delivered in the extra care housing schemes across Middlesbrough	Jun-26	Tender
Veterans Supported Accommodation	Supported housing project located in Teesside housing single ex-service veterans experiencing homelessness or at risk of experience rough sleeping	TBC	Direct Award

**TENDER PIPELINE 2026/27
DIRECTOR OF ADULT SOCIAL CARE**

PROJECT TITLE	DESCRIPTION OF SERVICE	ANTICIPATED PUBLISH DATE*	ANTICIPATED PURCHASE ROUTE
Independent Best Interest Assessor Framework	Supply of qualified Best Interest Assessors to provide additional workforce capacity to the DoLS Team	Apr-26	Quotation
South Tees Autism Strategy Development	To provide additional capacity to support the development of a South Tees Autism Strategy	Aug-26	Framework
Adult Social Care Front Door Technology System	To provide a technology system to support the activity of the Access and Safeguarding Service 'Front Door'	Oct 2026 - Mar 2027	Framework
Medicines Optimisation Support to Care Providers	Supply of qualified and experienced pharmacy technicians and pharmacists to provide additional medication support into care homes and home care services operating across Middlesbrough.	Apr-26	Direct Award
Framework for Emergency Community Support	Framework list of organisations to provide emergency and same day care, support and supervisory staff to enable individuals to remain safe in the community	Aug-26	Tender
Client Finance and Estates Case Management System	To provide a case management system to support the activity of the Client Finance and Estates team	Aug-26	Framework
Adult Social Care Document Management System	To supply an effective document management system to the Adult Social Care Directorate	Apr-26	Direct Award

**TENDER PIPELINE 2026/27
DIRECTOR OF ADULT SOCIAL CARE**

PROJECT TITLE	DESCRIPTION OF SERVICE	ANTICIPATED PUBLISH DATE*	ANTICIPATED PURCHASE ROUTE
Adult Social Care Workforce Training - AMHP	To provide AMHP training to Adult Social Care workforce	Jun-26	Direct Award
CC Inform Licensing and Subscription Cost	Subscription cost to access online resource tool CCInform. Newcastle CC lead contract	Jan-27	Framework
Refurbishment and Development of a Smart Living Demonstration Home	Capital refurbishment and development of Council-owned property on Fakenham Avenue into a Smart Living Demonstration Home	Jun-26	Tender
Domestic Homicide Reviews	Establishment of a dynamic market, framework or other procurement solution with a range of providers to undertake Domestic Homicide Reviews/DARDS	Apr-26	Tender
Adult Social Care Case Management and Contract Management System	Adult Social Care Case Management system designed to support the workforce in managing all aspects of Adults Social Care, including contract monitoring, provider payments and budget management.	Aug-26	Framework

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**TENDER PIPELINE 2026/27
DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES**

PROJECT TITLE	DESCRIPTION OF SERVICE	ANTICIPATED PUBLISH DATE*	ANTICIPATED PURCHASE ROUTE
Adoption Support Fund	Contract to provide therapy services to children and young people with a SGO or Child Arrangement Order	Jul-26	Tender
Tees Alternative Education Provision	Alternative Education Provision for children and young people	Jul-26	Tender
Short Breaks	Short Breaks for children and young people to support in and outside of the family home	Apr-26	Tender
Transport Support	Currently undertaking a pilot project to identify a more efficient and value for money model for transport for children and young people outside of the Integrated Transport Unit (ITU) (Home to School). If successful, this will be formally procured compliantly.	Aug-Dec-26	Direct Award
Therapy Services	Contract to provide therapy services for our children and young people	Apr-26	Tender
Care Team Support	To provide a high-quality staff team to support children and young people in their home or another property when a regulated placement is not available.	Jul-26	Quotation
Speech and Language Provision	Provision of Speech and Language for children and young people potentially in collaboration with Health and other Local Authorities. This is a Integrated Care Board led procurement.	TBC	Tender
SENDIASS	SENDIASS Service – Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Information, Advice and Support service for children, young people up to age of 25 and families.	Apr/May-26	Quotation

**TENDER PIPELINE 2026/27
DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES**

PROJECT TITLE	DESCRIPTION OF SERVICE	ANTICIPATED PUBLISH DATE*	ANTICIPATED PURCHASE ROUTE
Preventative Early Help Support Service	Provision of support to children, young people and their families to prevent escalation and reduce requirement for statutory services.	Apr-26	Quotation
External Placements	To ensure delivery of statutory sufficiency duty the Council may undertake various procurements in order to ensure placement choice for the children and young people in its care. This maybe via individual placement purchase for choice of care through to partnership agreements or block arrangements. The contract value is based on a projected bed rate for 7 beds with 2 different providers.	Ongoing	Direct Award
Youth Services	Range of youth services for children and young people in Middlesbrough	Apr-26	Tender
Advocacy / Independent Investigating Officers / Independent Persons	Regional procurement to secure access to Advocacy/IIO/IIP statutory services	Oct-26	Tender
Reducing Sexual Violence Contract	Provision for specialist therapy for reducing sexual violence.	Jan-27	Quotation
Family Hubs	Supporting Family Hubs with any commissioning requirements in line with funding received	TBC	TBC

**TENDER PIPELINE 2026/27
DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES**

PROJECT TITLE	DESCRIPTION OF SERVICE	ANTICIPATED PUBLISH DATE*	ANTICIPATED PURCHASE ROUTE
Online Procedures Manual	Provision of an online procedure's manual	Oct-26	Framework
Internal Fostering Payment System	Provision of a digital solution for payments for internal fostering service	Jun-26	Framework

TENDER PIPELINE 2026/27
DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

PROJECT TITLE	DESCRIPTION OF SERVICE	ANTICIPATED PUBLISH DATE*	ANTICIPATED PURCHASE ROUTE
Commercial Waste Collection Service	Contract for the collection of commercial waste	Apr-26	Direct Award
Transport Provision	Work to review and deliver alternative delivery model for the Integrated Transport Unit (ITU) in order to develop a more fit for purpose future delivery model and achieve savings	TBC	TBC
Street Light Connections	Street Lighting connections	Apr-26	Framework / Quotation
Hire of Equipment for Fleet Services	Hire of Equipment	Dec-26	Framework / QUOTATION
Trackers Fitted to Council Vehicles	Trackers Fitted to Council Vehicles	Apr/May-26	Quotation
Concrete Testing	Service requires a contract to call off a supplier to undertake concrete testing as required.	TBC	TBC
Transporter Bridge Works	Transporter Bridge Works	Jul/Aug-26	Framework
Managed Stored Services Fleet	Managed Stored Services Fleet	TBC	TBC

TENDER PIPELINE 2026/27
DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

PROJECT TITLE	DESCRIPTION OF SERVICE	ANTICIPATED PUBLISH DATE*	ANTICIPATED PURCHASE ROUTE
Play Equipment	Grant funding secured to renew and maintain park equipment across the town	Apr-26	Framework
Food Waste Collection	Collection of food waste from council's premises: Offices, Care homes and children's homes.	May-26	Tender
Crematorium Music / Tribute	Crematorium Music / Tribute at the Crematorium	Apr-26	Quotation
Pest Control	Pest Control	Apr-26	TBC
Bridge Works	Lindy and Belview Bridge repairs	Apr/May-26	Framework
Bereavement Framework	Bereavement Framework	Apr-26	Tender
Fleet Waste Removals	To remove fleet waste from Cargo Fleet workshop	TBC	Framework
Symology / Aurora Contract	Asset Management Software for Public Rights of Way	Apr-26	Framework

TENDER PIPELINE 2026/27
DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

PROJECT TITLE	DESCRIPTION OF SERVICE	ANTICIPATED PUBLISH DATE*	ANTICIPATED PURCHASE ROUTE
Digital service to monitor structures and assets.	Digital service to monitor structures and assets.	Apr-26	Framework
Vehicle Telematics	Vehicle Telematics for Fleet Services	Apr-26	Framework
Dixons Bank/Guisborough Rd junction signalisation scheme	Dixons Bank/Guisborough Rd junction signalisation scheme	Apr-26	Framework
Netting under Newport Bridge for Railway Line	To install Netting under Newport Bridge for Railway Line	Apr/May-26	Framework
Purchase of Street Lighting Columns	Purchase of Street Lighting Columns	Apr-26	Framework
Street Lighting Technical Approvers	To procure Street Lighting Technical Approvers	Jun-26	Framework
Street Lighting Testing	To procure Street Lighting Testing	Jun-26	Framework

**TENDER PIPELINE 2026/27
DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT AND COMMUNITY SERVICES**

PROJECT TITLE	DESCRIPTION OF SERVICE	ANTICIPATED PUBLISH DATE*	ANTICIPATED PURCHASE ROUTE
PA System	New PA System for Middlesbrough Town Hall	TBC	Tender
Hemp Line System	New hemp lines system for Middlesbrough Theatre	TBC	Tender
Digital Tachographs	Digital tachographs monitor drivers hours compliance with GB Domestic/EU drivers hours/working time directives.	TBC	Framework
Vehicle Monitoring Telematics	Equipment to monitor vehicles in ECS fleet	TBC	Framework

**TENDER PIPELINE 2026/27
DIRECTOR OF LEGAL AND GOVERNANCE SERVICES**

PROJECT TITLE	DESCRIPTION OF SERVICE	ANTICIPATED PUBLISH DATE*	ANTICIPATED PURCHASE ROUTE
WPC Coroners Case Management	To secure provider who offers a hosting platform for the coroners service with successful Coronial support.	Jun-26	Direct Award
Coroners Services	To procure a range of services to support the Coroners service to deliver its service on behalf of the region as per the shared service arrangements	Nov-Dec-26	TBC
Network Hardware and Service Desk	ICT service desk facility.	Aug-26	TBC
RSA SecurID Authentication Manager	Security login tokens.	Apr-26	TBC
Middlesbrough Learns (carry over 25/26)	Secure an online platform solution for Middlesbrough Learns	TBC	TBC
Mobile Phone Contract	Mobile Phones	Dec-26	Framework

TENDER PIPELINE 2026/27
DIRECTOR OF LEGAL AND GOVERNANCE SERVICES

PROJECT TITLE	DESCRIPTION OF SERVICE	ANTICIPATED PUBLISH DATE*	ANTICIPATED PURCHASE ROUTE
Data Centre Maintenance	Data Centre Maintenance	Mar-26	TBC
Egress Secure Email	Egress Secure Email	Mar-26	TBC
Checkpoint Security	Checkpoint Security Software	Apr-26	TBC
Sophos Central Intercept	Sophos Central Intercept	Sep-26	TBC
Network Cabling	Network Cabling	Sep-26	TBC
HCSN Connectivity	HCSN Connectivity	Sep-26	TBC
CISCO Internet Security	CISCO Internet Security – North Ormesby Hub	Apr-26	TBC
Tranman Release Upgrade	Tranman Release 9 upgrade and existing annual maintenance	Jul-26	TBC

**TENDER PIPELINE 2026/27
DIRECTOR OF LEGAL AND GOVERNANCE SERVICES**

PROJECT TITLE	DESCRIPTION OF SERVICE	ANTICIPATED PUBLISH DATE*	ANTICIPATED PURCHASE ROUTE
12 Access Points for Boho Five	Replacement of EOL AP's	Jun-26	TBC
Cube Enhanced Trunk Session license	Renewal of Cube licensing	Aug 26	TBC
Cisco Critical Hardware	Cisco critical hardware cover	Jul-26	TBC
Network Support	Network Service desk support (currently with Fournet)	Jul-26	TBC
WAN Renewal Replacement	WAN replacement or Renewal – Due in May 2027 but procurement could start before April 27, especially if we look at replacing	Jan-26	TBC
Access Points	Wireless Access points, required as and when the demand is there.	Apr-26	TBC

**TENDER PIPELINE 2026/27
DIRECTOR OF LEGAL AND GOVERNANCE SERVICES**

PROJECT TITLE	DESCRIPTION OF SERVICE	ANTICIPATED PUBLISH DATE*	ANTICIPATED PURCHASE ROUTE
Switch replacement	Replacement of EOL switches	Oct-26	TBC
Professional Services	Any professional services required for Network Support	Apr-26	TBC
Telephone and Contact Centre	Replacement/renewal of Telephone and Contact Centre System	Jun-26	TBC
Distribution switches	Distribution switches due to go EOL April 2027, so will need to do procurement in 26/27 financial year	Jan-27	TBC
Essential Edition	100 Interfaces Pack	Sep-26	TBC
PSN	PSN DNSP	Dec-26	TBC
Ddos	Cloudflare Ddos	Apr-26	TBC

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TENDER PIPELINE 2026/27
DIRECTOR OF LEGAL AND GOVERNANCE SERVICES

PROJECT TITLE	DESCRIPTION OF SERVICE	ANTICIPATED PUBLISH DATE*	ANTICIPATED PURCHASE ROUTE
FME Maintenance	FME Licences support and maintenance	Apr-26	TBC
CRM	Upgrading and Replacement of Customer Relationship Management System	Jun-26	TBC
AI	Introduction of AI across the Council	Jun-26	TBC

**TENDER PIPELINE 2026/27
DIRECTOR OF REGENERATION**

PROJECT TITLE	DESCRIPTION OF SERVICE	ANTICIPATED PUBLISH DATE*	ANTICIPATED PURCHASE ROUTE
Fire Alarm	Fire Alarm 2 nd line – support and servicing of fire systems	Apr/May-26	Tender
Intruder Alarm	Maintenance and repairs	Apr-26	Quotation
Property Management	Potential to procurement property management arrangements for Council owned buildings where internal resource is not available and/or where a commercial return can be made for the Council	TBC	TBC
Card Reading Machines	Payment Card Reading Machines Installation	Mar-May-26	Exemption
Mechanical & Electrical Products	Products used internally by DLO for repairs and maintenance	TBC	TBC
Planning system Software	Updated requirements by Planning Team to manage planning requirements	Jun-26	Tender
Grounds Maintenance at Boho 8 and TeesAMP and to include Boho X		Jun-26	Quotation
Fire Alarm 2 nd Line Support & Servicing of Fire Systems	Fire Alarm 2 nd Line Support & Servicing of Fire systems	Apr-26 Jul-Sep-26	Tender

**TENDER PIPELINE 2026/27
DIRECTOR OF REGENERATION**

PROJECT TITLE	DESCRIPTION OF SERVICE	ANTICIPATED PUBLISH DATE*	ANTICIPATED PURCHASE ROUTE
Central Library Fire Alarm system	Central Library Fire Alarm System	Apr-26	Exemption
Lift Refurbishment Middlesbrough House, Municipal Buildings and West Middlesbrough	Lift Refurbishment Middlesbrough House, Municipal Buildings & West Middlesbrough	Apr-26	Mini Competition
Lifting Equipment (Corporate)	Maintenance and repair of lifting equipment for corporate buildings	Apr-26	Exemption
Lifting Equipment (Theatre and Town Hall)	Maintenance and repair of lifting equipment for Middlesbrough Theatre and Town Hall	Apr-26	Exemption

**TENDER PIPELINE 2026/27
DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC HEALTH**

PROJECT TITLE	DESCRIPTION OF SERVICE	ANTICIPATED PUBLISH DATE*	ANTICIPATED PURCHASE ROUTE
Detox	Detox Programme	Apr-26	Provider Selection Regime
Immunisation Project	Tees Valley Childhood Immunisation Project	May-26	Provider Selection Regime
GP & Pharmacy Services	GP & Pharmacy Services	Apr-26	Provider Selection Regime
Oral Health	Oral Health	Apr-26	Provider Selection Regime
Infant Feeding	Infant Feeding	Apr-26	Provider Selection Regime
Tongue Tied Practitioners	Provision of Tongue Tie Practitioners	Apr-26	Provider Selection Regime
App Support	Regional NE app support	Apr-26	TBC

Tees Valley
Public Health
19/03/2025

**TENDER PIPELINE 2026/27
DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC HEALTH**

PROJECT TITLE	DESCRIPTION OF SERVICE	ANTICIPATED PUBLISH DATE*	ANTICIPATED PURCHASE ROUTE
Needle Exchange Waste	Needle Exchange Bins & Commercial Waste Collection Contract	Apr-26	Provider Selection Regime
South Tees Website development	South Tees Website development	Aug-26	TBC
Middlesbrough Safehaven Service	Middlesbrough Safehaven Service	Apr-26	TBC
Recovery Connections	Recovery Connections	Apr-26	TBC
South Tees Changing Futures Programme Management	South Tees Changing Futures Programme Management	Apr-26	TBC
Specialist Prescribing Doctors	Specialist Prescribing Doctors	Nov-26	TBC
Adolescent Healthy Child Programme	Healthy Child Programme for 12–19-year-olds	Apr-26	TBC

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**TENDER PIPELINE 2026/27
DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC HEALTH**

PROJECT TITLE	DESCRIPTION OF SERVICE	ANTICIPATED PUBLISH DATE*	ANTICIPATED PURCHASE ROUTE
Gulp Programme	Give Up Loving Pop (GULP) campaign from Food Active for raising awareness sugar health harms	Apr-26	TBC
Dementia Friendly	Dementia Friendly Communities South Tees Programme	Nov-26	Quotation

**Please note dates and tender routes are not indicative and could change.*

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Template for Impact Assessment Level 1: Initial screening assessment

Subject of assessment:	Tender Pipeline 2026/27			
Coverage:	Overarching/crosscutting			
This is a decision relating to:	<input type="checkbox"/> Strategy	<input type="checkbox"/> Policy	<input type="checkbox"/> Service	<input type="checkbox"/> Function
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Process/procedure	<input type="checkbox"/> Programme	<input type="checkbox"/> Project	<input type="checkbox"/> Review
	<input type="checkbox"/> Organisational change	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (please state)		
It is a:	New approach:	<input type="checkbox"/>	Revision of an existing approach:	X
It is driven by:	Legislation:	<input type="checkbox"/>	Local or corporate requirements:	<input type="checkbox"/>
Description:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key aims, objectives and activities Annual Executive approval of the Tendering Pipeline for the forthcoming financial year and seeking delegated authority to the relevant Director and Executive Member for contract award. • Statutory drivers (set out exact reference) There are no statutory drivers for this service, however, procurement must comply with a range of legislation and instruments, including but not exclusive, Procurement Act 2023, Public Contract Regulations 2015 and the Provider Selection Regime (PSR). The annual Tender Pipeline approval strengthens our internal governance arrangements. The Procurement Act 2023 has specific requirements for a formal tender pipeline notice to be published. • Differences from any previous approach This process has now become business as usual following its introduction in April 2021. • Key stakeholders and intended beneficiaries (internal and external as appropriate) The Council, residents of Middlesbrough, local suppliers, and supply chains • Intended outcomes Strengthen internal governance in respect of the award of high value contacts. Increase the markets understanding of tender opportunities for the coming financial year. 			
Live date:	April 2026			
Lifespan:	April 2026 – March 2027			
Date of next review:	January/February 2027			

Screening questions	Response			Evidence
	No	Yes	Uncertain	
Human Rights Could the decision impact negatively on individual Human Rights as enshrined in UK legislation?*	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The approval from Executive of the tender pipeline for 2026/27 and delegated responsibility to the relevant Director for contract award will ensure that the Council is being fair, open and transparent in all its formal tendering activity. It is not envisioned that this Tender Pipeline approval would negatively impact on individual Human Rights as enshrined in UK Legislation. Evidence includes analysis of performance against legislative requirements. E-tendering portal used to publish tenders and all suppliers are directed and encouraged to register on the portal which provides (this is free of charge)
Equality Could the decision result in adverse differential impacts on groups or individuals with characteristics protected in UK equality law? Could the decision impact differently on other commonly disadvantaged groups?*	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) requires that when exercising its functions the Councils must have due regard to the need to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act; • advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; and • foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it. In having due regard to the need to advance equality of opportunity, the Council must consider, as part of a single equality duty: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic; • taking steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of people who do not share it; and • encouraging people who share a protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation is low. The Tender Pipeline 2026/27 is in place to ensure that the Council is fair, open and transparent in all its tendering activity. The Tender Pipeline will ensure fair access to procurement opportunities for all. There are no concerns that these changes could result in adverse differential impacts on groups or individuals. Evidence includes analysis of performance against legislative requirements. E tendering portal used to publish tenders and all suppliers are directed and encouraged to register on the portal which provides (this is free of charge)

* Consult the Impact Assessment further guidance for details on the issues covered by each of these broad questions prior to completion.

Screening questions	Response			Evidence
Community cohesion Could the decision impact negatively on relationships between different groups, communities of interest or neighbourhoods within the town?*	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The Tender Pipeline 2026/27 is in place to ensure that the Council is fair, open and transparent in all its tendering activity. There are no concerns that the proposal could have an adverse impact on community cohesion. Evidence includes analysis of performance against legislative requirements. E-tendering portal used to publish tenders and all suppliers are directed and encouraged to register on the portal which provides (this is free of charge)
Armed Forces Could the decision impact negatively on those who are currently members of the armed forces of former members in the areas of Council delivered healthcare, compulsory education and housing policies?*	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The Tender Pipeline 2026/27 is in place to ensure that the Council is fair, open and transparent in all its tendering activity. There are no concerns that the proposal could have an adverse impact on anyone who has been in the armed forces. Evidence includes analysis of performance against legislative requirements. E-tendering portal used to publish tenders and all suppliers are directed and encouraged to register on the portal which provides (this is free of charge)
Care leavers Could the decision impact negatively on those who are care experienced?*	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The Tender Pipeline 2026/27 is in place to ensure that the Council is fair, open and transparent in all its tendering activity. There are no concerns that the proposal could have an adverse impact on care leavers. Evidence includes analysis of performance against legislative requirements. E-tendering portal used to publish tenders and all suppliers are directed and encouraged to register on the portal which provides (this is free of charge)
Reducing Poverty Could the decision impact negatively on the Council's ambitions to reduce poverty in the town?	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The Tender Pipeline 2026/27 is in place to ensure that the Council is fair, open and transparent in all its tendering activity. There are no concerns that the proposal could have an adverse impact on reducing poverty. Evidence includes analysis of performance against legislative requirements. E-tendering portal used to publish tenders and all suppliers are directed and encouraged to register on the portal which provides (this is free of charge)
Next steps: ➡ If the answer to all of the above screening questions is No then the process is completed. ➡ If the answer of any of the questions is Yes or Uncertain, then a Level 2 Full Impact Assessment must be completed.				

Assessment completed by:	Claire Walker	Head of Service:	Claire Walker
Date:	17 th February 2026	Date:	17 th February 2026

