

EXECUTIVE

Date: Wednesday 13th May, 2026
Time: 5.00 pm
Venue: Mandela Room (Municipal Buildings)

AGENDA

1. Apologies for Absence
To receive any apologies for absence.
2. Declarations of Interest
To receive any declaration of interests.
3. Minutes - Executive - 8 April 2026 5 - 14
To receive the minutes of the previous meeting.
4. Minutes - Executive Sub Committee for Property - 8 April 2026 15 - 16
5. Announcements from the Mayor
To receive any announcements from the Mayor.
6. Questions from Members of the Public (if any)
To receive questions from members of the public.
7. Questions from elected Members (if any)
To receive questions from elected Members.
8. 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.

9. 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.

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

THE MAYOR

11. Changing Futures Phase 2 Funding 17 - 56

EXECUTIVE MEMBER - CHILDREN'S SERVICES

12. Foster with North East and Regional Care Collaborative 57 - 72

EXECUTIVE MEMBER - FINANCE

13. Exceptional Hardship Fund - Section 13A (1) (a) Policy Change 73 - 80

EXECUTIVE MEMBER - NEIGHBOURHOODS

14. Enforcement Policies 81 - 172

EXECUTIVE MEMBER - PUBLIC HEALTH

15. Director of Public Health Annual Report 2026 173 - 238
16. Any other urgent items which in the opinion of the Chair, may be considered.

Charlotte Benjamin
Director of Legal and Governance Services

Town Hall
Middlesbrough
Tuesday 5 May 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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This document was classified as: OFFICIAL
EXECUTIVE

A meeting of the Executive was held on Wednesday 8 April 2026.

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

PRESENT BY INVITATION: Councillors J Kabuye and L Young

OFFICERS: M Adams, A Bates, C Benjamin, S Bonner, H Dalby, G Field, L Grabham, A Glover, R Horniman, E Scollay and R Williams

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Councillors J Ryles and P Storey

25/123 WELCOME AND FIRE EVACUATION PROCEDURE

The Chair welcomed all those present to the meeting and described the fire evacuation procedure.

25/124 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Name of Councillor	Nature of Interest	Agenda Item
Cllr Ian Blades	Non-Pecuniary	Agenda Item 12 - Ward Councillor
Cllr Nicky Walker	Non-Pecuniary	Agenda Item 12 - Works for MP for Middlesbrough

25/125 MINUTES - EXECUTIVE - 11 MARCH 2026

The minutes of the Executive meeting held on 11 March 2026 were submitted and approved as a correct record.

25/126 ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE MAYOR

None.

25/127 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC (IF ANY)

None.

25/128 QUESTIONS FROM ELECTED MEMBERS (IF ANY)

None.

25/129 MATTERS REFERRED FROM SCRUTINY OR COUNCIL (IF ANY)

None.

25/130 FINAL REPORT OF THE OSB TASK AND FINISH GROUP - COMMUNITY COHESION (SERVICE RESPONSE)

An Overview and Scrutiny Board Task and Finish Group had submitted entitled Community Cohesion. A copy of the full report was attached. The Task and Finish Group had made twelve recommendations upon which a response was sought from the relevant service area.

The recommendations of the Task and Finish Group were:

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1. To ensure Scrutiny contributes to Community Cohesion agenda: - Develop a Community Strategy as quickly as possible with quarterly progress updates brought to scrutiny.
2. A draft of the Community Strategy should be brought to Scrutiny as the earliest opportunity before it is finalised.
3. To mitigate the risk of future unrest: - An early warning system, such as a Community Cohesion dashboard, should be developed to alert the Council and relevant partners of community tensions.
4. To ensure a robust Community Cohesion offer: - that the Council embeds initiatives created because of Home Office funding as part of its business-as-usual operations. An update should be brought back to Scrutiny on this during the 2027/2028 budget setting process.
5. As part of the Council's approach to improved youth participation: - a specific plan be created that includes demonstrable, and quantifiable, actions to engage young people about the dangers of misinformation.

The Executive Member for Neighbourhoods submitted a service response to the recommendations of the Task and Finish Group. A copy of the action plan was appended to the report.

The lead Member of the Task and Finish Group introduced and presented the Scrutiny report and summarised the recommendations of the Panel.

The Executive Member for Neighbourhoods provided a response to the Scrutiny report and presented the Service Response.

The Executive Member for Neighbourhoods stated he welcomed the report and stated that some of the recommendations were already being addressed and, in some cases, were being built upon.

Members discussed the importance of community cohesion, and how the Council was actively working with local communities across the town to achieve effective community cohesion.

ORDERED that Executive

1. **Notes the report of the Overview and Scrutiny Board Task and Finish Group into Community Cohesion and the accompanying recommendations; and**
2. **Approved the Action Plan prepared by the service in response to the recommendations.**

REASONS

It was a requirement that Executive formally considered the Scrutiny Panel's report and confirmed the service area's response to the accompanying plan.

25/131

REPORTS FROM MEMBER BODIES WHICH ARE THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE EXECUTIVE

None.

25/132

PERFORMANCE AND FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT POLICY AND PROGRAMME AND PROJECT MANAGEMENT POLICY REVIEW

The Mayor submitted a report for Executive consideration presenting the proposed Performance and Financial Management Policy, the Programme and Project Management Policy, and the development plans for Directorate Business Plans. Members were informed that the Council Plan served as the organisation's overarching medium-term business plan and that the proposed policies were designed to strengthen the Council's ability to deliver its priorities within a proportionate and robust governance framework.

Members were advised that the Performance and Financial Management Policy set out how arrangements would be put in place to align directorate and workforce activities with the Council Plan, integrate performance, finance and risk into a single cycle, and provide a holistic view of organisational delivery. It was reported that the Policy aimed to embed a clear 'golden thread'

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from the Council Plan through Directorate Business Plans down to individual employee objectives, supporting evidence-based decision-making and earlier identification of pressures and opportunities.

In relation to Directorate Business Plans, Members noted that plans would be developed during 2026/27 and refreshed annually thereafter in line with the Council Plan cycle. The Plans would document each Directorate's key functions, past performance, priorities for the year ahead, key performance indicators and supporting strategies. Members heard that this approach would support transparency, strengthen accountability and promote a consistent standard across Directorates.

Members were further advised that the Programme and Project Management (PPM) Policy had been reviewed in line with the required three-year cycle. The revised Policy aligned with the Council's integrated performance, finance and risk framework and ensured that significant and complex change activity was supported by appropriate governance, including gateway processes and a project categorisation tool based on the Council's risk appetite. Low-risk, one-off tasks would continue to be managed as Business as Usual within Directorate Business Plans.

The report outlined the expected impacts of implementing both policies, including strengthened governance, improved ability to identify trends earlier, enhanced transparency, and positive contributions across the Strategic Risk Register, particularly in relation to maintaining a balanced budget and ensuring robust corporate governance. Members were informed that both policies had undergone Impact Assessments, which confirmed positive contributions to equalities, community cohesion, and climate-related reporting.

Members acknowledged that financial considerations were embedded throughout the PPM Policy, ensuring that programmes and projects were assessed for affordability, value for money and deliverability. It was noted that integrated performance and financial reporting was expected to begin from Quarter One 2026/27.

Members discussed the challenges in successfully aligning performance and financial information in this regard. It was noted that a balance needed to be achieved whereby both performance and finance information were aligned to produce quality outcomes for the Council.

It was also clarified that, with regard to the clinic process, Members would lead on this which would also give senior leaders an effective overview of progress.

OPTIONS

Members noted that the alternative option would have been to maintain separate approaches to performance and financial management or to retain existing project thresholds. It was considered that these approaches would limit the Council's ability to identify trends promptly and would not align with the principles of Best Value.

ORDERED that Executive:

- 1. Approved the Performance and Financial Management Policy;**
- 2. Approved the Programme and Project Management Policy; and**
- 3. Approved the Directorate Business Plan development plans as set out at paragraphs 4.4 to 4.8 of the report.**

AGREED that Executive:

- 1. Noted that implementation of the new integrated arrangements and the development of Directorate Business Plans during 2026/27 would support delivery of the Council Plan and strengthen organisational governance; and**
- 2. Noted that the revised PPM Policy and associated framework would ensure complex change activity was delivered effectively, consistently and in accordance with the Council's risk appetite.**

REASONS

The decisions supported the Council's commitment to continuous improvement and ensured that appropriate governance, accountability and transparency mechanisms

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were in place to maximise delivery of the Council Plan and demonstrate compliance with the Best Value Duty.

25/133

PRIDE IN PLACE PROGRAMME - THORNTREE, PARK END AND IMPACT FUND

The Executive Member for Development submitted a report for Executive consideration regarding the Pride in Place Programme allocations for Thorntree and Park End, and the Pride in Place – Impact Fund for central Middlesbrough. Members were informed that Middlesbrough had been awarded a combined £41.5m across the three programme areas.

Members were advised that Thorntree and Park End had each been allocated £20m over ten years under the main Pride in Place Programme. Each area would be required to establish an independent Neighbourhood Board, led by a locally appointed Chairperson, to identify priorities, consult with residents, and prepare a Neighbourhood Investment Plan for submission to Government by Winter 2026/27. Funding would commence in April 2027 following approval of each plan.

Members noted that the Council's role within the programme was limited to providing Accountable Body functions and secretariat support. The Executive heard that decision-making powers, including planning, design and prioritisation of investment, rested entirely with the Neighbourhood Boards. It was also reported that local MPs had a statutory role in the programme, including appointing Chairpersons and approving final Board membership. An open recruitment process for Board Chairs was underway, with expressions of interest due to close on 24 April 2026.

In addition to the main programme allocations, Members were informed that Middlesbrough had been awarded £1.5m from the Pride in Place – Impact Fund to support immediate improvements in central Middlesbrough. The Impact Fund would be delivered directly by the Council but required the consent of the constituency MP, Andy McDonald MP. Proposed interventions included improvements to Centre Square Pond, town centre clean-up activity and new public art installations.

The report highlighted that the programme was specifically targeted at areas identified as “doubly disadvantaged,” characterised by high deprivation and weak social infrastructure. Members acknowledged that the programme represented a significant opportunity to support long-term, community-led regeneration and to improve local engagement, service efficiency and neighbourhood resilience. The Executive also noted the resource implications for Council services, particularly during the early years of delivery, and the need for careful management of financial and legal oversight as the Accountable Body.

Clarification was provided regarding the area covered by the proposals which included three electoral wards and two parliamentary constituencies.

A discussion took place about Community Boards during which it was commented that if the process to appoint Chairs and other members to such Boards was too onerous it may deter community activists from applying. It was clarified that government guidance was available on the process of appointing members of the Community Boards and that the appointment process would be made as simple as possible.

OPTIONS

The alternative option would have been to decline Accountable Body status. Members noted that this would have jeopardised the £40m Pride in Place allocations for Thorntree and Park End, representing a substantial lost opportunity for these communities. This option was therefore not recommended.

ORDERED that Executive:

- 1. Approved the adoption of Accountable Body Status for the £20m Pride in Place Programme at Thorntree;**
- 2. Approved the adoption of Accountable Body Status for the £20m Pride in Place Programme at Park End;**

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3. **Approved the acceptance and allocation of the £1.5m Pride in Place – Impact Fund allocation for central Middlesbrough, subject to consent from Andy McDonald MP; and**
4. **Noted that the Council’s role was limited to that of Accountable Body and secretariat support.**

AGREED that Executive:

1. **Noted that all engagement activity, priority setting and development of the Neighbourhood Investment Plans would be solely determined by the Neighbourhood Boards for Thorntree and Park End;**
2. **Noted that officer resource requirements for administration and secretariat support would involve multiple Council services, including Growth & Assets, Neighbourhoods, Finance and Legal Services; and**
3. **Noted that any Neighbourhood Board decisions affecting Council land, assets, services or finances would be returned to Executive for consideration, with phased delivery used to maintain continuity of community services.**

REASONS

The decisions enabled Middlesbrough Council to unlock significant long-term investment for some of the town’s most disadvantaged communities, ensure robust governance and accountability in line with its duties as Accountable Body, and support the delivery of strong, resident-led neighbourhood plans focused on improving local pride, safety, wellbeing and community resilience.

25/134

TRANSPORT AND INFRASTRUCTURE CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2026/27

The Executive Member for Environment and Sustainability submitted a report for Executive consideration proposing the allocation of funding for the Transport and Infrastructure Capital Programme 2026/27 and seeking approval for associated delegations. Members were informed that the programme was fully grant-funded through the City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement (CRSTS) via the Tees Valley Combined Authority and totalled £3.403m for the forthcoming financial year.

The Executive was advised that the purpose of the report had been to allocate funding to transport and infrastructure improvements across the Borough, including both highways maintenance and incentive-based new works. Members heard that the proposals would support the Council Plan priorities by improving accessibility, reducing congestion, enhancing safety, encouraging modal shift and ensuring long-term best value through investment in asset renewal.

Members noted that the £3.403m programme comprised £1.065m in Incentive Funding and £2.338m for Highways Maintenance, with schemes identified through the Council’s Future Year Scheme list and prioritised using a robust scoring matrix. Maintenance schemes were based on asset condition rating systems, applying a “worst-first” approach to ensure public safety and prolong asset life. The report stated that competitive grant awards were also incorporated where relevant.

The Executive was informed that the proposed delegation of authority would allow the Director of Environment, Community Culture to approve programme amendments and virements up to £0.250m, subject to consultation with the Chief Finance Officer and the Executive Member for Environment where policy, service or strategic implications arose. Members heard that this would support prudent programme management, enabling timely adjustments to address unforeseen issues, funding changes or cost pressures.

Members acknowledged the wider benefits of the programme, including improvements to air quality, reduced traffic noise, greater accessibility for employment and education, and contributions to climate change objectives through investment in sustainable transport infrastructure. It was noted that the recommended approach also reduced the risk of rising highways claims associated with network deterioration and supported statutory duties under the Highways Act 1980.

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Members discussed the need for relevant Ward Members to be consulted before detailed design of schemes took place rather than at their commencement. It was stated that the decision before Executive was about the overall schemes not the detail of any one specific scheme.

The Mayor proposed an amendment to the report in that an additional action be added to provide a monthly report be made to the Executive Member responsible for Environment showing which schemes had been sent to relevant Ward Members.

Members were advised that the title of the Director of Environment and Community Services in the report should read Director of Environment, Community and Culture.

OPTIONS

Members noted that alternative options – including re-assessing the project proposals or taking no action – were not recommended. Reassessment would undermine the established prioritisation matrix and delay delivery, while taking no action would prevent timely allocation of funding and risk delivery failure.

ORDERED that Executive:

- 1. Approved the amendment to the report proposed by the Mayor.**
- 2. Approved the allocation of £3.403m in 2026/27 CRSTS Highways Maintenance and Incentive grant funding to schemes as detailed in Appendix 2; and**
- 3. Delegated authority for programme amendments and virements up to £0.250m to the Director of Environment, Community and Culture subject to consultation with the Chief Finance Officer and the Executive Member for Environment where relevant.**

AGREED that Executive:

- 1. Noted the title of Director of Environment and Community Services should read Director of Environment, Community and Culture.**
- 2. Noted that the programme aligned with Council Plan ambitions, supporting accessibility, safety, economic growth, sustainable travel and long-term asset management; and**
- 3. Noted that individual Ward Members would be consulted on schemes within their localities as appropriate.**

REASONS

The decisions ensured the Council could prudently allocate funding received through CRSTS, fulfil its statutory duties as Highway Authority, support safe and expeditious movement on the transport network, and deliver infrastructure improvements aligned with corporate ambitions and best value principles.

25/135

RESIDENTIAL PEST CONTROL SERVICE

The Executive Member for Environment and Sustainability submitted a report for Executive consideration seeking approval to implement a new Residential Pest Control Service. Members were informed that the proposal aligned with the Council Plan priority of creating safe and resilient communities and would have a significant impact across all wards.

Members were advised that the purpose of the report had been to extend the Council's existing pest control capability to domestic settings, supporting residents by responding to infestations, preventing environmental health risks and improving overall housing conditions. The Executive heard that the service would utilise Integrated Pest Management (IPM) principles, focusing on inspection, prevention, targeted treatment, and resident engagement to ensure effective, safe and environmentally responsible pest management.

Members noted that the service would provide free treatment for rats, mice, bedbugs and cockroaches, with other pest types treated on a chargeable basis. The service would be available to homeowners and private tenants, though not to social housing tenants, who already had pest arrangements through their landlords. It was reported that demand modelling had been benchmarked against other local authorities offering similar services.

The Executive was advised that £0.166m of permanent revenue growth had been included in the Medium-Term Financial Plan from 2026/27 to support staffing, training, materials and equipment. Members received clarification that no capital expenditure was required. The report also highlighted potential risks associated with demand levels and operational costs at service launch.

Members acknowledged that alternative options, such as appointing an external provider or not implementing the service, had been considered. It was noted that outsourcing could limit flexibility and reduce value for money, particularly given the uncertain level of demand, while doing nothing would fail to deliver important public health and community benefits. Retaining delivery in-house was therefore considered the most prudent option.

Members discussed the possibility of education programmes for the public to prevent food being discarded inappropriately leading to the attraction of pests. It was acknowledged that the introduction of food caddies may help with inappropriate food disposal.

OPTIONS

Members noted that the alternative options were to do nothing or to outsource delivery; however, neither was recommended, as both posed risks of reduced responsiveness, higher long-term costs, and diminished control and oversight of a service critical to public health.

ORDERED that Executive approved the implementation of a new Residential Pest Control Service.

AGREED that Executive:

- 1. Noted that the service would support the Council's ambitions for a healthy place, safe and resilient communities and best value through preventative action, reduced health risks and improved environmental conditions; and**
- 2. Noted that revenue growth requirements, staffing needs, legal responsibilities and operational risks had been fully assessed as part of the proposal.**

25/136

ENCOURAGING HEALTHIER ADVERTISING

The Executive Member for Public Health submitted a report for Executive consideration seeking approval for the implementation of a new Council advertising policy to restrict the promotion of health-harming products on Council-owned advertising assets. Members were informed that the proposal aligned with the Council Plan priority of creating a healthy place and would have a significant impact across multiple wards.

Members were advised that the policy aimed to reduce exposure to Unhealthy Commodity Industry (UCI) advertising, such as high-fat, salt and sugar (HFSS) foods, alcohol, tobacco, gambling, vaping, and high-cost short-term loans. It was reported that Middlesbrough continued to face severe public health challenges, including one of the highest childhood obesity rates in the country, with 39.8% of Year 6 children classified as overweight or obese, alongside 71.4% of adults living with overweight.

Members noted that with national HFSS television and online advertising restrictions introduced in January 2026, it was anticipated that advertising spend would shift towards outdoor marketing. Without local intervention, exposure to unhealthy food advertising on Council assets would likely increase. The Executive was advised that between October and December 2024, 26.4% of bus shelter advertisements in Middlesbrough promoted HFSS products.

The Executive heard that the proposed policy would prohibit UCI product advertising across all Council-controlled advertising spaces, including bus shelters, lampposts, roundabouts, social media channels, and printed publications. Evidence from Transport for London and other local authorities indicated minimal financial impact following implementation of similar policies, with most advertisers switching to compliant products and advertising revenues remaining stable.

Members were informed that the policy would operate on content-based restrictions rather than brand-based restrictions, enabling advertisers to promote healthier items within their product

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range. Targeted public health messages, such as smoking cessation or responsible drinking campaigns, would remain permitted. It was also noted that the Council's existing right to digital advertising time could be used to amplify positive health campaigns.

The Executive acknowledged the broader social benefits associated with the policy, including reduced environmental triggers for alcohol-related antisocial behaviour, support for healthier neighbourhood environments, and protection of vulnerable individuals disproportionately targeted by UCI advertising. Members were advised that adopting the policy reflected national momentum, with over 25 local authorities having already implemented similar approaches.

Members discussed the need to for Council policy to align with recent changes to restrictions applied to television and radio and that the Council's approach had been adopted in different areas.

OPTIONS

Two alternative options had been considered but were not recommended. The first option, to do nothing, would have missed a significant opportunity to reduce exposure to harmful advertising and would have contradicted commitments made through the Healthy Weight Declaration and the Public Health Strategy. The second option, to implement an advertising policy without restrictions on Unhealthy Commodity Industry products, would have failed to deliver known public health benefits and would not have reflected best practice evidence from comparable councils.

ORDERED that Executive approved the implementation of a new advertising policy restricting the promotion of health-harming products on Council advertising assets.

AGREED that Executive:

1. Noted that the policy provided a clear, consistent framework for managing advertising and safeguarding public health, while ensuring legal compliance and protecting the Council's reputation;
2. Noted that the policy would support healthier environments, reduce exposure to harmful advertising, particularly among deprived communities and children, and align with national public health objectives; and
3. Noted that financial impact was expected to be minimal, supported by evidence from other local authorities, with current advertising income of approximately £83,000 per year unlikely to be significantly affected.

REASONS

The proposed policy provided a clear, consistent framework for acceptable advertising, ensuring compliance with legislation and safeguarding public health. It supported the Council's Healthy Weight Declaration and Public Health Strategy, contributing to ambitions for a healthier, more sustainable, and more equal Middlesbrough. Evidence from other local authorities and Transport for London showed minimal financial impact and significant health benefits, including reduced calorie intake and improved health outcomes. Whilst restricting advertising from health harming industries represented a clear path to improving the advertising environment in Middlesbrough, it was also important to consider how positive messages could be utilised to maximise uptake of services and activities that improved wellbeing.

25/137

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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This document was classified as: OFFICIAL

EXECUTIVE SUB-COMMITTEE FOR PROPERTY

A meeting of the Executive Sub-Committee for Property was held on Wednesday 8 April 2026.

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

OFFICERS: A Bates, C Benjamin, S Bonner, H Dalby, G Field, A Glover, L Grabham, R Horniman, E Scollay and R Williams

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Councillors J Ryles and P Storey

24/21 WELCOME AND FIRE EVACUATION PROCEDURE

The Mayor welcomed all those present to the meeting and described the fire evacuation procedure.

24/22 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Name of Member	Type of Interest	Item/ Nature of Interest
Cllr Ian Blades	Non-Pecuniary	Item 7 Members Small Scheme Allocations 2026/27 – Submitted bid for wards.
Cllr Theo Furness	Non-Pecuniary	Item 7 Members Small Scheme Allocations 2026/27 – Submitted bid for wards.
Cllr Luke Henman	Non-Pecuniary	Item 7 Members Small Scheme Allocations 2026/27 – Submitted bid for wards.
Cllr Julia Rostron	Non-Pecuniary	Item 7 Members Small Scheme Allocations 2026/27 – Submitted bid for wards.

24/23 ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE MAYOR

None.

24/24 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC (IF ANY)

None.

24/25 QUESTIONS FROM ELECTED MEMBERS (IF ANY)

None.

24/26 MEMBERS SMALL SCHEME ALLOCATIONS 2026/27

The Executive Member for Finance submitted a report for the Executive Sub-Committee's consideration.

The purpose of the report was to present the updated position regarding applications submitted by Elected Members for the Members' Small Schemes Allocation 2026/27. The approved annual allocation totalled £143,590, enabling Members to apply for up to £15,000 per ward to deliver local environmental and highways improvements. Match funding from relevant service areas could be sought where project costs exceeded this limit.

Members noted that ten applications had been submitted across eligible wards, including Acklam, Ayresome, Berwick Hills and Pallister, Brookfield, Hemlington, Linthorpe, Marton West, Newport, Nunthorpe, and Park. The submissions had been assessed by Council Officers to determine suitability, affordability, and deliverability.

The Sub-Committee heard that the total value of funding requested was £143,590, with £80,000 requested in match funding from service areas. Where match funding had been required, confirmation had been provided by the relevant services. The approved schemes therefore remained within the funding allocation set aside in the Council's Capital Programme.

Members noted that the supported applications included traffic calming measures in Linthorpe and Park wards, zebra crossings in Hemlington and Berwick Hills and Pallister, CCTV and environmental improvements in Ayresome and Nunthorpe, and a range of local amenity enhancements including benches, bins, decorative lighting, and play area equipment across several wards.

These schemes were detailed in Appendix 1 of the report and were deemed deliverable with available resources.

The Executive Member proposed an amendment to the report to include the words 'as amended' when referring to Members Small Scheme project allocations.

It was confirmed that, once approved, the recommended schemes would proceed to design (where appropriate) and be scheduled for implementation at the earliest opportunity. Any expenditure not incurred during 2026/27 would be carried forward to 2027/28.

OPTIONS

The Council had the option not to approve the funding; however, this was not recommended, as the proposals had been fully assessed by Officers and were considered suitable, affordable, and deliverable within the available allocation. Declining all schemes was also not recommended, as the submissions met the relevant criteria.

ORDERED that the Executive Sub-Committee for Property:

- 1. Approved the proposed amendment to the report.**
- 2. Approved the eligible Members' Small Schemes project allocations, following applications from Members and assessment by Council Officers; and**
- 3. Approved the allocation of funding to deliver the approved projects.**

REASONS

The recommendations ensured the appropriate use of the Members' Small Schemes funding by supporting localised improvements that enhanced accessibility, safety, and the environment across wards. The approved schemes confirmed that the overall budget remained within limits and empowered Members to deliver meaningful improvements within their communities. The structured application and assessment process also enabled officers to programme work with sufficient notice and ensured match funding requirements were met where necessary.

24/27

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

MIDDLESBROUGH COUNCIL



Report of:	Director of Public Health South Tees, Mark Adams
Relevant Executive Member:	Mayor of Middlesbrough and lead for Changing Futures – Chris Cooke
Submitted to:	Executive
Date:	6 May 2026
Title:	Changing Futures Phase 2 Funding
Report for:	Decision
Status:	Public
Council Plan priority:	A healthy place
Key decision:	Yes
Why:	Decision(s) will have a significant impact in two or more wards
Subject to call in?	Yes
Why:	Non-urgent decision

Proposed decision(s)

That Executive:

- a. APPROVE the acceptance of external grant funding of £3,114,939 that will enable the extension of the Changing Futures programme in Middlesbrough for a further 3 years from April 2026 to March 2029.
- b. APPROVE the principles and terms of the Memorandum of Understanding.
- c. DELEGATE to the Director of Public Health the authority to approve expenditure in accordance with the Changing Futures Delivery Plan, as directed by the Changing Futures Board, for the funding period April 2026 - March 2029.

Executive summary

Purpose of the Report

The purpose of this report is to seek approval to accept external grant funding that will enable the extension of the Changing Futures programme for a further 3 years from April 2026 to March 2029.

Why This Decision Is Needed

Changing Futures is a programme that has been running across South Tees since 2021 following a successful bid to the National Lottery and MHCLG programme. South Tees is one of 15 local partnerships that have built strong evidence on how areas can provide a more effective response through flexible, coordinated support that works with the whole person and drives lasting changes in how services work together on multiple disadvantage.

The Programme directly supports people experiencing multiple disadvantage (combinations of homelessness and rough sleeping, substance misuse, mental ill health, domestic abuse and contact with the criminal justice system) and aims to develop strong partnerships and understanding of system change required to better support people to lead more fulfilling lives.

The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government has announced phase two of the Changing Futures programme, with 18 areas of the country sharing over £50m to help the most deprived upper-tier local authority areas in England. This represents a new phase of the cross government public service reform programme, led by MHCLG, that improves outcomes for people experiencing multiple disadvantage.

Middlesbrough has been selected as a Changing Futures phase 2 area and will receive £1.038M each year over the next three years (2026/27 to 2028/29).

Recommended Option and Rationale

That Executive:

- a. APPROVE the acceptance of external grant funding of £3,114,939 that will enable the extension of the Changing Futures programme in Middlesbrough for a further 3 years from April 2026 to March 2029.
- b. APPROVE the principles and terms of the Memorandum of Understanding.
- c. DELEGATE to the Director of Public Health the authority to approve expenditure in accordance with the Changing Futures Delivery Plan, as directed by the Changing Futures Board, for the funding period April 2026 - March 2029.

Impacts and Benefits

Accepting the funding to extend the Changing Futures programme in Middlesbrough will have a positive impact on local people who experience multiple disadvantage and continue to provide additional capacity to support them directly. The funding presents a compelling opportunity to continue delivering and expand a programme that is already delivering positive outcomes.

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 seek approval to accept external grant funding that will enable the extension of the Changing Futures programme for a further 3 years from April 2026 to March 2029.

Our ambitions	Summary of how this report will support delivery of these ambitions and the underpinning aims
A successful and ambitious town	Supporting people out of chaotic and difficult lives to support them to contribute to their communities through volunteering, training or finding a good job.
A healthy place	This programme will improve the life chances of our most vulnerable residents and reduce health inequalities.
Safe and resilient communities	Finding new ways to support people experiencing multiple disadvantage should reduce anti-social behaviour and crime – both that committed by people experiencing multiple disadvantage and committed against them.
Delivering best value	The programme connects us into learning from similar places that will help the Council and partners to improve effectiveness by improving outcomes for people experiencing multiple disadvantage.

2. Recommendations

2.1 That Executive:

- a. APPROVE the acceptance of external grant funding of £3,114,939 that will enable the extension of the Changing Futures programme in Middlesbrough for a further 3 years from April 2026 to March 2029.
- b. APPROVE the principles and terms of the Memorandum of Understanding.
- c. DELEGATE to the Director of Public Health the authority to approve expenditure in accordance with the Changing Futures Delivery Plan, as directed by the Changing Futures Board, for the funding period April 2026 - March 2029.

3. Rationale for the recommended decision(s)

3.1 Accepting this funding will not only help those with multiple disadvantages, continued involvement in the Changing Futures Programme will give Middlesbrough a further opportunity for ongoing learning through the programme to improve our approaches across the partnership, build the reputation of the Council with key Government departments and could increase the likelihood of further funding and support.

3.2 A core principle of the programme is to work in partnership across local services and the voluntary and community sector, building strong cross-sector partnerships at a

strategic and operational level. As such the Council should consider itself as the host and partner in the programme, rather than key decision-maker. Delegating the allocation of monies and management of procurement processes to the Director of Public Health on behalf of the Middlesbrough Changing Futures Board supports the development of a true partnership approach – an essential element of this programme.

4. Background and relevant information

- 4.1 Changing Futures is a programme that has been running across South Tees since 2021 following a successful bid to the National Lottery and MHCLG programme. South Tees is one of 15 local partnerships that have built strong evidence on how areas can provide a more effective response through flexible, coordinated support that works with the whole person and drives lasting changes in how services work together on multiple disadvantage.
- 4.2 The Programme directly supports people experiencing multiple disadvantage (combinations of homelessness and rough sleeping, substance misuse, mental ill health, domestic abuse and contact with the criminal justice system) and aims to develop strong partnerships and understanding of system change required to better support people to lead more fulfilling lives.
- 4.3 A core principle of the programme is to work in partnership across local services and the voluntary and community sector, building strong cross-sector partnerships at a strategic and operational level. As such the Council should consider itself as the host and partner in the programme, rather than key decision-maker.
- 4.4 The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government has announced phase two of the Changing Futures programme, with 18 areas of the country sharing over £50m to help the most deprived upper-tier local authority areas in England. This represents a new phase of the cross government public service reform programme, led by MHCLG, that improves outcomes for people experiencing multiple disadvantage.
- 4.5 Middlesbrough has been selected as a Changing Futures phase 2 area and will receive a total of £3,114,939 - £1.038M each year over the next three years (2026/27 to 2028/29).
- 4.6 The targeted areas have been identified as high need, based on the ranking of the Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD). Middlesbrough has been chosen as a target area as they are second in the IMD ranking, however Redcar and Cleveland hasn't been chosen as the IMD ranking of 29th is outside the chosen areas. South Tees wasn't considered as a composite as MHCLG only looked at Council footprints.
- 4.7 This approach is part of the Government moving away from bidding processes to an allocation process. Government consultation identified that there was widespread frustration with the intensity and resources required for the bidding processes.
- 4.8 National Learning from Phase 1 Programmes

4.8.1 There is a significant emphasis placed on learning in both the current South Tees programme and the phase 2 programme. The learning will inform national policy across Government, with the Cabinet Office, MHCLG, DHSC, DWP, MoJ and the Home Office all sponsoring the programme.

4.8.2 The features of a more effective response identified from phase 1, and anticipated to be developed further throughout this programme include:

- Trusted caseworker building relationships, providing practical and emotional support and leading coordination of support across the system, with low caseloads allowing bespoke and intensive support
- Wrap-around of specialist support such as housing, health, and employment advice as needed, e.g. through multi-disciplinary teams.
- Strong strategic partnership backing and collective, person-centred problem-solving between public services.

4.9 Programme Core Principles

4.9.1 There is a strong desire to avoid direction from the centre and allow areas to explore local issues and solutions in a local context. However, there are a set of core principles we will need to work to:

- **Work in partnership** across local services and the voluntary and community sector, building strong cross-sector partnerships at a strategic and operational level
- **Coordinate support**, and better integrate local services that support adults experiencing multiple disadvantage to enable a ‘whole person’ approach
- **Create flexibility** in how local services respond to adults experiencing multiple disadvantage, taking a system-wide view with shared accountability and ownership leading to better service provision and a ‘no wrong door’ approach to support
- **Involve people with lived experience** of multiple disadvantage in the design, delivery and evaluation of improved services and in governance and decision making
- **Take a trauma-informed, relational approach** across the local system, services and in the governance of the programme
- **Commit to drive lasting systems-change**, with long-term sustainable changes and a commitment to sustain the benefits of the programme beyond the lifetime of the funding.

4.10 Local Commitments

4.10.1 The programme is described as a “joint central/local endeavour” to achieve positive sustained change for people and services. As part of that approach a set of local commitments are described:

- Target and improve support for a local cohort of adults experiencing multiple disadvantage, who are placing a high level of demand on local services (c.300-350 adults over 3 years).
- Drive wider system change, as defined through a co-designed system maturity framework.
- Build lived experience into the local system stewardship and development.

- Evidence the impact of work on the cohort and local systems by working with the Changing Futures national evaluation.
- Develop and share learning relevant to other areas and government departments, attending events and hosting visits.
- Produce and implement a partnership delivery plan.

4.11 These features are consistent with the approach in phase 1.

5. Ward Member Engagement if relevant and appropriate

5.1 Not relevant.

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

6.1 To do nothing and not accept the funding would deny Middlesbrough the opportunity for investment into continuity of existing Changing Futures projects and improvement into services for some of our most complex and vulnerable residents.

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

Topic	Impact
Financial	<p>There are no formal match funding requirements from the Council or other partners, although there is an expectation that areas align and embed this funding with wider investments and initiatives locally.</p> <p>The learning from this programme should influence the MTFP over the years of the funding and beyond to ensure that what works for people suffering multiple disadvantage becomes part of mainstream delivery.</p>
Social Value	<p>In terms of social value the focus of this work will be to work with local organisations to improve the system of support, which will include commissioning services that directly support people suffering multiple disadvantage.</p>
Procurement	<p>Any services or support commissioned through this programme will follow Middlesbrough Council procurement policies and best practice.</p>
Legal	<p>There are no identified legal implications in relation to accepting the funding and to develop the delivery of the programme up until March 2029.</p> <p>Any contract extensions required through the extension of this funding from the previous South Tees Changing Futures programme will be consistent with Middlesbrough Council commissioning and procurement policies.</p>
Risk	<p>No significant risks that would negatively impact on the strategic risk register have been identified.</p>

Topic	Impact
	Please see attached Risk Assessment at appendix 5
Human Rights, Public Sector Equality Duty and Community Cohesion	Equality impact assessments were carried out for original Changing Futures proposal and found no negative impacts on any protected groups, nor was it likely to have any negative impact as a whole. An updated Impact Assessment can be found at appendix 4.
Reducing Poverty	People suffering multiple disadvantage suffer from the most extreme impact of poverty. This programme will support some of the most vulnerable people in Middlesbrough to reduce that impact and move towards more fulfilling lives. The system change element of the programme will include an action learning approach to understand how we can move beyond working with people to challenge the underlying systems and processes that either don't help to resolve or make those problems worse.
Climate Change / Environmental	No adverse impact
Children and Young People Cared for by the Authority and Care Leavers	No adverse impact
Data Protection	There have been early discussions with the Probation Service on data linkage to better understand the intersection of issues with this population and there may be further aims to use data differently to better understand how people suffering multiple disadvantage use services and how Changing Futures interventions shift that pattern to something more productive for the person. Any arrangements on data sharing will be in line with GDPR regulations and in liaison with the Data Protection team.

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

Action	Responsible Officer	Deadline
Establish Middlesbrough Changing Futures Programme Board	Mark Adams	May 2026
Identify lead roles (as detailed in the Prospectus)	Mark Adams	May 2026
Develop a Changing Futures Delivery plan	Mark Adams	June 2026

Action	Responsible Officer	Deadline
Update report to Executive within 6 months of approval	Mark Adams	November 2026

Appendices

1	Executive Committee (April 2021): South Tees Changing Futures Programme
2	Changing Futures Programme: Prospectus for Phase 2 – 2026-2029
3	Memorandum of Understanding between Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government and Middlesbrough Council
4	Impact Assessment level 1
5	Risk Assessment

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MIDDLESBROUGH COUNCIL

Report of:	Erik Scollay - Director of Adult Social Care and Health Integration Mark Adams - Director of South Tees Public Health Councillor Dorothy Davison - Executive Member for Adult Social Care and Public Health
Submitted to:	Executive - 13 April 2021
Subject:	Changing Futures Funding Opportunity

Summary

Proposed decision(s)
<p>That Executive approves:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A formal submission on a South Tees partnership basis with Middlesbrough Council as the lead organisation; • Subject to the bid's success, approval to receive the grant funding on behalf of the South Tees partnership and distribute it amongst the partner organisations; • That the Director of Public Health (DPH), as the named lead for the South Tees partnership, in consultation with the relevant Executive Member, receives delegated authority to allocate future funding for Changing Futures, up to £150k per intervention/decision and to approve costed delivery plans relating to the programme, via the Governance and Steering Board that will be formed if we are successful. • That the Director of Public Health (DPH), as the named lead for the South Tees partnership, receives delegated authority to sign the bid on behalf of Middlesbrough Council as lead authority for the Partnership.

Report for:	Key decision:	Confidential:	Is the report urgent?¹
Decision	Yes - it is over financial threshold and affects more than two wards	No	Yes - the deadline for submission is 6 th May 2021 and there is a significant amount of partnership work involved to develop the bid.

¹ Remove for non-Executive reports

Contribution to delivery of the 2020-23 Strategic Plan		
People	Place	Business
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tackling crime and anti-social behaviour head on 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Winning investment and creating jobs Creating positive perceptions of our town on a national basis

Ward(s) affected
All wards are affected by this proposal.

What is the purpose of this report?

- To provide an update on the Changing Futures funding opportunity and to seek approval for a formal submission on a South Tees partnership basis with Middlesbrough Council as the lead organisation.

Why does this report require a Member decision?

- This decision is a key decision, affecting all wards in Middlesbrough and with financial implications over the key decision threshold of £150,000.

Report Background

- Following Middlesbrough's award of approx. £4.5m funding for Project ADDER, the government has announced £46m from the Shared Outcomes Fund for a new programme: Changing Futures – aimed at changing systems to support adults experiencing multiple disadvantage. It is being led by the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government (MHCLG).
- The programme will work in partnership with up to 15 local areas to test innovative approaches and improve outcomes for people experiencing multiple disadvantage, including a combination of: homelessness; substance misuse; mental health issues; domestic abuse and contact with the criminal justice system.
- People in this situation are among the most vulnerable in our local communities, experiencing entrenched disadvantage and trauma. They come into repeated contact with our police, criminal justice and emergency response services without receiving the support they need to break the cycle – generating significant costs to the public purse without seeing improved life outcomes.
- Changing Futures invited expressions of interest from pioneering local partnerships who want to work with government to drive lasting system change and better outcomes for adults experiencing multiple disadvantage. By working together in local areas and across government, the programme aims to change systems, change services and change the futures of the most disadvantaged adults in our community.
- Despite having several existing lot of cross-over with Project ADDER, Next Steps Rough Sleeper funding and other government grant initiatives, we are still eligible to bid.

MHCLG are looking to work with areas that have significant, existing partnership work to address multiple disadvantage, therefore, it presents an opportunity to support these and the other workstreams that we are already undertaking - notably the integrated vulnerable persons' service model.

8. There is a particular focus on submissions demonstrating the following:
 - a. Addressing the needs of the whole person;
 - b. A system-wide approach;
 - c. Trauma-informed practice;
 - d. Meaningful lived experience input in the design and ongoing delivery;
 - e. Additionality, evidence based and targeted – not substituting universal, statutory or mainstream (existing) services.
9. Two meetings were held to explore the most feasible geographical basis for the bid. Consensus was reached that, although a Tees-wide bid would have been preferable, there was insufficient existing partnership approaches in relation to the topic areas. Having weak evidence of this would have harmed the EoI submission, therefore, it was agreed to proceed on a South Tees footprint.
10. Middlesbrough Council took the lead, as MHCLG stipulated that it had to be an LA that they had the grant agreement with, in order to distribute the funding throughout the partnership on their behalf.
11. The Expression of Interest (EoI) was submitted on behalf Middlesbrough and Redcar & Cleveland Councils, along with a variety of partner organisations across a South Tees partnership. This has not been attached as an appendix due to its commercially sensitive nature at this stage, given that Changing Futures is a competitive bidding process.
12. The South Tees (ST) EoI was successful and we were able to claim a development grant of £15k that is enabling us to appoint a bid co-ordinator. The appointed lead is working with all organisations within the ST partnership and co-ordinating the development of a costed delivery plan to ensure the formal bid is submitted on time. They are providing dedicated capacity to carry out the partnership-wide engagement and meet the challenging timescale of 6th May 2021 for submission (as of mid-March, this has just been extended from the original 26th April 2021 deadline) at no cost to the council/ST partnership.
13. If successful, MHCLG guidance stated that they expected two year grants to total approx. £1.5m - £4.5m per area. However, MHCLG have just extended the length of the programme through until 31/3/24, thanks to a partnership with the National Lottery Fulfilling Lives fund. This will ensure additional funding for successful areas, which will be based on the proposed, costed delivery plan submitted. Delivery is expected to commence in June/July 2021.
14. If successful, we would seek to apply the Middlesbrough Council corporate 8% management fee to the funding as the grant recipient. It is also within scope to recruit strategic lead capacity with the funding to oversee the programme.

What decision(s) are being asked for?

15. That Executive approves:
- a. A formal submission on a South Tees partnership basis with Middlesbrough Council as the lead organisation;
 - b. Subject to the bid's success, approval to receive the grant funding on behalf of the South Tees partnership and distribute it amongst the partner organisations;
 - c. That the Director of Public Health (DPH), as the named lead for the South Tees partnership, in consultation with the relevant Executive Member, receives delegated authority to allocate future funding for Changing Futures, up to £150k per intervention/decision and to approve costed delivery plans relating to the programme, via the Governance and Steering Board that will be formed if we are successful.
 - d. That the Director of Public Health (DPH), as the named lead for the South Tees partnership, receives delegated authority to sign the bid on behalf of Middlesbrough Council as lead authority for the Partnership.

Why is this being recommended?

16. Successfully attaining a Changing Futures area status presents an opportunity to attract significant external funding to Middlesbrough and the wider South Tees area, which will benefit a wide range of our population, including extremely vulnerable groups. The delegated authority to the DPH request is being made within the context of creating a South Tees Partnership Governance and Steering Board, should we be successful. This group will include key representatives from commissioning/procurement, finance, HR and social care, as well as appropriate partner organisations representation. Decisions regarding delivery plans, interventions, recruitment and procurement processes will be agreed within this group.
17. The benefits of being Changing Futures programme area include:
- a. The funding could have a significant positive impact on the lives of local people impacted by multiple vulnerabilities;
 - b. The timing is extremely welcome given the challenges outlined in the 'Report Background' and the following, current and critical issues relating to the last two years:
 - i. Highest levels of drug related deaths on record;
 - ii. Highest levels of alcohol related deaths on record;
 - iii. Unprecedented number of domestic homicide reviews;
 - iv. Significant increases in those in temporary accommodation and with acute housing issues;
 - v. Impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.
 - c. It will benefit the integrated service model which brought together domestic abuse, homelessness and substance misuse services from 1st April 2021, aiming to better address the complex vulnerabilities faced by some of our residents. Changing Futures status will help us to complement this approach with additional capacity and maximise the benefits of this new model with significant external investment in key areas of specialist support.
 - d. The issues associated with multiple vulnerabilities impact on a wide range of health outcomes and service provision, including demand on childrens services, primary and secondary care, and adult social care. Improved outcomes in will translate to further benefits across key areas of health and social care.
 - e. Stakeholder consultation is not formally required in order to approve the receipt of this funding, however, co-production of the interventions with the South Tees

- partners, VCS, local service user community and 'experts by experience' will form a key part of the programme.
- f. Both Changing Futures and Project ADDER support the recent Middlesbrough Council Health Scrutiny Panel's examination of opioid dependency, which recommended that this topic was to become a long-term, standing agenda item due to its level of impact and complexity. Multiple partner organisations have been invited to the panel over the last year in order to promote a whole-system approach to tackling this 'wicked problem'.
 - g. In addition to the funding, being a Changing Futures programme area would ensure that we benefitted from:
 - i. Having direct links with the MHCLG and other key, government departments with our local findings/outcomes influencing national decisions;
 - ii. Being part of a network with other Changing Futures areas to gather and share best practice;
 - iii. Being provided with additional, specialist support from other organisations involved in the Changing Futures national programme, including Making Every Adult Matter (MEAM).

Other potential decisions and why these have not been recommended

18. Retaining the status quo and not accepting this funding would deny Middlesbrough/South Tees the opportunity for significant investment and improvement in services for some of our most complex and vulnerable residents. Addressing these complex vulnerabilities and tackling the underlying social determinants of poor health in this group, including issues such as criminal justice, employment and positive relationships, provides the potential to transform local lives. The negative impact that these issues have on the wider community and the area as a whole can be significantly mitigated by investment at this scale.

Impact(s) of recommended decision(s)

Legal

19. There are no identified legal implications in relation to delivering Changing Futures. This has been discussed with relevant Legal and Democratic Services officers, including them having oversight of the EoI.

Financial

20. There are no formal match funding requirements from the Council and full project management costs have been built into the draft proposal. There would be a draw on corporate staff time to contribute to the project, therefore, the 8% for council overheads has been fully applied to the costed delivery plan in order to cover this support. Furthermore, MHCLG has indicated that Changing Futures areas will not be subjected to redundancy liabilities. Their current expectation is that any potential redundancy costs will be built into the final year funding requests and covered by the associated grant settlement.
21. As the final proposal is at an early stage and remains corporately sensitive (given the competitive nature of the process), no formal commitment of match funding from partners has yet been made. However, we are aware of and are discussing funding streams which meet this criteria and have the potential to be utilised. This approach would only be pursued following Executive approval to proceed with Changing Futures. The Council would not be subject to any financial liability for uncommitted match funding, should this

not transpire, as the any posts/activity would be amended/reduced proportionately in order to be fully covered by the external funding.

22. Whilst there is the real potential that this programme of work will make the national case for an increased baseline funding for this agenda, this cannot be guaranteed and, as such, all interventions will need to be designed with a clear exit strategy in place. Specific consideration will need to be given to:
- a. Hosting arrangements and liability for posts - any post hosted by the local authority could be initially recruited to a maximum of two years, on fixed term contracts.
 - b. Continuation of service pathways beyond the initial funding – consideration will need to be given to how successful ways of working from the project are embedded within future commissioning intentions and existing service pathways across the South Tees partnership.
 - c. From the outset we will be clear on the need for Changing Futures to create a legacy. We are going to propose a mixture of roles, interventions and service elements to enable some to be self-sustaining (following initial investment) and others to be built into future service developments if they are proven to deliver successful outcomes.
 - d. Interventions where system savings can be identified would be flagged at the outset, however, we would retain a pragmatic view regarding the ability of these savings to become either “cashable” or reallocated to this programme.
 - e. Ongoing research and evaluation throughout the programme is embedded in and funded through the national programme. Nationally funded support will be provided from MHCLG to support local pilot areas in exit strategy arrangements and embedding successful practice.

Policy Framework

23. Approval of the recommendations will not affect any part of the Council’s Policy Framework.

Equality and Diversity

24. An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) has been completed. This has found that the proposal does not negatively impact on any protected groups nor is it likely to have any negative impacts as a whole.
25. The EIA is attached to this report at Appendix i.

Risk

26. No significant risks that would negatively impact on the strategic risk register have been identified. Several related risks relating to the forthcoming integrated service model will be positively influenced by Changing Futures, including ensuring enhancement of delivery capacity and specialisms within the staffing model.
27. Please see attached DRAFT Risk and Issue register/log at Appendix ii.
28. Further to receiving approvals all risks will be uploaded to and managed through Pentana.

Actions to be taken to implement the decision(s)

29. The costed delivery plan will be further developed to ensure that the recommended decisions enable Changing Futures to be successfully delivered. This will be overseen by the DPH/Changing Futures Governance and Steering Board throughout the lifetime of Changing Futures.

Appendices

30. Appendix i - Impact assessment

31. Appendix ii - Draft Risk and Issue Register

Background papers

32. No background papers were used in the preparation of this report.

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Changing Futures Programme: Prospectus for Phase 2 – 2026-2029

Introduction

1. Adults experiencing multiple disadvantage face complex, interconnected issues and unmet needs – including combinations of homelessness, substance misuse, mental ill health, domestic abuse, and contact with the criminal justice system - that cannot be addressed by any one service alone. They cost the state five times more per head than other citizens, but receive fragmented, crisis-driven support that fails to address their underlying issues.
2. Extensive evaluation of the first phase of Changing Futures and predecessor programmes such as Fulfilling Lives, has shown that a more joined-up, person-centred approach improves outcomes for adults experiencing multiple disadvantage and significantly reduces both demand on the system and costs to the taxpayer.
3. We are therefore making further national funding and support available through a new phase of Changing Futures to achieve long term transformation for more areas, more services and more people in need. We will continue to focus on a cohort of people that are already creating high levels of repeat crisis demand on local services and expect this programme to provide direct help to approximately 4,700 people over the next 3 years.
4. Phase 2 of Changing Futures is an important element of the Government's wider commitment to public service reform, bringing together multiple government departments on a shared challenge and supporting partnerships and integration across local government, health, social care, police, criminal justice and voluntary sectors.
5. The programme will retain much of the framework of the successful first phase while embedding key learning about how to drive change across diverse systems as swiftly and effectively as possible. It will continue to focus on achieving change:
 - o **for individuals**, helping to stabilise and improve health, safety, wellbeing, and access to support for local cohorts of adults experiencing multiple disadvantage;
 - o **for services**, promoting greater integration and collaboration across local services, alongside increased use of person-centred, trauma-informed approaches, and in the long-term, reducing demand on services;
 - o **for the wider system of services and support**, promoting strong multi-agency partnerships, governance, and better use of data so that local strategy and commissioning better responds to and prevents multiple disadvantage.

Core principles

6. Every area has its own unique context, partnerships, services, governance and leadership. So, as with the first phase, we will avoid prescription but expect all partners to work within the following core principles:

- **work in partnership** across local services and the voluntary and community sector, building strong cross-sector partnerships at a strategic and operational level;
 - **coordinate support**, and better integrate local services that support adults experiencing multiple disadvantage to enable a ‘whole person’ approach;
 - **create flexibility** in how local services respond to adults experiencing multiple disadvantage, taking a system-wide view with shared accountability and ownership leading to better service provision and a ‘no wrong door’ approach to support;
 - **involve people with lived experience of multiple disadvantage** in the design, delivery and evaluation of improved services and in governance and decision making;
 - **take a trauma-informed, relational approach** across the local system, services and in the governance of the programme;
 - **commit to drive lasting systems-change**, with long-term sustainable changes and a commitment to sustain the benefits of the programme beyond the lifetime of the funding.
7. While the core principles remain unchanged, we aim to build on learning from approaches tried and tested in the first phase that unlock better collaboration and support on multiple disadvantage – such as dedicated keyworkers, low caseloads, multi-disciplinary teams, and case conferencing approaches. Areas will also be able to draw on extensive learning and resources from the evaluation of Changing Futures, such as the [system change toolkit](#), and we will co-design stronger guidance on areas such as support models, system change and involving people with lived experience. Further detail is provided later in this prospectus.

Place selection and funding

8. Under this phase of the Changing Futures programme we are targeting the 18 most deprived areas at upper tier local authority level in England. Where multiple areas are identified within a Mayoral Strategic Authority area, local partners have the option to combine their allocations via the Mayoral Strategic Authority and work in a collaborative approach. In each area local partnerships involving the local authority, health, police, criminal justice and voluntary sector partners have agreed to participate on the basis of the programme expectations which are detailed in this prospectus. Funding will pass to the upper-tier local authority or Mayoral Strategic Authority on the understanding that it will flow through to the wider area partnership as per their joint plans.
9. We will agree a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with each area. The MoU sets out more detail about what involvement in the programme will entail, based on the principles in this prospectus. It is framed as a two-way accountability mechanism between areas and government. In broad terms, areas are expected to:
- Target and improve support for a local cohort of adults experiencing multiple disadvantage, who are placing a high level of demand on local services.

- Drive wider system change, as defined through a co-designed system maturity framework, so that the work of the next 3 years will continue to benefit the population after the programme ends.
- Build lived experience into the local system stewardship and development.
- Evidence the impact of their work on the cohort and local systems by working with our national evaluation.
- Develop and share learning relevant to other areas and government departments.

It also makes commitments on behalf of national government to:

- Provide flexible funding.
- Support areas to embed lived experience in their approach.
- Facilitate opportunities for shared learning and challenge across national networks.
- Provide routes into relevant government departments.
- Supply evidence-based support and guidance on effective models and delivery, building on learning from Changing Futures, that will inform areas local approach.

Cohort definition

10. Changing Futures aims to improve support for adults experiencing multiple disadvantage. By this we mean people who experience:
 - a. multiple unmet needs: three or more of homelessness, substance misuse, mental ill health, domestic abuse, and contact with the criminal justice system; and,
 - b. repeated negative service use: repeated contact with crisis and response services such as police, A&E, safeguarding, etc. where the system is struggling to engage them in effective support.
11. People experiencing multiple disadvantage will also face a range of other challenges underlying these problems, including physical ill health, disability, trauma, brain injury, learning disability, neurodiversity, poverty, and/or a lack of family connections or support networks. As set out in the core principles, local areas should develop a coordinated, 'whole person' approach taking account of the full range of a person's needs, strengths and resources.
12. Local areas have the flexibility to use professional judgement to target within this definition and ensure any additional support offer provided through Changing Futures integrates with, and addresses gaps in, the wider local support system. This may include, for example, supporting adults with less than three presenting issues where those individuals are repeatedly using and/or dropping out of crisis services and their needs are escalating.
13. Progress in intelligent use of data should increasingly improve the identification of this cohort, but we want areas to be able to reach individuals who are placing high demand on reactive services but not yet evident in the data, perhaps due to a lack of connection with existing support services, or transition out of children and adolescent services. Areas may also want to consider identifying people through key transition points and areas of 'failure demand', where high levels of multiple disadvantage are

found – such as high intensity use of A&E; prolific offenders; people leaving prison; women experiencing child removal; transitions from care or from youth to adult services; and repeated safeguarding referrals.

14. Multiple disadvantage and service use looks different across different groups, so we will ask areas to consider how approaches might need to be adapted to reach women and ethnic minorities. For instance, women are more likely than men to experience domestic abuse and exploitation and engage in sex work. Women experiencing multiple disadvantage may be less visible to services and therefore more likely to be missed by them.¹

Partnership expectations

15. Areas will be expected to develop strong partnership working structures at an operational and strategic level.
16. As a minimum the following should be represented:
- **Adult Social Care**
 - **Public Health** including substance misuse commissioning.
 - **Housing support**
 - **Other Local Authority representatives**, areas might wish to include representation from community safety, youth offending services and health and wellbeing boards.
 - **Strategic NHS partners**, including the Integrated Care System, Integrated Care Board and Mental Health Trust.
 - **Police, Police and Crime Commissioner and Deputy Mayors for Policing.**
 - **National Probation Service.** Areas might also wish to additionally involve representation from prison and HM Courts and Tribunals.
 - **Voluntary, social and community sector partners.**
 - **Jobcentre Plus**
17. The governance of the local area programme will be through this partnership, and any of the above partners – or multiple partners – may be identified as the chair or lead of the local partnership. Alternatively, areas may choose to identify an independent chair of the partnership.
18. Areas may choose to align with existing strategic governance arrangements, such as health and wellbeing boards, Combatting Drugs Partnerships and/or Community Safety Partnerships. They may also choose to develop bespoke arrangements to oversee their cross-cutting multiple disadvantage plan, with clear links to multiple forums. We do not want this work to further complicate the local partnership landscape, but rather to enhance and better coordinate local efforts on multiple disadvantage - so areas should develop the partnership arrangements that suit them

¹ [Evaluation of the Changing Futures programme - final report](#)

best. The system change toolkit sets out learning from Changing Futures to date on different governance approaches.

19. While the local authority or Mayoral Strategic Authority will be the direct recipient of funding on behalf of the partnership, funding will flow through to other parts of the system in line with the local delivery plan.
20. While allowing local flexibility in these structures, certain roles will need to be identified in each area to ensure effective running of the programme and engagement with the central programme and evaluation teams. These roles can be identified within any of the partner organisations, and can be an existing position or supported by programme funding:
 - **Local political lead:** Named elected local political lead who will oversee and champion the project. This may be a Mayor, Local Authority Cabinet Member, Leader
 - **Senior Responsible Officer:** Identified senior official responsible for delivering the project such as the Director of Public Health, Director of Adult Social Care, Director of Housing or other senior leader on the partnership.
 - **Partnership/Programme lead:** named lead for overseeing delivery of local programme and coordinating partnership. Acts as single point of contact for the central government team.
 - **System change lead:** named lead responsible for overseeing system change learning, dissemination and delivery and linking with commissioners.
 - **Lived experience lead:** named lead responsible for establishing structures and systems that embed lived experience throughout the system change and delivery work, from commissioning to evaluation and peer support. Successful integration of lived experience to design and delivery was viewed to be one of the most important success factors in phase 1 of Changing Futures.
 - **Data and digital lead:** named lead on data, data protection, information governance and outcomes measurement. Critical role in promoting and enabling local data sharing and providing data governance expertise as part of wider system change. Key contact for evaluation team.
21. We can make sample person specifications/job descriptions for these roles available if areas would find this helpful.

Articulating system change ambitions – support and challenge for areas

22. The programme requires system wide changes and reform locally to deliver the benefits. This cannot be achieved without a commitment to wider impact from local partners. The new programme framework strengthens the emphasis on this foundational and ongoing system change work.
23. System change will be formally defined through a co-designed system maturity framework, and will cover changes around environment, policy, people, funding, culture, strategy, or process, that is sustainable in the long-term and transformational. This is likely to include:

- Establishing clear leadership and governance for multiple disadvantage across the local partnership.
 - Actively engaged partners sharing a common understanding of multiple disadvantage.
 - Plans to improve data sharing and use between relevant agencies.
 - Better integration of services, funding and commissioning related to multiple disadvantage, making the most of local resources.
 - Lived experience insight informing decision making.
 - Learning pathways for continuous improvement between frontline delivery and strategic oversight and commissioning.
 - Targeted improvement at key transition and challenge points in the system, that lead to better service responses and earlier intervention in multiple disadvantage.
24. The partnership in each area should produce a plan that sets out how they will build on existing work and improve outcomes for adults experiencing multiple disadvantage in line with the core principles. This should read across to other plans relevant to those experiencing multiple disadvantage.
25. The Local Outcomes Framework includes a multiple disadvantage outcome, which provides expectations for all local authorities regarding both support for individuals and wider system reform. This should bolster local partnership development both within and beyond funded areas, and when data is collected against the outcome this will provide additional context to the programme evaluation. Through the programme, the partnership will be expected to self-assess progress on their delivery plan and system change ambitions in order to drive local improvement and capture learning.
26. To help accelerate local and national learning, we will be supporting area self-assessments and peer reviews by areas participating in Changing Futures and other public sector reform programmes. The national delivery team and support services will also continue to work with areas offering tailored and structured support, challenge and learning.
27. This process will be co-designed with the participating areas and the findings at key stages will be shared with a national cross-government group on multiple disadvantage with representation from all key Government Departments: Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government, Cabinet Office, Home Office, Ministry of Justice, Department of Health and Social Care and Department of Work and Pensions.
28. The cross-government group will provide oversight for the wider work on multiple disadvantage and support areas to drive system change and unblock barriers to service integration.

Alignment with other local and government programmes

29. A range of other government programmes are currently underway led by different parts of the public sector or targeting specific groups with high levels of multiple

disadvantage, such as people sleeping rough, repeat offenders, or women in or at risk of contact with the criminal justice system. It also includes other public sector reform projects such as:

- The shift to a Neighbourhood Health Service, including the National Neighbourhood Health Implementation programme (DHSC)
 - Test, Learn and Grow pilots (Cabinet Office)
 - Place Based Budget pilots
30. We expect, and will support, areas to make explicit links where they are participating in other government or voluntary sector funded projects impacting on this cohort, so that it complements and enhances other programmes and interventions underway in the area as part of a whole system approach.
31. All these programmes play an important part in the cross-government work to tackle disadvantage in England and the national board referenced above will collaborate with local areas to understand the learning and outcomes in real time and drive forward system change at a local, regional and national level.

Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning

32. The final evaluation outputs from the Changing Futures programme are available [here](#). These include a comprehensive final report that uses a theory-based approach to explain the outcomes observed at individual, service, and system levels.
33. The report presents updated quantitative data on key individual-level outcomes, comparing baseline measures to approximately 12 months into the programme. It also includes a narrative assessment of the programme's contribution to these outcomes, alongside a cost-benefit analysis that weighs programme costs against the monetised net benefit per participant.
34. In the next phase of Changing Futures, the national evaluation will place greater emphasis on understanding changes in the wider system surrounding individuals experiencing multiple disadvantage, while continuing to strengthen evidence on individual outcomes and service use.
35. All participating areas will be expected to contribute to the national monitoring and evaluation programme. This will involve quantitative data collection from beneficiaries on demographics, outcomes, service use and personal identifiers to link to national administrative data sets. As well as participation in interviews, focus groups, and other qualitative activities.
36. The national monitoring programme will streamline data collection, ensure that collection is trauma-informed and minimise the monitoring burden where possible.
37. To support the delivery of the national evaluation, appropriate data protection documentation must be in place for each local area. Both local areas and MHCLG are expected to adhere to the principles outlined in these documents.
38. The national evaluation will centre lived experience, incorporating co-design approaches wherever possible to ensure meaningful involvement.

39. Many areas in the past have chosen to commission external research organisations to deliver local evaluations and evidence products.
40. Learning and adaptation remain central to Changing Futures. We will continue to support areas in sharing insights and lessons learned and will expect participating areas to attend and host regular in person learning events.
41. A voluntary Monitoring and Evaluation Working Group will continue to support the design and delivery of national monitoring and evaluation activities. This group provides valuable feedback and challenge to the national programme.

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

between

Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government

and

Middlesbrough Council

1. Background

1.1. In December 2025, the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government ('MHCLG') announced a £55.8m multiple disadvantage programme. This programme is named Changing Futures and will run for three years, from financial year 2026/27 to 2028/29. For clarity, this builds on a preceding five-year programme of the same name.

1.2. For the purposes of the programme, 'multiple disadvantage' describes combinations of experience that include homelessness, substance misuse, domestic abuse, mental ill health and contact with the criminal justice system – particularly where this drives repeated contact with crisis response services.

1.3. Middlesbrough Council has been selected to receive an allocation of £3,114,939 under this programme, based on the locality's ranking in the 2025 Indices of Multiple Deprivation. This allocation is profiled as below:

2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	Total
£1,038,313	£1,038,313	£1,038,313	£3,114,939

2. Purpose of the MoU

2.1. This Memorandum of Understanding ('MoU') sets out the terms, principles and practices that will apply to the working relationship between MHCLG and Middlesbrough Council ('the Council') (collectively 'the Parties') regarding the administration and delivery of the Changing Futures programme.

2.2. This MoU is not legally binding, and no legal obligations or legal rights shall arise between the Parties from the provisions of the MoU. The Parties enter into the MoU intending to honour all their obligations.

3. Purpose of funding

3.1. The goals of the funding are to:

3.1.1. help to stabilise and improve health, safety, wellbeing and access to support for local cohorts of adults experiencing multiple disadvantage, to include the provision of direct support to a minimum of 280 beneficiaries over the funding period

3.1.2. promote greater integration and collaboration across local services alongside increased use of person-centred, trauma-informed approaches, and in the long-term, reduce demand on services

3.1.3. promote strong multi-agency partnerships, governance and better use of data so that local strategy and commissioning better responds to and prevents multiple disadvantage

3.2. Delivery of the programme is underpinned by principles set out in the prospectus, which are:

3.2.1 to work in partnership across local services and the voluntary and community sector, building strong cross-sector partnerships at a strategic and operational level that can design and implement an improved approach to tackling multiple disadvantage.

3.2.2 to promote coordinated support, and better integrate local services that support adults experiencing multiple disadvantage to enable a 'whole person' approach.

3.2.3. to create flexibility in how local services respond to adults experiencing multiple disadvantage, taking a system-wide view with shared accountability and ownership leading to better service provision across statutory and voluntary organisations and a 'no wrong door' approach to support.

3.2.4. to involve people with lived experience of multiple disadvantage in the design, delivery and evaluation of improved services and in governance and decision making.

3.2.5. to take a trauma-informed approach across local system, services and in the governance of the programme.

3.2.6. to commit to driving lasting systems change, with long-term sustainable changes to benefit people experiencing multiple disadvantage and commitment to sustain the benefits of the programme beyond the lifetime of the funding.

3.3. The Council agrees to spend the funding in pursuit of the goals at 3.1. and in accordance with the principles at 3.2.

3.4. The Council agrees to develop and maintain strong partnership working structures at both strategic and operational levels, to include at minimum representation from Adult Social Care, Public Health, Housing, Policing, Probation, NHS and Voluntary and Community Sector partners.

4. Programme delivery

4.1. The Council agrees to:

4.1.1. develop and maintain a live delivery plan to an MHCLG template, which will serve as a reference for understanding local activity over the course of the programme.

4.1.2. engage in good faith with a quarterly reporting cycle to MHCLG, to include a written update on delivery against the local plan, confirmation of the number of beneficiaries supported to date, and participation in a quarterly call with MHCLG officials to expand and reflect upon local learning and delivery.

4.1.3 coordinate a partnership self-assessment of system maturity on a six-monthly basis, based on a maturity framework provided by MHCLG.

4.1.4. nominate or appoint as appropriate persons to take the following key roles in relation to the programme per paragraph 22 of the prospectus:

A local political lead

A senior responsible officer

A partnership/programme lead

A system change lead

A lived experience lead

A data and digital lead

4.1.5. engage with MHCLG and other Governmental departments to identify and resolve national-level policy barriers and issues that affect people's experience of multiple disadvantage.

4.2. The Changing Futures team at MHCLG agree to:

4.2.1. provide a prospectus that makes clear the purpose and objectives of the programme.

4.2.2. supply evidence-based support and guidance on effective models of delivery.

4.2.3. facilitate and promote cross-area learning and networking.

4.2.4. support local flexibility in how the local programme delivery direct support and systems change, recognising the variability of local context across the programme areas.

4.2.5. appoint and oversee the work of a Lived Experience support provider and a Learning and Delivery support provider to assist areas in delivering a successful programme.

4.2.6. work collaboratively with local programme teams on co-design of further guidance, monitoring and evaluation elements.

5. Evaluation

5.1. MHCLG will commission a robust national evaluation to understand the programme's impact, build the national evidence base and inform cross-government policy as it pertains to multiple disadvantage.

5.2. The structure of the evaluation remains under development, but we anticipate that participation will entail:

5.2.1. collation of high-level beneficiary metrics on a quarterly basis (per 4.1.2.), likely by the nominated data or programme lead.

5.2.2. collation of a basic set of systems metrics alongside the Systems Maturity Framework self-assessment every six months (per 4.1.3.).

5.2.3. six-monthly collection of information relating to beneficiary circumstances and support journeys, likely by frontline caseworkers. A standardised survey platform and questionnaire will be provided.

5.2.4. participation in qualitative interviews by programme staff, caseworkers and a small subset of beneficiaries, to provide a qualitative underpinning to the quantitative data. These interviews will be conducted by the evaluation contractor with support from trained peer researchers.

5.2.5. work to ensure compliance with data protection standards, likely by the nominated data lead.

5.2.6. contribution to smaller ad-hoc evaluation projects, which may entail interviews with programme staff, caseworkers or local stakeholders.

5.3. The Council agrees to participation in the evaluation.

5.4 The Council agrees to share data with MHCLG - including beneficiary personal identifiers - for the purposes of monitoring and evaluation and agrees to collaborate on appropriate governance before data collection begins.

6. Financial arrangements

6.1. The Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government has determined under Section 31 of the Local Government Act 2003 that a grant of £3,114,939 should be paid to Middlesbrough Council.

6.2. The maximum amount of grant payable for the funding period between date of agreeing this MoU and 31/03/2029 is £3,114,939. MHCLG expects the Council to spend all grant funding by the end of the financial year 2028/29.

6.3. The grant covers revenue expenditure relating to the employment of staff – whether direct or via external commission – to deliver in accordance with the goals at 3.1., and additional activities including but not limited to facilitation of partnership events, production of learning and communication materials, travel and subsistence costs associated with participation in national learning events and local evaluation.

6.4. The funding will be paid in annual instalments at or near to the start of each financial year.

6.5. MHCLG will provide grant funding subject to the Council hereby agreeing to full transparency open book working on all matters relating to the project, including project proposals, project expenditure, quarterly reports and evaluation returns.

6.6 The Council agrees to complete an end of grant report in March 2029 which will confirm total grant expenditure. MHCLG reserves the right to quality assure this return.

6.7. Upon signed return of this MoU, MHCLG will send the Council a Grant Determination letter which sets out the financial terms and conditions under Section 31 grants.

7. Duration

7.1. This MoU applies until 31/03/2029.

7.2. This MoU will come into effect upon signature by the Parties. It may be extended by the written agreement of the Parties.

8. Assurance and risk management

8.1. The Council is expected to have the necessary governance and assurance arrangements in place and that all legal and other statutory obligations and consents will be adhered to, which may include, but not solely, state aid/subsidy control, equalities duties, procurement, health and safety and fraud.

8.2. Ownership of risk will be transferred to the Council. Councils will be responsible for mitigation of any risks that arise throughout the delivery of the programme.

8.3. The Council will complete their own Fraud Risk Assessment to ensure the safe administration of grants and that appropriate measures are put in place to mitigate against the risk of both fraud and payment error.

8.4. The Council will inform MHCLG should there be any changes to their project delivery.

8.5. The Council will undertake corrective action if the quality of work does not meet expected standards.

9. Marketing and branding

9.1. The Council agrees that UK Government should be acknowledged in all marketing and promotional material as the funding source.

9.2. MHCLG may publish relevant data and use it to inform public statements.

9.3. MHCLG will ensure that any information published will be processed in accordance with the requirements of the data protection legislation.

10. Procurement

10.1. The Council will be responsible for ensuring that any third-party partnership arrangements or procurement activities related to delivery of the Fund comply with Procurement Law and any relevant Council procurement procedures.

10.2. "Procurement Law" includes, but is not restricted to, the Public Contracts Regulations 2015, Concession Contracts Regulations 2016, Defence Security Public Contracts Regulations 2011, the Utilities and Contracts Regulations 2016 and The Procurement Act 2023 and any secondary legislation (such as regulations) and/or other Law made pursuant to the Procurement Act 2023, together with their amendments, updates and replacements from time to time.

11. Due Diligence

11.1. The Council will be responsible for undertaking due diligence checks on all third-party organisations, including community groups, suppliers and subcontractors, receiving funding and/or involved in delivery of the Fund. Evidence may be required of due diligence on community groups chosen to work with.

12. Resolution of Disputes

12.1. Any dispute that may arise as to the interpretation or application of this MoU will be settled by consultation between the Parties.

13. Legal Enforcement

13.1. This MoU is not legally enforceable. It describes the understanding between both Parties for administration and delivery of the programme.

14. Amendment of this Memorandum of Understanding

14.1. The arrangements under this MoU will be kept under review by MHCLG and the Council and can be amended upon securing written agreement between both parties.

Signed on behalf of Middlesbrough Council by:

Name:

Date:

Duly authorised to sign for Middlesbrough Council (by Chief Executive/Section 151 Officer)

Signed on behalf of MHCLG by:

Name:

Date:

Appendix 4 - Impact Assessment Level 1: Initial screening assessment

Subject of assessment:	Changing Futures Phase 2 (2026 – 2029)			
Coverage:	The Programme will directly support people experiencing multiple disadvantage (combinations of homelessness and rough sleeping, substance misuse, mental ill health, domestic abuse and contact with the criminal justice system) across Middlesbrough and aims to develop strong partnerships and understanding of system change required to better support people to lead more fulfilling lives.			
This is a decision relating to:	<input type="checkbox"/> Strategy	<input type="checkbox"/> Policy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Service	<input type="checkbox"/> Function
	<input type="checkbox"/> Process/procedure	<input checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Local or corporate requirements:	<input type="checkbox"/>

Description:

Changing Futures is a programme that has been running across South Tees since 2021 following a successful bid to the National Lottery and MHCLG programme. South Tees is one of 15 local partnerships that have built strong evidence on how areas can provide a more effective response through flexible, coordinated support that works with the whole person and drives lasting changes in how services work together on multiple disadvantage.

The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government has announced phase two of the Changing Futures programme, with 18 areas of the country sharing over £50m to help the most deprived upper-tier local authority areas in England. This represents a new phase of the cross government public service reform programme, led by MHCLG, that improves outcomes for people experiencing multiple disadvantage.

Middlesbrough has been selected as a Changing Futures phase 2 area and will receive a total of £3,114,939 - £1.038M each year over the next three years (2026/27 to 2028/29).

Changing Futures Core Principles:

- Work in partnership across local services and the voluntary and community sector, building strong cross-sector partnerships at a strategic and operational level
- Coordinate support, and better integrate local services that support adults experiencing multiple disadvantage to enable a 'whole person' approach
- Create flexibility in how local services respond to adults experiencing multiple disadvantage, taking a system-wide view with shared accountability and ownership leading to better service provision and a 'no wrong door' approach to support
- Involve people with lived experience of multiple disadvantage in the design, delivery and evaluation of improved services and in governance and decision making
- Take a trauma-informed, relational approach across the local system, services and in the governance of the programme
- Commit to drive lasting systems-change, with long-term sustainable changes and a commitment to sustain the benefits of the programme beyond the lifetime of the funding

The programme is described as a "joint central/local endeavour" to achieve positive sustained change for people and services. As part of that approach a set of local commitments are described:

- Target and improve support for a local cohort of adults experiencing multiple disadvantage, who are placing a high level of demand on local services (c.300-350 adults over 3 years).
- Drive wider system change, as defined through a co-designed system maturity framework.
- Build lived experience into the local system stewardship and development.
- Evidence the impact of work on the cohort and local systems by working with the Changing Futures national evaluation.
- Develop and share learning relevant to other areas and government departments, attending events and hosting visits.
- Produce and implement a partnership delivery plan.

Live date:

April 2026

Lifespan:	Changing Futures Phase 2 is from April 2026 to March 2029
Date of next review:	This assessment will be reviewed annually

Screening questions	Response			Evidence
	No	Yes	Uncertain	
Human Rights Could the decision impact negatively on individual Human Rights as enshrined in UK legislation?*	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	There are no concerns that the proposal could impact negatively on human rights.
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?*	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The proposals will not have any negative impact on protected characteristics. Those targeted for support within the programme are amongst other commonly disadvantaged groups which stand to benefit significantly from the additional support provided through this programme
Community cohesion Could the decision impact negatively on relationships between different groups, communities of interest or neighbourhoods within the town?*	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	There is no negative impact on community cohesion as a result of these proposals. The Programme will seek to positively address issues of substance misuse and associated criminal activity which threaten community cohesion and as such should have a hugely positive impact on community cohesion. Evidence used to assess the impact of the proposals includes consideration of international evidence base for effective interventions.
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?*	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The Programme will support former members of the armed forces who are suffering from multiple disadvantage
Care leavers Could the decision impact negatively on those who are care experienced?*	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The Programme will support people who are care experiences and who are suffering from multiple disadvantage

* 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
<p>Reducing Poverty Could the decision impact negatively on the Council's ambitions to reduce poverty in the town?</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>People suffering multiple disadvantage suffer from the most extreme impact of poverty. This programme will support some of the most vulnerable people in Middlesbrough to reduce that impact and move towards more fulfilling lives.</p> <p>The system change element of the programme will include an action learning approach to understand how we can move beyond working with people to challenge the underlying systems and processes that either don't help to resolve or make those problems worse.</p>
<p>Next steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ 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:	Mark Adams	Head of Service:	N/A
Date:	10 April 2026	Date:	N/A

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Appendix 5 – Changing Futures - Risk and Issue Register

Risk ID	Risk Description	Type of Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Severity (Likelihood x Impact)	Owner	Mitigation Strategies <i>Please give an outline of how you will mitigate this risk to delivery</i>
STCF002	Delay in procurement of services and/or roles	Project-level	Unlikely (2)	Major (4)	8	Changing Futures Board (CFB)	Early engagement with relevant colleagues and outline, concise procurement and recruitment processes agreed. Onward engagement of key colleagues throughout process. Executive approval is being sought. DPH is Project Sponsor and Exec Member project champion. Agreements with relevant colleagues and stakeholders will be secured upon funding award, including DPH, Finance Director and Head of Corporate Procurement. Soft market stimulation will be carried out and we are confident of relevant interest in the interventions that we are proposing.
STCF003	Project delivery is delayed	Project-level	Unlikely (2)	Major (4)	8	CFB	Dedicated project team resources will be identified to deliver the required activity. Proven track record of delivering similar projects, e.g. Project ADDER, PHE Capital funding, etc.
STCF004	Procurement process for local, integrated service model (including substance misuse) is either delayed or unsuccessful	Project-level	Unlikely (2)	Moderate (3)	6	CFB	Learning from similar projects will inform a procurement plan that will be developed complete with relevant providers identified who can be asked to quote.
STCF005	Inability to employ suitable staff for the roles identified via CF	Project-level	Unlikely (2)	Major (4)	8	CFB	This programme is building on phase 1 of Changing Futures so relationships with partner organisations are well-established. There is strong interest in collaborating on CF and roles will be appointed as soon as the programme is launched. Staff with relevant knowledge and experience are already engaged in CF, which provides a safety net if there are any small delays (though these are not anticipated).
STCF006	Other, competing local priorities reduces focus on Changing Futures	Project-level	Unlikely (2)	Moderate (3)	6	CFB	Dedicated capacity has been identified in terms of a local project team and oversight group.
STCF007	Further cuts to local investment in existing and related services/capacity	Project-level	Unlikely (2)	Moderate (3)	6	CFB	Project Sponsor (DPH) will aim to protect local investment and there are no current plans or indications that any further cuts are to be made.
STCF008	Lack of senior buy-in locally	Project-level	Unlikely (2)	Major (4)	8	CFB	The Mayor has agreed to be the political lead for the Programme. Commitment is evident as outline processes already agreed to enable CF to be successfully undertaken. This commitment has also been matched by relevant executive members.

Risk ID	Risk Description	Type of Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Severity (Likelihood x Impact)	Owner	Mitigation Strategies <i>Please give an outline of how you will mitigate this risk to delivery</i>
STCF009	Desired outcomes are not delivered	Project-level	Unlikely (2)	Major (4)	8	CFB	We have a strong track record of delivery in Middlesbrough and do not anticipate issues in this regard. There is a history of innovative practice implemented by local services in partnership with commissioners. Local evaluation will be undertaken, which will provide a baseline for monitoring and allow us to measure the success of CF. Performance will be a standing agenda item on the CFB to ensure that it is closely monitored and any remedial actions can be swiftly undertaken
STCF010	Projects may not be sustainable beyond CF funding timescales	Project-level	Possible (3)	Major (4)	12	CFB	The local CF programme leads will aim to ensure a local legacy for CF. Driving collaboration with partner organisations and ensuring that sustainability is a factor in planning interventions will be a responsibility for this role. We have planned for sustainability in terms of our proposed interventions as much as possible.
STCF011	Delay in project commencement/launch or funding being allocated to LA, leading to compressed timescale for delivery of yr. 1 outcomes	Project-level	Possible (3)	Major (4)	12	CFB	Maintain regular communication with national colleagues and do as much preparatory work as possible in order to hit the ground running.

MIDDLESBROUGH COUNCIL

Report of:	Corporate Director of Children's Services, Annabel Bates
Relevant Executive Member:	Executive Member for Children's Services, Luke Henman
Submitted to:	Executive
Date:	6 May 2026
Title:	Foster with North East and Regional Care Cooperative
Report for:	Decision
Status:	Public
Council Plan priority:	A successful and ambitious town
Key decision:	Yes
Why:	Decision(s) will have a significant impact in two or more wards
Subject to call in?	Yes
Why:	Non-urgent decision

Proposed decision(s)

That Executive:

- APPROVES the Council's entry into an agreement to be part of the expanded North East Fostering Hub in line with national policy and guidance
- APPROVES the allocation of resources (financial and workforce) as required by the regional model set out in this report
- APPROVES the Council's support to a North East Regional bid to become a 'Wave 2' Regional Care Cooperative national pathfinder and support submission of a bid to Department for Education by 22nd May 2026.
- DELEGATES authority to the Corporate Director of Children's Services in consultation with the Executive Member for Children's Services to take all necessary steps to implement the recommendations in line with National Policy.

Executive summary

Ensuring councils have enough accommodation for young people in their care – referred to as Children in Care sufficiency - is a significant risk and financial pressure to Councils across the North East and nationally. Following the Independent Review of Children's Social Care in 2022, national policy of successive governments has identified regional working as key to addressing these challenges. The Competitions and Market Authority (CMA) has also reported that the current model is dysfunctional, driving up costs and delivering poor outcomes.

Foster with North East (FwNE) was established in 2023 as the National Fostering Pathfinder, hosted by Together for Children and with all 12 councils in the region participating. FwNE moved foster carer recruitment to a regional model. An evaluation of FwNE was carried out last year and it was recognised that expansion of the model to an End-to-End approach was essential to achieve the benefits of the regional approach. It is positive that national policy and some additional funding have now aligned with that view. The government is looking to continue to push for regional models, supported by proposed legislation in the Children's Wellbeing and Schools Bill. The Department for Education is moving quickly on this agenda. It published a blueprint in February 2026 called [Renewing Fostering: homes for 10,000 more children](#). This includes a clear expectation that existing fostering hubs – like FwNE- will expand to an 'End-to-End' to include assessment, approval and expanded support to help both recruit and keep foster carers in the system for longer.

Alongside this, The DfE has also issued guidance on the next stage of development for Regional Care Co-operatives (RCCs) in March 2026. RCCs are intended to facilitate wider collaboration and carry out functions like carrying out regional data analysis, forecasting the future needs of homes for children in care and work to co-ordinate commissioning. The DfE included an Expression of Interest (EoI) for six further regions to become RCC's. ([Apply to set up a regional care cooperative - GOV.UK](#))

The DfE policy statement sets out seven minimum requirements for an expanded Regional Fostering Hub along with a specification and very tight timelines to establish and implement the model. A fully costed plan needs to be submitted to DfE by 1st June 2026. The work undertaken in the region to develop the model, financial planning and implementation are set out in the body of this report.

To ensure the benefits of regional working are fully realised and we operate as efficiently as possible it is proposed that an expanded FwNE will be fully integrated into a proposed North East RCC. It is recommended that a regional bid is submitted as part of the RCC Expression of Interest (EoI) by 22nd May 2026, building on extensive work that has taken place regionally over the last 18 months. If successful it would bring at least £1.5m

additional funding into the region and enable significant efficiency and benefits by integrating with FwNE.

The DfE provided over £2m of funding to FwNE to establish it and for initial running costs, however in 2025-26 the current model was fully funded by the 12 LA's through a population-based formula. In 2026-27 it is projected that the model will cost approximately £2m with £500k of funding through government grant. A commitment has been made that the financial contributions from individual LA's will be maintained at 2025/26 levels, and the efficiencies will be sought to support the expansion of FwNE into a Regional Fostering Hub. For context, in 2023-24 the region spent £540m on children in care placements and costs continue to rise at an exponential rate. A breakdown of financial implications is set out in the body of the report.

A high-level structure for regional working through a proposed RCC and, underneath that, the delivery of FwNE via a locality mode, is described in detail in the report. Whilst it will be required to operate across a full regional footprint of all 12 LA's our design is based on 3 Locality delivery teams taking the learning from FwNE pathfinder. It is proposed that the 3 localities are;

- North Locality – Gateshead, Newcastle, North Tyneside and Northumberland
- Central Locality – Durham, South Tyneside and TfC/Sunderland
- South Locality – Darlington, Hartlepool, Middlesbrough, Redcar & Cleveland and Stockton

This report presents a rationale for the recommendations outlined on page 1 and the move to regional arrangements to address chronic shortfalls in sufficiency of children in care placements. The risks presented by the current dysfunctional market approach impacting on children's outcomes and the financial sustainability of LA's must be addressed, and this work provides an opportunity to do so.

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 seek Executive approval for Middlesbrough Council to take part in the expansion of FwNE into a Regional Fostering Hub, in line with the Department for Education (DfE) expansion programme. This will build on the Foster with North East (FwNE) pathfinder that has been in operation since 2023 that all North East Councils are part of, but also requires a move to an 'End-to-End' model encompassing all aspects of the Fostering process.

Our ambitions	Summary of how this report will support delivery of these ambitions and the underpinning aims
A successful and ambitious town	Improve opportunities for foster carers to develop and attract others to the role.
A healthy Place	Promote fostering to residents and provide further opportunities to support them.
Safe and resilient communities	Address the quality of care for our children and young people in order to address risks and harms they face.
Delivering best value	Provide robust and effective regional governance of fostering. Contribute to national developments in regional fostering hubs.

2. Recommendations

2.1 That the Executive:

- APPROVES the Council’s entry into an agreement to be part of the expanded North East Fostering Hub in line with national policy and guidance
- APPROVES the allocation of resources (financial and workforce) as required by the regional model set out in this report
- APPROVES the Council’s support to a North East Regional bid to become a ‘Wave 2’ Regional Care Co-operative national pathfinder and support submission of a bid to Department for Education by 22nd May 2026.
- DELEGATES authority to the Corporate Director of Children’s Services in consultation with the Executive Member for Children’s Services to take all necessary steps to implement the recommendations in line with National Policy.

3. Rationale for the recommended decision(s)

3.1 Foster carers provide high quality care for some of our most vulnerable children and as such we highly value the part they play in making a difference to children’s lives. Our ambition is to be able to offer more children and young people high quality family-based care provided by our foster carers. It is also important that we are able to maintain lifelong connections for our children with siblings, extended families and their wider community. Enhancing our recruitment and retention of foster carers to reverse the decline in numbers seen in recent years is essential to achieving that.

3.2 There is also a financial imperative with rapidly escalating costs driven by a dysfunctional market model within the care system. This has led to costs escalating well in advance of budgets creating substantial pressure and sustainability risks for Councils across the region and nationally. A different approach is needed and these developments give us the opportunity to completely redesign this critical service area with an enhanced regional approach that is still embedded in locality.

3.3 The Directors of Children’s Services within 12 North East local authorities in scope for this activity have agreed to support this programme, and there is a national expectation to deliver the ‘End-to-End’ expansion. On a national and regional level, recruiting sufficient numbers of foster carers for the number of children requiring care remains a

challenge and this approach is designed to reduce the challenges faced. The costs associated with using external fostering providers and children's homes can be high and so it is hoped this will see a reduction.

4. Background and relevant information

- 4.1 Children's Social Care has been operating in a very challenging context in recent years in particular with sufficiency of places for children in care being constrained by a dysfunctional market model. These issues have been well documented through the Independent Review of Children's Social Care led by Josh McAllister which reported in May 2022 and a report by the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) published in March 2022.
- 4.2 Financially there is a 'burning platform' driving change with nationally around £9bn now spent on supporting children in care with costs rapidly out pacing budgets creating significant risks to the financial sustainability of Councils. An external review commissioned in 2024 showed that the region spent £540m on children in care placement in 2023-24 with around £300m of that on residential placements. It was also estimated that just over 30% of children in residential placements could have been placed in foster care if sufficiency challenges are addressed.
- 4.3 In the North East our regional fostering hub Foster with North East (FwNE) was the first national fostering hub Pathfinder established in 2023 and hosted by Together for Children. This has enabled substantial learning in the region and we have also benefited from approx. £2m of DfE investment in our hub. An evaluation of FwNE was commissioned last year and recommendations from that have been integrated into the proposal to expand the model in line with national requirements.
- 4.4 the Labour is taking forward the recommendations of the McAllister Review in the Children's Wellbeing and Schools Bill - which is now at its final stage in Parliament. The McAllister recommended the development of Regional Care Co-operatives (RCCs) and the Children's Wellbeing and Schools Bill will give the Secretary of State powers to direct regions to establish RCCs, taking on a range of duties for commissioning of fostering and residential care.
- 4.5 Josh MacAlister, author of the independent review of children's social care is now a Labour MP and September 2025 was appointed as the Children's Minister. He now has the national political leadership for the implementation of the recommendations he made in 2022 and that has seen an acceleration in the national roll out of both RCC's and Fostering Hubs.
- 4.6 The DfE established a 'pathfinder' programme for RCCs in 2024 and the two successful regions following Expressions of Interest, Greater Manchester and South East, went live with their RCC's in 2025. The pathfinders have tested out different governance models, shared commissioning approaches and provider engagement, regional collaboration on data and insights and moving away from reactive approaches to commissioning to a more proactive planned approach across the regional footprint.
- 4.7 The DfE published a [policy statement on Regional Care Cooperatives](#) (RCCs) in February 2026 which sets out the national direction of travel, giving the high-level

expectations of an RCC building on the work of the 2 pathfinders in Greater Manchester and the South-East regions. This was followed by publication of detailed guidance setting out requirements and route for regions to submit an EoI to become an RCC published on 26th March 2026 - [Apply to set up a regional care cooperative - GOV.UK](#)

- 4.8 It has been confirmed there will be 6 regions joining the pathfinder programme as part of the national roll out of RCCs. RCC's will be expected to develop in 3 stages, foundation, development and delivery with a checklist of minimum requirements at each stage set out in the guidance. National funding of up to £10.8m over 2 years will be provided across the new pathfinders for initial costs of set up and implementation, so the North East could expect around £1.5-2m if successful.
- 4.9 A complementary recommendation from the national review was to develop collaborative approaches at regional level to fostering recruitment and retention following a decline in the number of foster carers nationally after Covid. This reduction in foster capacity combined with an increase in the number of children in care requiring foster placements has created a perfect storm. We are not able to fully meet children's needs close to their homes and have seen significant financial pressures due to increased usage of Independent Fostering Agencies (IFA's) and residential care.
- 4.10 The DfE launched a new policy paper, '[Renew Fostering](#),' in February which sets an 'ambitious' target of securing an additional 10,000 new fostering places by 2029, underpinned by 5 'Pillars of Reform'. This includes a clear expectation that existing fostering hubs, which are currently a primarily 'front door' recruitment model, will expand to an 'End-to-End' to include assessment, approval and expanded support to help both recruit and keep foster carers in the system for longer.
- 4.11 The DfE's expectation is that regions will move towards an End-to-End model (enquiry to approval) during the 2026-27 financial year. A proposed model has been developed through the regional governance arrangements led by the North East Association of Directors of Children's Services (NE ADCS) and the regional Directors of Resources (DRG). A number of workshops with DCS's and operational leads have taken place to shape the regional proposal and ensure we can meet the national requirements in a way that works in our context.
- 4.12 It is expected the proposed model will significantly reduce duplication across the region and could result in more efficient use of resources, a better experience for prospective foster cares and sharing of best practice. The ambition is ultimately to recruit and retain more foster carers giving more children access to loving homes within their own communities as reduce pressure on Children in Care budgets that are unsustainable across the region.
- 4.13 The national guidance provided by the DfE sets out a range of 'minimum requirements' for regional fostering hubs against which we must design a model that fits our local context and needs. Those requirements are;
- Recruitment: Regional approach to recruitment led by the Hub
 - Single Front Door: All enquiries regionally to be routed through a single point of entry

- Journey Guide: A dedicated person to support and steer carers through assessment and approval processes
- Support Network for Carers: Core regional offer establishing lasting support networks
- Regional Assessment: Single assessment function for the region with the Hub
- Regional Data: Regional systems and data collection with oversight of progress
- Post Approval Support: Regional offer of training and support

4.14 The proposal to move to a fully End-to-End fostering model across the region covering all aspects of fostering services from initial enquiry through to post approval support and supervision will require structural change. Learning from the experience of the Foster with North East national pathfinder the proposal is to build a locality delivery structure into the Regional Hub. Working through NE ADCS and DRG the preferred option is for three locality delivery teams to be established covering the following areas;

- North Locality – Gateshead, Newcastle, North Tyneside and Northumberland
- Central Locality – Durham, South Tyneside and TfC/Sunderland
- South Locality – Darlington, Hartlepool, Middlesbrough, Redcar & Cleveland and Stockton

4.15 The national minimum requirements include the management and oversight of all resources, including staffing to be through the regional hub. Therefore, structural change and a formal HR process will be required as part of the transition to new arrangements. A detailed capacity and demand analysis is being undertaken to design the structures required in each locality to deliver against the new model. This will inform a formal consultation process likely to take place in the summer of 2026 with transition to the new locality structure during the autumn of 2026.

4.16 There is a requirement to submit to DfE a full costed plan setting out how the region will meet the minimum requirements and the allocation of resources by 1st June 2026. An interim plan giving high level direction of travel, outline of model and costs was submitted to DfE on 31st March 2026 and feedback on this will inform the final version.

4.17 In relation to RCC development, for the past 18 months North East ADCS has been proactively preparing for these announcements, and have established a new governance arrangement for both the development of our northeast RCC and fostering expansion activity. The RCC Executive Board meets every 6 weeks and includes DCSs, Chief Executives, Section 151 / Finance Directors, Legal and Commissioning strategic representation.

4.18 All indications suggest we are in a strong position for the North East to be successful in a bid to become one of the next round of RCC pathfinders, to take advantage of additional national funding and support. DCSs and Section 151 Officers / Finance Directors have been directly involved in developing the regional approach and are supportive of the proposed EoI bid.

4.19 Our regional work to date has included:

- Establishment of a Complex Needs Board in September 2023 working with the ICB and health partners on four workstreams – market management, integration, transition and prevention.

- Commissioned and external partner (Newton Consulting) to conduct a regional deep dive and diagnostic exercise analysing the cost of placements for children with the most complex needs.
- Developed and published a regional 'Sufficiency Statement' in Spring 2025 and subsequent rolling programme of provider engagement activities [NE ADCS Sufficiency Position Statement](#)
- Held a number of workshop sessions to develop regional thinking and learn from the two National Pathfinders. We also commissioned additional support from a consultant who had previously worked with the GM pathfinder to share their experience of the process.
- Successful in a regional bid to work with Social Finance, funded by DfE, to develop a regional data platform to support our commissioning activity and form a core foundation of a future RCC.
- Used DfE Regional Improvement grant to invest in additional regional leadership and programme management capacity to progress FwNE's development and prepare the region to become an RCC.

4.20 As a result of this work we are in a strong position to submit an Expression of Interest to become an RCC and already have in place or are developing the key building blocks required to meet the national requirements DfE has set out in the RCC guidance. DCSs and Section 151 Officers / Finance Directors have been directly involved in developing the regional approach and are supportive of the proposed Eol bid.

Finances

4.21 Whilst DfE provided grant funding in total of over £2m for the set up and initial running costs of Foster with North East it is now fully funded by LA contributions using a formula based on population. In 2025-26 the FwNE budget was fully funded by local authority contributions, with a total running cost budget of £1,125,504. Taking into account an agreed uplift in contributions of 4% the core budget for the existing FwNE activity in 2026-27 prior to expanding its remit is £1,170,524.

4.22 The DfE has offered grant funding of up to £500,000 to support the region's ability to expand to an end-to-end model. DfE's modelling indicates that to receive the full grant it needs to equate to 25% of the costs of the expanded costs with the remainder funded by the LA financial contributions, in kind contributions or sharing resources with the RCC infrastructures. NE ADCS had already agreed in 2025 that for the Regional Fostering Hub to be sustainable and fulfil its potential it needed to go further to eliminate duplication in the current model. Therefore, it has welcomed the national policy position and additional funding has aligned with that approach.

4.23 Given the DfE indicative contribution for 2026-27 of £500k is calculated on the basis it is 25% of overall cost, the hub expansion programme aims to work towards a funding envelope of £2,000,000 to develop the most efficient model possible whilst maximising access to national funding. Initial high-level costings for the extension to End-to-End Expansion activity estimates the cost for the Regional Fostering Hub for 2026-27 financial year to be £2,072,817.

4.24 If the full DfE allocation of £500,000 towards the costs is received, split between core functions and expansion activity, this leaves an initial funding gap of £402,293 to be

mitigated by in kind activity, alignment with broader regional work and other efficiencies. In addition, in-year slippage on new posts and activity are anticipated in 2026-27 and once we know the outcome of a possible RCC EoI a medium term financial strategy can be developed to ensure a sustainable model. Therefore, local authorities are not being asked to fund any additional costs in 2026-27, only to maintain last year's costs plus a 4% inflation uplift, as above. The 2026-27 financial contribution from Middlesbrough will be £62,930.85.

HR and Workforce Implications

- 4.25 It is a minimum requirement with the national guidance that the fostering workforce will move from within their current local authorities to be fully absorbed with the Fostering Hub. As part of the implementation phase, we will explore the best HR process to achieve this in the short term, pending permanent transfer to a future RCC structure to meet the DfE's requirements.
- 4.26 There is learning from the region's previous experiences of setting up Regional Adoption Agencies (RAAs) and we need to ensure the approach to moving staff across into the Regional Fostering Hub must be fair and equitable. This may create some challenges as all LA's will currently be resourced at different levels and not necessarily in line with future demand and targets.
- 4.27 Bringing together our 12 separate fostering workforces under one hub structure will result in significant change for many of our region's fostering staff, and this will be managed carefully and sensitively involving the workforce extensively in both informal and formal consultations. It is expected that TUPE arrangements will be required in 2027/8 as part of the setup of our RCC entity, therefore an interim approach will be required for 2026/7 until the RCC is established.
- 4.28 Given the short timescales, the staffing structures are still being gathered from local authorities and explored in preparation for submission of our final plan to meet the DfE's final deadline of 1st June 2026.
- 4.29 Foster carers and children in our care will also be involved in the design of the expanded service and their views captured through a structured engagement programme to ensure the new model can maximise the opportunities available to improve and support our families to the best of our ability. This will be essential if we are to achieve our objectives on foster carer recruitment and retention.

5. Ward Member Engagement if relevant and appropriate

- 5.1 Ward member engagement will be factored into future stages of the process.

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

- 6.1 We have considered retaining the status quo and have been advised by the DfE that it is an expectation that all local authorities participate in the regional developments

outlined above. Taking this approach could lead to regulatory challenge by the DfE and Ofsted, and would have additional financial implications for the Council.

6.2

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

Topic	Impact
Financial	<p>The finance implications are set out in paragraphs 5.21 to 5.24 of this report. For Middlesbrough the financial contribution to the Fostering Hub in 2026-27 will be £62,930.85. It is expected that the North East will receive a grant from DfE of £500k for 2026-27 towards the cost of expanding the Fostering Hub. There will be potential alignment if the region submits an EoI to become an RCC and is successful with around £1.5m likely to be allocated to regions for that development.</p> <p>The resourcing implications are set out in paragraphs 5.25 to 5.29 of this report. A detailed demand and capacity analysis is being undertaken regionally that will develop the staffing structures for the Locality Delivery Teams. This will shape the next stage of work in relation to the HR workstream and staffing implications for individual LA's.</p>
Procurement	<p>There are no specific procurement implications arising from this report. A further review of impact on procurement will be carried out as part of the regional project plan.</p>
Legal	<p>Under section 22G of the Children Act 1989 the Authority is required to take steps to secure, so far as reasonably practicable, sufficient accommodation within the Authority's area which meets the needs of children that the Authority is looking after and whose circumstances are such that it would be consistent with their welfare for them to be provided with accommodation that is in the Local Authority's area (the so-called 'sufficiency duty'). In order to comply with this duty, the Authority needs sufficient numbers of foster carers who are able to provide safe and suitable accommodation for looked after children.</p>
Risk	<p>The implementation of the proposed pilot will address some of the risks of not having sufficient foster care arrangements to meet the needs of children in our locality authority area. The lack of resource for children and young people requiring care is a significant corporate risk in terms of our statutory responsibilities towards children and in relation to budget pressures resulting from the purchase of higher cost placements from third party providers.</p>
Human Rights, Public Sector Equality Duty and Community Cohesion	<p>Article 8 of the European Convention of Human Rights states that everyone has the qualified right to respect for their private and family life. The families of some "Looked</p>

	After” children may claim to have had that right interfered with. However, that right must be balanced against the rights of children to have a safe and stable home life and that right is promoted if there are more foster carers available in our area.
Reducing Poverty	The developments outlined in our regional commitment to FwNE explicitly focus on providing support to community members who experience poverty.
Climate Change / Environmental	There are no specific environment and sustainability implications arising from this report.
Children and Young People Cared for by the Authority and Care Leavers	The developments outlined in this report are intended to have an explicit impact on improving the services provided to our children and young people in care.
Data Protection	There are no specific data protection implications arising from this report.

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

Action	Responsible Officer	Deadline
Liaise with regional group to determine next steps for Middlesbrough.	Annabel Bates	June 2026
Structured engagement activity with foster carers, children in our care (or who have left our care) and with relevant external organisations including Independent Fostering Agencies, in line with a regional programme communications plan.	Annabel Bates	May & June 2026

Appendices

1	Project plan and timelines
2	Equality impact assessment

Background papers

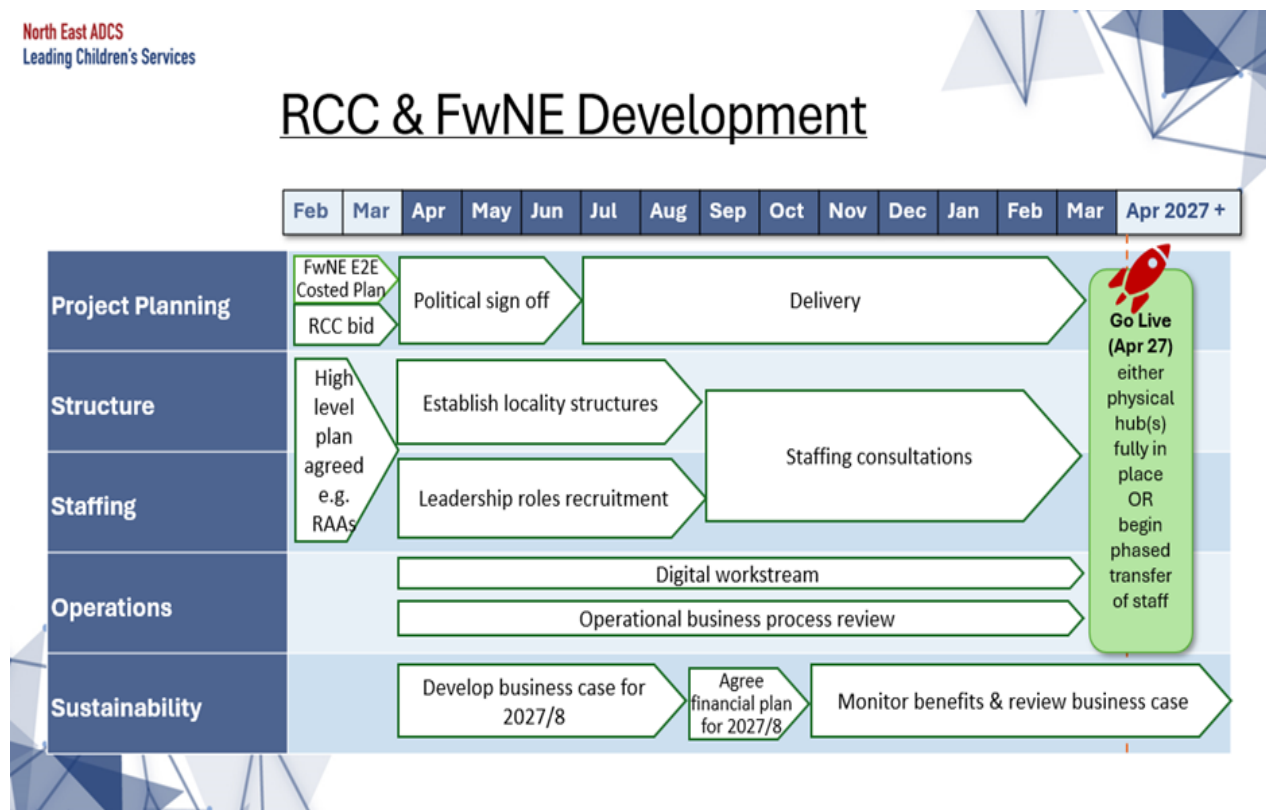
Body	Report title	Date
DfE	Renewing fostering: Renewing fostering: homes for 10,000 more children - GOV.UK	February 2026
DfE	RCC policy statement: Regional care cooperatives policy statement - GOV.UK	February 2026

DfE	RCC guidance: Apply to set up a regional care cooperative - GOV.UK	March 2026
DfE	Independent review of Children’s Social Care: Independent review of children's social care: final report - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)	March 2022
DfE	Stable Homes: Children's social care stable homes built on love consultation (publishing.service.gov.uk)	February 2023

Contact: Annabel Bates, Corporate Director Children’s Services
Email: annabel_bates@middlesbrough.gov.uk

Appendix 1

A detailed project plan has been developed and is being led through the regional team. The following graphic outlines the high-level view of key workstreams of activity required to bring the RCC and FwNE expansion activity together.



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Appendix 2

Subject of assessment:	Regional Fostering Hub End-to-End Expansion			
Coverage:	Overarching			
This is a decision relating to:	<input type="checkbox"/> Strategy	<input checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Revision of an existing approach:	<input type="checkbox"/>
It is driven by:	Legislation:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Local or corporate requirements:	<input type="checkbox"/>
Description:	<p>The purpose of this EIA is to consider the potential impact in relation to the development of the Regional Fostering Hub. The project is for the council's fostering service to become being part of an expanded Regional Fostering Hub in line with the Department for Education (DfE) expansion programme. This will build on the Foster with North East (FwNE) pathfinder that has been in operation since 2023 and requires a move to an 'End-to-End' model encompassing all aspects of the Fostering process. This activity will involve the secondment of staff into a single regional service hosted by Together for Children Sunderland, in a short term arrangement until such time as the northeast's Regional Care Cooperative entity is set up, when staff will be TUPE'd across into that entity.</p> <p>We will also be expanding existing offers such as fostering 'refer a friend' and 'buddy scheme', reviewing the existing regional fostering comms and marketing plan, and introducing new Journey Guide roles to support foster carers through the recruitment, assessment and approval journey and beyond into post-approval support. This activity is related to DfE policy documentation published in February 2026 seeking to improve the availability of suitable family-based care for children and young people in our care: Renewing fostering: homes for 10,000 more children - GOV.UK</p> <p>There will be a structured engagement programme to seek the views of the fostering workforce, foster carers, children in our care and other stakeholders throughout April and May prior to the submission of our region's final costed plan to the DfE on 1st June 2026.</p>			
Live date:	April 2027			
Lifespan:	Permanent change			
Date of next review:	Annual			

Screening questions	Response			Evidence
	No	Yes	Uncertain	
Human Rights Could the decision impact negatively on individual Human Rights as enshrined in UK legislation?*	☒	☐	☐	This activity is required by the Department for Education, and we will be one of several regions undertaking this activity for the first time. There is no precedent, but the DfE believes this activity will have a positive impact on recruitment of more foster carers to improve sufficiency of family-based care for children in our care and avoid children and young people moving out of their communities unnecessarily or living in children's homes when a family-based living arrangement is preferable. As proposals develop, we'll examine the effects of this activity and use this to determine both positive and negative impact for both staff and foster carers. Once staffing structures and proposals are understood, further details will be provided in an updated impact assessment. We will seek to use existing carer data across the region to understand the profile of our foster carers and how they may be either positively or negatively impacted by this activity, or whether there will be no impact.
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?*	☒	☐	☐	
Community cohesion Could the decision impact negatively on relationships between different groups, communities of interest or neighbourhoods within the town?*	☒	☐	☐	
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?*	☒	☐	☐	
Care leavers Could the decision impact negatively on those who are care experienced?*	☒	☐	☐	
Reducing Poverty Could the decision impact negatively on the Council's ambitions to reduce poverty in the town?	☒	☐	☐	

Assessment completed by:	Annabel Bates	Head of Service:	
Date:	7 April 2026	Date:	

MIDDLESBROUGH COUNCIL

Report of:	Corporate Director of Finance (s151 Officer), Andrew Humble
Relevant Executive Member:	Executive Member for Finance, Cllr Nicky Walker
Submitted to:	Executive
Date:	6 May 2026
Title:	Exceptional Hardship Fund - Section 13A (1) (a) Policy change
Report for:	Decision
Status:	Public
Council Plan priority:	A healthy place
Key decision:	Yes
Why:	Decision(s) will have a significant impact in two or more wards
Subject to call in?	Yes
Why:	Non-urgent decision

Proposed decision(s)

That Executive approves a time-limited change (2026/27 financial year only) to the Exceptional Hardship Fund - Section 13A (1) (a) policy which was approved at Executive on 4 February 2026 to:

- extend eligibility to Council Tax Reduction (CTR) claimants on the basis of their increased income from Universal Credit due to the removal of the two-child restriction, to enable individual council tax bills to remain unaffected, with automatic awards to be made.

Executive summary

This report addresses the situation created by the timing of the Government Budget announcement made in November 2025 with the intention of tackling child poverty but which would mean that some of those in receipt on Council Tax Reduction (CTR) would not benefit to the full extent if measures are not taken to ensure that CTR awards are not adversely affected once the household income of families increases due to the lifting of the two-child limit in Universal Credit from April 2026. The proposals in this report would enable individual council tax bills to remain unaffected.

The timing of the Budget announcement meant that the necessary consultation could not be undertaken to make adjustments to Middlesbrough's CTR scheme for 2026/27.

In common with some other councils with income banded CTR schemes, Middlesbrough's scheme uses groups of household types, which differentiates between those with none, one or two or more children, with no provision for larger households, reflecting national rules for benefit entitlement in place at the time the scheme was devised when the two-child limit was in place. Within each of these groupings there are 5 income bands which determine entitlement to CTR.

If no mitigation is put in place, those receiving higher levels of income through the lifting of the two-child limit could move into a higher income band, meaning they pay more council tax.

The income bandings within the CTR scheme will remain unchanged for 2026/27 with the maximum reduction of 90%. This applies to both those who are in and are not in work.

Alleviating the effect in 2026/27 is possible, though at some financial cost to the Council and involving administrative burden in making the necessary calculations and adjustments.

If the recommended decision is approved then this would be consistent with the Council's ambition of supporting residents out of poverty, with the particular opportunity for improving outcomes for children in the borough.

It is open to the Council not to take action, though this might be difficult to justify.

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 This report seeks approval from Executive for a change to the recently confirmed Exceptional Hardship Fund policy that will enable the Council to ensure that recipients of Council Tax Reduction are not adversely affected by the increase in income arising from the removal of the two-child restriction that has previously generally applied in Universal Credit.

Our ambitions	Summary of how this report will support delivery of these ambitions and the underpinning aims
A successful and ambitious town	<i>Council tax revenues are important in maintaining public services and fostering economic growth within the local community. The amount of council tax due to be collected was set in the budget and would have been increased at the expense of some Council Tax Reduction claimants without the policy intervention.</i>
A healthy Place	<i>Provision of additional council tax support is important to the Council’s aim of preventing poverty and supporting residents out of poverty. The policy change proposed seeks to ensure that the effect of the government’s decision to increase the income of some families through Universal Credit is not diminished through a reduced entitlement to Council Tax Reduction.</i>
Safe and resilient communities	<i>Supporting individual residents whose financial circumstances are not great will contribute to community resilience.</i>
Delivering best value	<i>The implementation of the defined approach assists in efficient administration of providing the additional support proposed.</i>

2. Recommendations

That Executive approves a time-limited change (2026/27 financial year only) to the Exceptional Hardship Fund - Section 13A (1) (a) policy which was approved at Executive on 4 February 2026 to:

- extend eligibility to Council Tax Reduction (CTR) claimants on the basis of their increased income from Universal Credit due to the removal of the two-child restriction, to enable individual council tax bills to remain unaffected, with automatic awards to be made.

3. Rationale for the recommended decision(s)

3.1 The decision to extend eligibility is required if it is the Council’s intention to ensure that there is no detriment to claimants of CTR who would otherwise benefit from additional household income to be made available by Government through Universal Credit due to the removal of the two-child restriction that has previously generally applied.

- 3.2 The cost of extending eligibility under the Exceptional Hardship Fund - Section 13A (1) (a) Policy is offset to a substantial extent by increased council tax revenue because the value of CTR awards for the claimants affected will be reduced. The impact from increased household income will commonly be a lower rate of individual entitlement under the CTR scheme.
- 3.3 Avoiding the requirement for individual applications will reduce the administrative effort that would be involved in arranging for them to be made and decided. A standard approach that enables individual council tax bills to remain unaffected should reduce the level of contact with the Resident and Business Support Service from affected claimants and avoid the need for more than one council tax bill to be issued associated with the income change.

4. Background and relevant information

- 4.1 Under Schedule 1A of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, CTR schemes have to be approved by 11 March each year, with the requirement to publish a draft scheme and provide for consultation on changes to an existing scheme in advance of that date.
- 4.2 The Chancellor of the Exchequer announced in her Budget on 26 November 2025 that the government would be removing the two-child limit in the child element of Universal Credit from April 2026, estimating that the measure would lift 450,000 children out of poverty.
- 4.3 The announcement was made too late for councils to undertake the necessary preparatory work to design and consult on a scheme taking the change into account and then to obtain scheme approval by the 11 March 2026 deadline.
- 4.4 The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) has been approached for data on those claimants who are likely to be affected by the change but have responded to the effect that nothing is to be provided.
- 4.5 It is therefore unfortunately difficult to predict with any accuracy the numbers and cost potentially involved as the Council is reliant on receiving DWP electronic notifications that are expected during May and June 2026 as individual claimant Universal Credit entitlements are recalculated.
- 4.6 The data that is already held suggests in excess of 1,000 claimants will be affected, and the scale of the impact in each instance will vary according to other factors in individual assessments. The effect that this will have in terms of the reduction in the rate of support to be provided by the CTR scheme could be substantial, particularly for larger families.
- 4.7 For each additional child for which the child element will be awarded in Universal Credit, the income provided for will increase by £303.94 per month, or £70.14 per week.
- 4.8 Most claimants will be receiving CTR at a rate of 90% before the increase takes effect, with 72%, 36%, 24% and none, all being possible entitlement rates afterwards. The current scheme bands prescribe income ranges as shown in the table below:

Discount Band	Discount	Single Person	Single person with one child	Single person with two or more children	Couple	Couple with one child	Couple with two or more children
Band 1	90%	£0 - £126.77	£0 - £200.80	£0 - £275.17	£0 - £177.47	£0 - £257.89	£0 - £326.00
Band 2	72%	£126.78 - £228.17	£200.81 - £301.20	£275.18 - £368.99	£177.48 - £304.22	£257.90 - £353.49	£326.01 - £426.30
Band 3	36%	£228.18 - £272.54	£301.21 - £320.03	£369.00 - £437.78	£304.23 - £367.60	£353.50 - £402.56	£426.31 - £501.54
Band 4	23%	£272.55 - £323.24	£320.04 - £351.40	£437.79 - £562.87	£367.61 - £430.99	£402.57 - £465.45	£501.55 - £601.85
	0%	Over £323.24	Over £351.40	Over £562.87	Over £430.99	Over £465.45	Over £601.85

- 4.9 The proposal being made is to negate the effect of a lower rate of CTR by reducing a claimant's council tax liability to the value of CTR lost by crediting an equivalent amount under the Exceptional Hardship Fund - Section 13A (1) (a) Policy. The Exceptional Hardship Fund - Section 13A (1) (a) Policy provides for application-based reductions to council tax bills in exceptional circumstances, usually where a CTR award has been made.
- 4.10 The cost of extending eligibility under the Exceptional Hardship Fund - Section 13A (1) (a) Policy is offset to a substantial extent by increased council tax revenue because the value of CTR awards for the claimants affected will be reduced in comparison to the sum allowed in the Council's budget setting process. Therefore, whilst the amounts that taxpayers are required to pay is unchanged, for accounting purposes there is an effect.
- 4.11 The cost of CTR awards is not borne solely by the Council and neither therefore is any saving on that cost, but awards from the Exceptional Hardship Fund are not shared, giving rise to the only partial offset. Council tax, against which CTR is awarded, is revenue not just for the Council, but also the Police and Crime Commissioner and Cleveland Fire Authority. The net cost to the Council might be anywhere between £50k and £300k, subject to the factors of claimant numbers and the value of CTR individually lost, and will only become clear once DWP data is received.
- 4.12 As the Council's budget has been set, it will be necessary to identify resources that can be directed to ensuring that the additional expenditure that would be incurred in making the proposed Exceptional Hardship Fund awards is funded.
- 4.13 The introduction of the Crisis and Resilience Fund (CRF), which is still subject to Executive approval as part of a future report, provides funding that might overlap with some of the provision set aside from the Family Resilience Fund initiative introduced from 2025/26. As provision can be maintained and expanded under CRF, and the objective of this report is connected to improving family resilience, some of the ongoing budgeted funding could be redirected to meet the new Exceptional Hardship Fund expenditure.
- 4.14 It is proposed that awards would only be made for the 2026/27 council tax year and that an amended CTR scheme would be brought forward for 2027/28 that would make allowance for the removal of the two-child limit and for any other changes then relevant.
- 4.15 Households newly affected during the course of 2026/27 are to be eligible for the adjustment to council tax liability, recognising that the effect for new claimants of their Universal Credit award could mean less support is being provided through the CTR scheme than is appropriate in the circumstances.

- 4.16 Changes in claimant circumstances will be monitored throughout 2026/27 to ensure that any award initially made remains equivalent to the sum lost in CTR entitlement, so that the cost borne by the Council under the policy extension is minimised.
- 4.17 An Impact Assessment undertaken notes the consistency of the effect of the recommended decision with the provision made in Universal Credit and the intent that low income families are not disadvantaged as they would be financially without the decision.

5. Ward Member Engagement if relevant and appropriate

- 5.1 To the extent that members are represented at the Policy Development Group, members have been consulted and engaged.

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

- 6.1 The Council could take no action to provide additional support, which would mean more council tax revenue would become payable due to the reduction in individual CTR claimants' entitlements.
- 6.2 Those claimants would bear the cost of the bigger council tax bills and meet it from the additional income that the government has announced would be received through Universal Credit.
- 6.3 The perception could well be that the Council is not serious about reducing poverty, particularly for families with children, and is taking financial advantage from the changed circumstances.
- 6.4 It is possible that a sum at a lesser rate than the full amount lost in CTR could be awarded from the Exceptional Hardship Fund, but an additional level of complexity would be introduced for which a substantial amount of work might be required to understand the range of consequences that would result and to then implement. The interplay between the CTR scheme income ranges and associated CTR award rates creates the possibility that some households could have a lot more council tax to pay if the full amount were not credited.

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

Topic	Impact
Financial (including Social Value)	The first £100,000 of the cost will be met from the budgeted provision for the Family Resilience Fund (see paragraph 4.13), with the remainder being financed from the General Fund in 2026/27. Subject to its approval and terms, the Council Tax Reduction Scheme for 2027/28 would restore the previous status quo where the cost of maintaining individual entitlements would be met through the Collection Fund and not directly by the Council. If the previous status quo is restored, and as this decision is affecting only the current financial year, then there are no consequences for the Medium Term Financial Plan.

Procurement	None – existing Revenues & Benefits system software to be utilised.
Legal	Section 13A (1) (a) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 provides for the reduction of council tax bills. There are no other legal implications arising from the proposed change.
Risk	The Policy will continue to support the delivery of the Council's strategic priority to reduce poverty as set out in the Council Plan 2024-2027.
Human Rights, Public Sector Equality Duty and Community Cohesion	There are no disproportionate adverse impacts on any group or individuals with characteristics protected in UK equality law.
Reducing Poverty	Through the provision of additional awards, the extent to which the government's action on poverty reduction among households on low incomes would be effective is not lessened.
Climate Change / Environmental	There are no disproportionate adverse impacts on the aspirations of the Council to achieve net zero, net carbon neutral or be the lead authority on environmental issues.
Children and Young People Cared for by the Authority and Care Leavers	The change is of no consequence to Care Leavers who are already not required by the Council to pay council tax until reaching the age of 25.
Data Protection	The collation and use of personal data will continue to be managed in accordance with the Council's Data Protection policy and the Benefits, Council Tax and Business Rates Privacy Notice Privacy notice - Housing Benefit and Council Tax Reduction Middlesbrough Council

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

Action	Responsible Officer	Deadline
Amend Service procedures	Janette Savage	8 May 2026

Appendices

None

Background papers

Body	Report title	Date
Executive	Exceptional Hardship Fund - Section 13A (1) (a) Policy	4 February 2026

Contact: Janette Savage (Head of Resident and Business Support)

Email: Janette_Savage@middlesbrough.gov.uk

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MIDDLESBROUGH COUNCIL	
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Report of:	Richard Horniman, Corporate Director of Regeneration and Housing
Relevant Executive Member:	Councillor Ian Blades, Executive Member for Neighbourhoods
Submitted to:	Executive
Date:	6 May 2026
Title:	Enforcement Policies
Report for:	Decision
Status:	Public
Council Plan priority:	A healthy place
Key decision:	Yes
Why:	Decision(s) will have a significant impact in two or more wards
Subject to call in?	Yes
Why:	Non-urgent decision

Proposed decision(s)	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That Executive approves the General Enforcement Policy 2026-2031. 2. That Executive approves the Public Protection Private Sector Housing Enforcement Policy 2026-2031 3. That Executive approves the Public Protection Civil Penalties Policy 2026-2031 (under the Renters' Rights Act 2025 and other housing legislation) 4. That Executive delegates authority to the Director of Regeneration and Housing to make minor changes to the above policies in response to changes to governance guidance or legislation. 5. That a further report is brought to Executive to provide an update on the demands and the resource costs of delivering the Renters' Rights Act 2025. 	

Executive summary	
<p>The Legislative and Regulatory Reform Act 2006, and the Regulators' Code made under it, set out that regulatory activities should be carried out in a way which is transparent, accountable, proportionate and consistent, and that regulatory activities should be</p>	

targeted only at cases in which action is needed.

The Council satisfies this responsibility by setting out how it intends to exercise regulatory functions and enforcement measures in its general and specific enforcement policies and its statement(s) of principles.

The policies, to which this Executive report apply, commit the Council to good enforcement practice, setting out the enforcement options the Council has and the circumstances in which it uses its enforcement powers and sanctions.

The policies will apply specifically to the Public Protection Service (Regeneration and Housing Directorate) and to the Neighbourhoods and Environmental Enforcement services (Environment, Communities and Culture Directorate). The Directorates have a wide range of legislation and associated enforcement powers and functions which are used to protect public health and social wellbeing; protect and enhance fair and equitable trade, protect consumer safety and lawful interests, protect employers and workers; protect and enhance the safety and wellbeing of tenants in rented accommodation; and protect and enhance the broader environment.

Enforcement policies need to be reviewed periodically and specifically if there is a significant change in the enforcement protocols or sanctions available to the Council in its delivery of regulatory functions. The policies will replace the current general enforcement and civil penalties policies and enable the Council to apply new enforcement sanctions and powers derived from new and amended legislation.

The Renters Rights Act 2026 has introduced a significant expanded civil penalty framework and places new duties on the Council to enforce a broader range of landlord obligations. This includes new compliance requirements, enhanced penalties for repeat or serious non-compliance, and clearer expectations that enforcement activity is fair, consistent and proportionate. To meet these requirements, the Council must ensure its relevant policies are fully aligned with the new legislative framework, which includes the application of civil penalties for breaches of conditions attached to licences issued to Houses in Multiple Occupation and designated selective landlord licensing and additional licensing areas (licensing of houses in multiple occupation with 3 or 4 occupants not living as a single household)

The current Civil Penalty Policy was approved in October 2022 prior to the introduction of the Renters' Rights Act 2025, and a revised policy is required to reflect the suite of new powers and offences and amendments to the penalty and evidential thresholds.

The Private Sector Housing Enforcement Policy 2026-2031 and The Civil Penalties Policy 2026-2031 are aligned with a nationally recognised framework template which ensures consistency in regulation and protection from legal challenge.

If these policies are not updated or introduced, there is a risk of inconsistent enforcement, legal challenge to decisions and reduced ability to demonstrate compliance with statutory guidance and best practice. Updating these policies is essential to ensure the Council can meet its statutory obligations.

The implications of the recommendation(s) 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 approval of three new policies relating to the general and regulatory functions delivered by Public Protection, Neighbourhoods and Environmental Enforcement functions to enable the Council to satisfy its statutory obligations in line with the provisions of the Legislative and Regulatory Reform Act 2006 and the Regulators Code made under it, and the Renters’ Rights Act 2025 and associated housing legislation.

Our ambitions	Summary of how this report will support delivery of these ambitions and the underpinning aims
A successful and ambitious town	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To attract investment in residential properties and ensure housing provision meets local demand.
A healthy Place	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To promote conditions for improved health and wellbeing, achieve better housing standards in the private rental sector, and in particular for low-income households who are reliant on the private rental sector for safe and comfortable housing.
Safe and resilient communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To directly address anti-social behaviour related to the private rented sector, and to support broader aims of reducing crime and anti-social behaviour – allowing residents to live safer lives.
Delivering best value	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The proposed policies help the council to achieve best value by ensuring consistent, transparent decision-making that targets resources where they have the greatest impact. They will build public confidence and compliance which supports more efficient, preventative service delivery.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That Executive approves the General Enforcement Policy 2026-2031
- 2.2 That Executive approves the Public Protection Private Sector Housing Enforcement Policy 2026-2031.
- 2.3 That Executive approves the Public Protection Civil Penalties Policy 2026-2031 (under the Renters’ Rights Act 2025 and other housing legislation)
- 2.4 That Executive delegate authority to the Corporate Director of Regeneration and Housing to make minor change to the above policies in response to change to governance guidance or legislation.
- 2.5 That Executive approves that a further report is brought to provide an update on the demands and the resource costs of delivering the Renters’ Rights Act 2025.

3. Rationale for the recommended decision(s)

- 3.1 To ensure the Council has an approved framework for delivering Public Protection, Neighbourhoods and Environmental Enforcement regulatory functions.
- 3.2 To ensure that the Council satisfies its obligations under the Legislative and Regulatory Reform Act 2006 and the Regulators Code made under it, and the Renters' Rights Act 2025 and associated housing legislation.
- 3.3 To avoid or mitigate the risk of inconsistent enforcement, legal challenge to decisions and reduced ability to demonstrate compliance with statutory guidance and best practice.
- 3.4 Delegation of decision to make minor changes to policies is to ensure that changes to new legislation and guidance are accounted for and policies can be applied effectively without need for full Executive approval.
- 3.5 To inform Executive about the additional demands of the Renters' Rights Act and the impact on staffing resources and costs.

4. Background and relevant information

General Enforcement Policy 2026-2031

- 4.1 The purpose of the General Enforcement Policy is to set out the measures the Council can take to protect the public, the environment, consumers and legitimate businesses, by ensuring that legal requirements are met and that everyone acts/operates within the law. Enforcement includes both informal and formal approaches to securing compliance with law, while protecting and enhancing the rights and interests of local people, visitors and businesses. This policy covers the regulatory provisions for Public Protection, Neighbourhoods and Environmental Enforcement.
- 4.2 For general enforcement matters, a graduated approach is taken, which endeavours to support both businesses and individuals to meet their legal obligations, prior to considering formal enforcement action. Formal enforcement can range from the service of statutory notices to prosecution or the issue of civil financial penalties. Formal action is usually only taken when informal, advisory and educative approaches have not been, or will not be, successful, and where the level of offending or severity of impact of offences is high.
- 4.3 Enforcement policies should be reviewed routinely and specifically when significant changes to legislation and enforcement powers / functions are introduced. The General Enforcement Policy 2026-2031 has taken into account new and amended legislation, including powers to serve Community Protection Notices and issue fixed penalty notices, and the power to seek Closure Orders under the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014.

Private Rented Sector Housing Enforcement Policy 2026-2031

- 4.4 The Renters' Rights Act 2026 represents a fundamental shift in the regulation of the private rented housing sector. Tenants will see stronger protections including the replacement of assured shorthold tenancies with periodic assured tenancies, improved rights and better security of tenure, and greater protection from unlawful interference from landlords or their agents.
- 4.5 The Renters' Rights Act 2026 places a statutory duty on local housing authorities to enforce landlord and rented accommodation legislation, altering the balance between informal action and formal enforcement. Where breaches legislation are identified, the Council must now actively consider enforcement action to meet this duty, rather than defaulting to advice or informal resolution in the first instance. As a result, the Regulators' Code can no longer be relied upon to justify informal action as the starting point for compliance under the Renters' Rights Act 2025. This explains the need for a separate Private Sector Housing Enforcement Policy 2026-2031 which does not rely on the principles set out in the Regulators' Code.
- 4.6 Historically, enforcement of private rented sector legislation has varied significantly between local housing authorities, with markedly different enforcement outcomes. This inconsistency risks undermining confidence in the regulatory system, creates uncertainty for landlords operating across multiple areas and increases the likelihood of challenge to enforcement decisions. This also results in discrepancies to the level of tenant protections.
- 4.7 To address these concerns, the Association of Chief Environmental Health Officers (ACEHO) has developed a suite of national model policies, including a Civil Penalty Policy. These policies aim to promote greater consistency, transparency and robustness in local authority enforcement approaches, whilst allowing for appropriate local discretion, where appropriate. The Private Sector Housing Enforcement Policy 2026-2031 and The Civil Penalties Policy 2026-2031 are aligned with this nationally recognised framework strengthening the Council's ability to meet its statutory duties under the Renters' Rights Act 2026.
- 4.8 The implementation of the Renters' Rights Act 2025 requires a coordinated and timely update to the Civil Penalties Policy and the previous Public Protection Enforcement Policy. Failure to update these policies risks inconsistency in enforcement decisions and activities, increasing exposure to challenge, as well as an inability to demonstrate that the Council is meeting its statutory duties to enforce landlord legislation under section 107 of the Renters' Rights Act 2025.

Civil Penalties Policy 2026-2031

- 4.9 There is a current Civil Penalty Policy which was developed prior to the introduction of the Renters' Rights Act 2025. This policy has been revised to reflect the suite of new offences and amendments to the penalty and evidential thresholds used when calculating the level of civil penalty, and to new statutory guidance.
- 4.10 Civil penalties offer a faster, less resource-intensive enforcement route compared to the time-consuming process of criminal prosecution, which places a burden on the

court system. This allows regulatory bodies to deal with more cases effectively and quickly

- 4.11 The statutory guidance on civil penalties under the Renters' Rights Act 2025 and other housing legislation informs Councils' that civil penalties are available as an alternative to criminal prosecution for relevant landlord and rented accommodation and that there is no expectation that Councils take informal steps to address breaches or offences under the Renters Rights Act 2025 and other housing legislation. The guide includes starting points which Councils should use for setting civil penalties, based on the seriousness of the offending.
- 4.12 The Council has the power to impose a civil penalty of up to £40,000, with a level of civil penalty imposed decided on a case-by-case basis in line with the Civil Penalties Policy. The policy sets out the level of a civil penalty in each case where it has been determined to issue a civil penalty as an appropriate enforcement option.
- 4.13 The Council, through its policy, will determine the level of penalty after having taken into consideration factors specific to the offending, including aggravating and mitigating factors, and financial considerations. In setting a final civil penalty amount the Council will take account of any information supplied by the offender about their financial circumstances which will usually include all gains from rental income. It is recognised that in areas where rents are lower or higher than the national average the Council may apply a general adjustment via its civil penalties policy and issue a penalty that is proportionate to the local rental market. This adjustment should still maintain a level of civil penalty such that the offender does not financially benefit from their offending behaviour and the level of fine is relevant to the impact of the offending on tenants and the Council.
- 4.14 The legislation states that any income received from civil penalties is retained by the Council and used to further the Council's statutory functions in relation to its enforcement activities covering the private rented sector.

Additional information

- 4.15 Adopting the polices referred to in this report will ensure the Council can continue to effectively deliver regulatory functions and use appropriate enforcement sanctions. However, as there will be new regulatory duties placed on the Council, particularly due to the changes introduced under the Renters' Rights Act 2025, and an increase in demands on services, this will place a pressure on existing resources in terms of the number of qualified officers to deliver services and associated costs. New Burden's funding of £115k has been made available for 26/27 to deliver the new responsibilities. This level of funding will fund 2 full time officers which is unlikely to be sufficient. Once the legislation is implemented officers will be in a better position to know the resource required and the additional cost will be considered under the medium-term financial plan (MTFP). This will be reported back to Executive, together with an update on the implications of the new legislation.

5. Ward Member Engagement if relevant and appropriate

- 5.1 Ward member views have not been sought in relation to these policies.

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

6.1 Not to approve the new policies. This would mean an increased risk of a legal challenge against enforcement decisions action, particularly in respect of the new / amended enforcement functions and powers.

Impact(s) of the recommended decision(s)

Topic	Impact
Financial (including procurement and Social Value)	New Burden's funding of £115k has been made available for 26/27 to deliver the Renters' Rights Act 2025. This will fund 2 full time officers which is unlikely to be sufficient to deliver the new responsibilities. Once the legislation is implemented officers will be in a better position to know the resource required and the cost will be considered under the medium-term financial plan (MTFP). This will be reported back to Executive, together with an update on the implications of the new legislation. Income from civil penalties will be retained by the Council and used to offset any additional costs.
Legal	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Council may be subject to legal challenge if it does not have enforcement policies that set out how it will meet and deliver enforcement duties and functions. 2. The use of enforcement measures may be subject to legal challenge.
Risk	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Compliance with legislative duties and responsibilities ensured 2. Potential for legal challenge reduced 3. Effective protection of residents, businesses and visitors
Human Rights, Public Sector Equality Duty and Community Cohesion	There are no negative impacts. The policies ensure the protection of human rights including protection from crime and anti-social behaviour, protection of consumer rights, and the broader protection of health, safety and wellbeing.
Reducing Poverty	There are no negative impacts. Those people living on lower incomes and in the deprived areas are the most affected by poor housing conditions in the private rented sector and benefit from the protections offered by the Renters Reform Act and other housing legislation.
Climate Change / Environmental	There are no negative impacts. Effective enforcement ensures direct positive impact on the local environment
Children and Young People Cared for by the Authority and Care Leavers	There are no negative impacts. Effective enforcement seeks to protect children and young people from risks to health, and protection from crime and antisocial behaviour. Effective enforcement of housing related laws seeks to protect children and young people from harm.

Data Protection	There are no negative impacts on data protection. The policies and the functions they relate to will be implemented in line with all data protection requirements.
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Actions to be taken to implement the recommended decision(s)

Action	Responsible Officer	Deadline
Approved polices to be published and implemented	Judith Hedgley	Within 14 days of Executive approval.
That a further update report is provided to Executive on resources required and costs of the implementation of the Renters’ Rights Act 2025.	Judith Hedgley	12-18 months

Appendices

1	Appendix 1: Impact Assessment
2	Appendix 2: Civil Penalties Policy
3	Appendix 3: General Enforcement Policy
4	Appendix 4: Private Sector Housing Policy

Background papers

Body	Report title	Date
Department for Business and Innovation Skills – Better Regulation Office	Regulators' Code	1 st April 2014
Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government	Civil penalties under the Renters' Rights Act 2025 and other housing legislation - GOV.UK	13 November 2025
Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government	Guide to the Renters Rights Act	6 November 2025

Contact: Judith Hedgley
Email: Judith_hedgley@middlesbrough.gov.uk

Contact: Wayne Flowers
Email: Wayne_flowers@middlesbrough.gov.uk

Impact Assessment Level 1: Initial screening assessment

Subject of assessment:	Regulatory Services General Enforcement Policy Private Sector Housing Enforcement Policy Civil penalties under the Renters' Rights Act 2025 and other housing legislation Policy			
Coverage:	General and regulatory functions delivered by the Regeneration and Housing, and Environment, Communities and Cultures directorates			
This is a decision relating to:	<input type="checkbox"/> Strategy	<input checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Local or corporate requirements:	<input type="checkbox"/>
Description:	<p>Key aims, objectives and activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To enable the Council to satisfy its statutory obligations in line with the provisions of the Legislative and Regulatory Reform Act 2006 and the Regulators Code made under it, and the Renters' Rights Act 2025 and associated housing legislation. <p>Statutory drivers (set out exact reference)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Legislative and Regulatory Reform Act 2006 and the Regulators Code Renters' Rights Act 2025 and associated housing legislation. Housing and Planning Act 2016 <p>Differences from any previous approach</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requirement to review existing policies and develop new polices to take into account new and amended legislation. <p>Key stakeholders and intended beneficiaries (internal and external as appropriate)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Council – to ensure it meets its statutory obligations All persons, businesses and other organisations who are subject to regulatory functions. <p>Intended outcomes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Compliance with statutory requirements Consistency in approach to delivery regulatory functions and enforcement decisions Publication of the policies that regulated persons, businesses and other organisation are subject to. 			
Live date:	Once approved by Executive			
Lifespan:	2026 – 2031			
Date of next review:	Policies are kept under review in line with any changes to legislation or national guidance.			

Screening questions	Response			Evidence
	No	Yes	Uncertain	
Human Rights Could the decision impact negatively on individual Human Rights as enshrined in UK legislation?*	☒	☐	☐	These policies will positively support human rights, their rights to respect for private and family life, home and correspondence. The policies support established legal processes which include a right to a fair trial. They clearly set out how legislation will be applied in a fair and proportionate matter.
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?*	☒	☐	☐	These policies will have a positive impact on this duty and the application will consider the needs of groups and individuals with protected characteristics including considering disability, language barriers, age, vulnerabilities and religion. Improving housing standards in line with the Enforcement Polices will impact positively on all age groups, in particular the elderly and families with young children who are more vulnerable.
Community cohesion Could the decision impact negatively on relationships between different groups, communities of interest or neighbourhoods within the town?*	☒	☐	☐	These policies will safeguard community cohesion by enabling legislation to be applied in a proportionate and targeted manner, with communities benefiting according to their need. The application of housing standards legislation will be focused on the areas of greater need which are generally the most deprived locations. Improving housing standards supports a developing pride in neighbourhoods and communities and reduces health inequalities.
Armed Forces Could the decision impact negatively on those who are currently members of the armed forces or former members in the areas of Council delivered healthcare, compulsory education and housing policies?*	☒	☐	☐	These policies will support the needs of the armed forces or veterans living in the private rented sectors or for the application of the wider regulatory roles governed by the General Enforcement Policy

Screening questions	Response			Evidence
Care leavers Could the decision impact negatively on those who are care experienced?	☒	☐	☐	The policies will actively support care leavers who live in the private rented sector to enable them to occupy properties which comply with legal housing standards.
Reducing Poverty Could the decision impact negatively on the Council's ambitions to reduce poverty in the town?	☒	☐	☐	Those living in the most deprived areas are more likely to be affected by criminal behaviour and poor housing standards in the private rented sector, directly or indirectly. These policies set out how legal action will be applied in a proportionate and targeted manner and will ensure that most deprived communities do not suffer adversely and will contribute to the reducing poverty in the town.

Assessment completed by:	Wayne Flowers Public Protection Manager	Head of Service:	Judith Hedgley
Date:	13 th March 2026	Date:	14 th March 2026

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Creator	Author(s)	Judith Hedgley Head of Public Protection Wayne Flowers Public Protection Manager		
	Approved by			
	Department	Regeneration and Housing		
	Service area	Public Protection		
	Head of Service	Judith Hedgley		
	Director	Richard Horniman		
Date	Created	1 st March 2026		
	Submitted			
	Approved			
	Updating Frequency	5-year review with updates in period subject to changes in law and national guidance		
Status	Version: 0.1			
Contributor(s)				
Subject	Civil Penalties Policy 2026-2031 (in relation to the Renters' Rights Act 2025 and other housing legislation)			
Type	Policy			
	Vital Record		EIR	
Coverage	Middlesbrough Council – all wards			
Language	English			
Document Control				
Version	Date	Revision History		Reviser
1.0		First Draft		
Distribution List				
Version	Date	Name/Service area		Action
1.0				

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1 Summary

- 1.1. This policy forms part of the Council's framework for the delivery of regulatory services that support the Council to satisfy its statutory duties and functions, which aim to protect public health, safety and welfare, prevent crime and anti-social behaviour, protect and enhance the environment, ensure fair and equitable trading practices, protect consumer interests and support the local economy.
- 1.2. The Council, as the local housing authority, has a duty to enforce landlord and rental accommodation legislation, which defines taking enforcement action as imposing a financial penalty or instituting proceedings against a person for an offence. The Council fulfils its duty by acting in accordance with its enforcement policies, which are developed in line with statutory guidance.
- 1.3. If the Council suspects non-compliance with landlord and rented accommodation laws, it must decide whether to seek to prosecute or apply a civil penalty. The Civil Penalties Policy applies once the Council has decided to apply a civil penalty and sets out how the level of penalty is to be determined.
- 1.4. Civil penalties are used as an alternative to criminal prosecution for offences. Where a civil penalty has been imposed, a person cannot then be prosecuted for the same offence. However, in the case of continuing and repeat breach or offence, the Council may prosecute even though a previous civil penalty is a constituent element of the offence or impose a further civil penalty as an alternative to prosecution even although a previous conviction forms part of the basis for imposing the penalty.
- 1.5. Any decision to issue a civil penalty is a serious one and in making such a decision there are a few considerations, including the benefits of taking such action to the tenant(s), the community and the Council, and to the nature and degree of the offending including any previous offending or relevant behaviour.
- 1.6. Civil penalties may be imposed on a landlord, or other relevant person, for breaches of landlord, rented accommodation and other housing related legislation.

2 Context

- 2.1 This policy is designed to ensure that civil penalties imposed for breaches or offences under landlord and rented accommodation legislation are determined in an open and consistent manner.
- 2.2 This policy aims to provide guidance for officers to ensure that the use of civil penalties under the Renters' Rights Act 2025 and other housing legislation is fair, proportionate and consistent.
- 2.3 The Renters' Rights Act 2025 and the 'Landlord Legislation' as defined by Section 107 of the Act sit outside of the Regulator's Code, and its provisions do not apply. Part 1 of the Housing Act 2004 is also outside of the scope of the Regulator's Code.

3 Purpose

- 3.1 As the local housing authority, the Council has a duty to enforce the landlord legislation under section 107 of the Renters' Rights Act 2025 and under other housing legislation. This defines taking enforcement action as imposing a financial penalty or instituting proceedings against a person for a breach or offence of landlord or rented accommodation legislation. The Council fulfils its duty by acting in accordance with its enforcement policies, which include this policy.
- 3.2 If the Council suspects non-compliance with landlord or rented accommodation legislation, it must consider what proactive steps may be reasonably necessary to establish that a breach or offence has occurred. Once non-compliance has been established, the Council must determine, in line with its policies, what steps are to be taken to address the breach or offence. There is no expectation that the Council will take informal steps to address the breach or offence, for example by issuing warning letters, prior to taking formal action. Formal action includes issuing statutory notices, such as an Improvement Notice or Prohibition Order, issuing a Civil Penalty Notice or commencing prosecution proceedings.
- 3.3 In determining what steps to take to address the breach or offence, the Council must take account of the need for effective deterrence and punishment and what is in the best interests of tenants. Where any steps to end the non-compliance have failed to do so and the Council is satisfied that the necessary evidential threshold is reached and proceeding is in the public interest, it must issue a civil penalty notice or start prosecution proceedings.

- 3.4 The Council must have a policy basis to guide its decisions on when to prosecute and when to issue a civil penalty and therefore the Private Sector Housing Enforcement Policy and General Enforcement Policy are to be read in conjunction with this policy.
- 3.5 This policy replaces the Council's 'Framework for calculating the level of civil penalty charge for breaches of landlord duties under private sector housing laws (2022)'.
- 3.6 This policy sets out what landlords, their agents or any other person involved in the letting or management of privately rented accommodation, and tenants of private rented sector properties, can expect from the Council regarding the use of civil penalties for breaches and offences of landlord and rented accommodation legislation.

4 Definitions

- 4.1 The term 'landlord(s)' should be read as including letting agents, managing agents, licensors, property owners, directors of corporate landlords and any other person involved in the letting or management of privately rented accommodation.
- 4.2 The term 'House of Multiple Occupation' (HMO) is defined by the Housing Act 2004
- 4.3 A 'person' may be an individual, a company or other legal entity.
- 4.4 The term 'breach' is used to refer to non-compliance by landlords where the Council may impose a civil penalty only.
- 4.5 The term 'offence' is used to refer to non-compliance by landlords where the Council may either prosecute or impose a civil penalty.
- 4.6 The term 'landlord legislation' refers to duties under Chapters 3 and 6 of Part 1 of the Renters' Rights Act 2025, Part 2 of the Renters' Rights Act 2025, Sections 1 and 1A of the Protection from Eviction Act 1977, and Chapter 1 of Part 1 of the Housing Act 1988.

4.7 The term 'rented accommodation legislation' means:

- Sections 1 and 1A of the Protection from Eviction Act 1977;
- Chapter 1 of Part 1 of the Housing Act 1988;
- Parts 1 to 4 and 7 of the Housing Act 2004 so far as relating to qualifying residential premises within the meaning given by section 2B of that Act;
- Section 83(1) or 84(1) of the Enterprise and Regulatory Reform Act 2013;
- Sections 21 to 23 of the Housing and Planning Act 2016; and,
- Chapter 3 of Part 1 and Part 2 of the renters Rights Act 2025.

4.8 The term 'local housing authority' means the Council, having a duty, function or responsibility under relevant landlord and rented accommodation legislation

5 Scope

5.1 This policy applies to all persons who are authorised by the Council to deliver statutory duties and functions relating to landlord and rented accommodation legislation.

5.2 This policy is a five-year policy and will be reviewed periodically and whenever there are significant changes in legislation and national guidance. Compliance with the policy will be monitored through service delivery processes.

6 Legislative and regulatory framework

6.1 The Council wants to support responsible landlords to raise housing standards and protect tenants' rights. However, the Council expects landlords to have a good understanding of the housing standards and management issues that should be met in privately rented accommodation.

6.2 This policy supports the Council to meet its statutory obligations and to succeed in its ambitions for a successful and ambitious town, to ensure communities are safe and resilient, and to help residents live longer, healthier lives.

7 Policy Detail

7.1 Civil penalties may be imposed for the following breaches or offences:

- rental discrimination and rental bidding on a landlord and any person acting or purporting to act on their behalf, who is responsible for the breach or offence.

- illegal eviction and harassment may be imposed on anyone who has committed the offence of illegal eviction or harassment.
- assured tenancy landlord duties may be imposed on any landlord, and any person acting or purporting to act on their behalf, who is responsible for the breach or offence.
- unlicensed houses in multiple occupation (HMOs) and houses subject to selective licensing may be imposed on the person managing, the person having control defined under section 263 of the Housing Act 2004 and any landlord, including any superior landlord.
- allowing an HMO to be occupied by more than the authorised number of households or persons may be imposed on the person managing and the person having control.
- failure to comply with HMO or selective licence conditions may be imposed on the licence holder, or a person on whom restrictions or obligations under a licence were imposed with their consent.
- failure to comply with management regulations in respect of HMOs, civil penalties may be imposed on any person subject to duties under the regulations, including, in some circumstances, the occupiers.
- failing to comply with an improvement notice, contravening an overcrowding notice, or breaching a banning order may be imposed on any person on whom an improvement notice, or overcrowding notice was served or against whom a banning order was made.
- where a breach or offence has been committed with the consent or connivance of, or (in most cases) is attributable to any neglect on the part of any officer of a body corporate, a civil penalty may be imposed on them individually as well as, or instead of, the body corporate.
- where more than one person is liable for the same breach or offence, the Council may impose a civil penalty on more than one person. The amount of penalty imposed on each person may differ depending on the circumstances of the case. Alternatively, in the case of breaches and offences relating to the duties of landlords under assured tenancies and breaches relating to rental discrimination and rental bidding, the Council may impose a single penalty on more than one person. Where this happens, those persons are jointly and severally liable to pay it.

Breaches subject to a civil penalty with a maximum of £7,000:

7.2 The following breaches are subject to a civil penalty with a statutory maximum of £7,000:

- Failure to give a written statement of terms and any other prescribed information under section 16D of the Housing Act 1988.
- Attempting to let a property for a fixed term under section 16E of the Housing Act 1988.
- Attempting to end a tenancy by service of a notice to quit under section 16E of the Housing Act 1988.
- Attempting to end a tenancy orally or requiring that it is ended orally under section 16E of the Housing Act 1988.
- Serving an eviction notice that attempts to end a tenancy outside the prescribed section 8 process under section 16E of the Housing Act 1988.
- Relying on a ground where the landlord does not reasonably believe that the landlord is/will be able to obtain possession under section 16E of the Housing Act 1988.
- Failing to provide a tenant with prior notice that a ground which requires it may be used under section 16E of the Housing Act 1988.
- Failure to give an existing tenant prescribed information about changes made by the Renters' Rights Act 2025 in the prescribed form and timeframe under paragraph 7(2) of schedule 6 to the Renters' Rights Act 2025.
- Discrimination relating to children in the lettings process under section 33 of the Renters' Rights Act 2025.
- Discrimination relating to benefits in the lettings process under section 34 of the Renters' Rights Act 2025.
- Failure to specify proposed rent within a written advertisement or offer under section 56 of the Renters' Rights Act 2025.
- Inviting, encouraging or accepting any offer of rent greater than the stated rate under section 56 of the Renters' Rights Act 2025.

Offences and breaches subject to a civil penalty with a statutory maximum of £40,000:

7.3 The following breaches are subject to a civil penalty with a statutory maximum of £40,000:

- Breach of duty under Regulation 3, 3B, 3C, and 3D of The Electrical Safety Standards in the Private Rented Sector and Social Rented Sector (England) Regulations 2020.
- Unlawful eviction and harassment of occupier under section 1 of the Protection from Eviction Act 1977.

- Continuation of conduct subject to a relevant penalty (under s.16I or s.16K Housing Act 1988) after the 28-day period (or, if appealed, after conclusion of the appeal) where the final notice has not been withdrawn under section 16J of the Housing Act 1988.
 - Conduct giving rise to liability under s.16I, where within the preceding five years the landlord has either (i) had a relevant penalty (under s.16I or s.16K Housing Act 1988) imposed for different conduct and the final notice has not been withdrawn, or (ii) been convicted under s.16J for different conduct under section 16(J) of the Housing Act 1988.
 - Relying on a ground knowing the landlord would not be able to obtain possession or being reckless as to whether they would under section 16J of the Housing Act 1988.
 - Breach of restrictions relating to reletting (s16(E)(2) Housing Act 1988) or remarketing (s16(E)(3) Housing Act 1988) a property within restricted period after using Grounds 1 or 1A of Schedule 2 Housing Act 1988 under section 16J of the Housing Act 1988. 2
 - Breach of a banning order under section 21 of the Housing and Planning Act 2016.
 - Failure to comply with an Improvement Notice under section 30 of the Housing Act 2004.
 - Contravention of an overcrowding notice under section 139 of the Housing Act 2004.
 - Failure to obtain a selective licence under section 95 of the Housing Act 2004.
 - Failure to obtain an HMO licence under section 72 of the Housing Act 2004.
 - Knowingly permitting over-occupation of an HMO under section 72 of the Housing Act 2004.
 - Failure to comply with management regulations in respect of HMOs under section 234 of the Housing Act 2004.
 - Failure to comply with HMO licence conditions under section 72 of the Housing Act 2004.
 - Failure to comply with selective licence conditions under section 95 of the Housing Act 2004.
- 7.4 If a landlord has committed multiple breaches or offences, a separate civil penalty can, and usually will, be imposed for each breach and offence. In each case, the level of any civil penalty imposed will be determined in accordance with this policy.
- 7.5 If multiple landlords have committed the same breach or offence at the same property, a separate civil penalty can, and usually will, be imposed on each offender. In each case, the level of civil penalty imposed on each offender will be in accordance with this policy.
- 7.6 This policy outlines the Council's methodology and mechanism for assessing and setting the level of a civil penalty at all stages where a civil penalty is under consideration, including the preparation of a notice of intent, and where a final decision has been made to impose a civil penalty.
- 7.7 When applying the civil penalties matrix, interim calculations at individual stages may result in figures that exceed the statutory maximum. Where the final amount

reached following application of all relevant steps exceeds the statutory maximum, the civil penalty will be reduced to the applicable statutory maximum.

- 7.8 The Council considers the need for transparency and consistency to be of primary importance to ensure fairness in the discharge of its functions. The general objective of this policy is, therefore, to promote both transparency and consistency in the imposition of financial penalties so that those involved in the letting or management of accommodation (a) know how the Council will generally penalise relevant breaches and offences and (b) are assured that, generally, like cases will be penalised similarly, and different cases penalised differently.
- 7.9 The Council recognises that, despite its best efforts, landlords may operate unlawfully for a significant period without detection, and that only a proportion of those committing relevant breaches and offences will be identified. Accordingly, the Council seeks to ensure that civil penalties are set at a level that makes it clear to the landlord concerned and to others that operating unlawfully as a landlord is financially disadvantageous when compared to operating lawfully.
- 7.10 The Council has a duty to act fairly, transparently and consistently when assessing civil penalties. To maintain fairness between all landlords, the Council will not give weight to claims advanced as factors that might reduce the amount of a civil penalty unless those claims are supported by evidence that the Council reasonably considers to be relevant, reliable, credible, and sufficient in scope and detail to enable proper assessment of the claim, having regard to the nature of the claim, the information ordinarily available to the landlord, and the need for consistent and fair decision making.
- 7.11 Allowing inadequately evidenced assertions to influence outcomes would risk rewarding those who provide incomplete or misleading information and would create an unfair advantage over landlords who provide a full and properly evidenced account. Accordingly, the Council expects landlords against whom a civil penalty is being considered to provide all documents and records that would ordinarily exist if their account were accurate. Where such evidence is not provided, and no explanation that the Council considers adequate is given, the Council may draw an adverse inference.
- 7.12 Where claims are advanced without sufficient supporting evidence, the Council may request specified supporting material before determining whether to issue a final notice or whether any mitigation has been sufficiently evidenced so as to justify a lower civil penalty.
- 7.13 The further objectives of using financial penalties in particular as a means of enforcing the above breaches and offences are explained below.

Statutory Guidance

7.14 The Council has regard to government issued statutory guidance entitled “Civil penalties under the Renters' Rights Act 2025 and other housing legislation”. The Council has considered the following factors in developing this civil penalty policy to help ensure that the civil penalty is set at an appropriate level.

- **Severity of the breach or offence.** The more serious the breach or offence, the higher the penalty should be.
- **Culpability and track record of the offender.** A higher penalty will be appropriate where the offender has a history of failing to comply with their obligations and/or their actions were deliberate and/or they knew, or ought to have known, that they were in breach of their legal responsibilities.
- **The harm caused to the tenant.** This is a very important factor when determining the level of penalty. The greater the actual harm or the potential for harm, principally to the tenant but also potentially the local community, the higher the penalty should be.
- **Punishment of the offender.** The penalty should, in a way that is fair, both punish the offender and demonstrate the consequences of not complying with their responsibilities.
- **Deter the offender from repeating breaches or offences.** The goal is to prevent any further offending and help ensure that the offender fully complies with all of their legal responsibilities in future. The level of the penalty should therefore be set at a level that it is likely to have a very significant deterrent effect
- **Deter others from committing similar breaches or offences.** While the fact that someone has received a civil penalty may not be in the public domain, the civil penalty policy itself will be. An important part of deterrence is the realisation on the part of landlords that the Council is proactive in levying civil penalties where the need to do so exists and the civil penalty will be set at a high enough level such that operating lawfully will be the sensible financial choice.
- **Remove any financial benefit the offender may have obtained as a result of committing the breach or offence.** The principle here is that it should not be in the offender's financial interest to commit a breach or offence rather than comply, for example that the penalty for breaching licensing conditions in respect of occupancy of a property is less than the additional rent received as

a result of the over-crowding. The absence of any financial benefit to the landlord does not mean though that the penalty should be reduced.

Civil penalties matrix

7.15 In determining the level of a civil penalty, officers will have regard to the matrix set out below, which consists of the following sequential steps:

1. Determining the starting point based on the seriousness of the breach or offence.
2. Adjustment for factors relating to the type of landlord; size and type of portfolio controlled, owned or managed; experience of the landlord (“Landlord Type”)
3. Mitigating and aggravating factors the Council deems significant including, but not limited to, factors relating to the track record and culpability of the landlord and the actual or potential harm to the occupants.
4. Financial considerations.
5. Applying the totality principle.

Starting point based on seriousness of the breach or offence

7.16 The Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government has provided statutory guidance that prescribes starting points for all breaches and offences based on the seriousness of the breach or offence. The exception to this prescription is for breaches of licensing conditions under sections 72(3) and 95(2) of the Housing Act 2004, where the Council has determined its own starting levels based on the seriousness of the specific licence condition or type of licence condition that has not be complied with.

Adjustment for factors relating to the type of landlord; the size and type of portfolio controlled, owned or managed; and, the experience of the landlord (“Landlord Type”)

7.17 While all landlords are expected to comply fully with their legal obligations, the Council considers that a higher standard of professionalism and regulatory awareness is reasonably expected of landlords who operate at greater scale, who have greater experience, or who are involved in more complex forms of letting. Where such landlords fail to comply with their obligations, this will ordinarily justify a higher civil penalty.

7.18 A higher degree of professionalism is expected of landlords who:

- Control, own, or manage a significant portfolio of properties;

- Have significant experience in the letting or management of property;
- Are or have been involved in the letting or management of Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs);
- Are corporate landlords; or
- Are or have been directors of corporate landlords.

7.19 An upward adjustment of 20% of the applicable starting point will be applied where the landlord meets any one or more of the following criteria:

- The landlord has, at any point in time, controlled, owned, or managed six or more properties. These properties need not have been held concurrently or at the time civil penalty proceedings are brought.
- The landlord has, at any point in time, controlled, owned, or managed three or more properties that operated as HMOs, whether or not concurrently.
- The landlord is, or has previously been, a director of a corporate landlord.
- The landlord is a corporate landlord.
- The landlord has, in the Council's assessment and by reference to the available evidence, significant experience in the letting or management of property.

7.20 A downward adjustment of 20% of the applicable starting point will be applied only where all of the following criteria are met:

- The landlord has, at any point in time, controlled, owned, or managed no more than two properties.
- The landlord has controlled, owned, or managed no more than one property that has operated as an HMO, at any point in time.
- The landlord has, in the Council's assessment and by reference to the available evidence, very limited experience in the letting or management of property.

Mitigating and aggravating factors the Council deems significant including, but not limited to, factors relating to the track record and culpability of the landlord and the actual or potential harm to the occupants

7.21 To promote fairness and consistency in the administration of civil penalties, the Council will apply a structured and consistent framework when determining the extent to which mitigating and aggravating factors affect the quantum of any civil penalty.

General approach

7.22 Each breach or offence may have offence-specific mitigating and/or aggravating factors, which will be considered alongside the generic factors set out below.

7.23 Where multiple civil penalties are issued under this policy against the same landlord at the same time, and except where expressly stated otherwise, mitigating and aggravating factors will be considered and applied separately to each civil penalty when determining the quantum of each penalty.

Mitigating factors

7.24 The Council may reduce the level of a civil penalty by up to 20% of the applicable starting point to reflect the presence of mitigating factors. Only in exceptional circumstances may the Council depart from the application of this policy in respect of mitigating factors and apply a reduction of more than 20%.

7.25 Exceptional circumstances are rare and unusual and are not established merely by the presence of multiple mitigating factors. Within the framework of this policy, the Council has not sought to provide an exhaustive list of mitigating factors, recognising that a wide range of circumstances may potentially give rise to mitigation. However, the following generic mitigating factors will be considered in respect of each breach or offence:

Steps taken to remedy the basis of the breach or offence

Non-exhaustive examples include:

- Promptly remedying all elements of the breach or offence after receiving communication from the Council.
- Promptly remedying all the significant elements of the breach or offence leaving only less significant elements of the breach or offence.

A high level of cooperation

Non-exhaustive examples include:

- Proactive provision of significant information the Council reasonably considers relevant beyond that required by statutory notice.

Acceptance of liability

Non-exhaustive examples include:

- Accepting liability before or within the period for representations. Where a landlord relies on a reasonable excuse defence or otherwise contests liability, this mitigating factor will not usually apply.

Health circumstances

Non-exhaustive examples include:

- A serious health condition or medical incident experienced by the landlord during, or in the period immediately preceding, the breach or offence, where there is clear and reliable evidence that the condition had a direct and material impact on the landlord's ability to comply with the relevant legal obligation. Examples may include, but are not limited to, a heart attack, stroke, cancer diagnosis, or other acute or serious medical event causing significant incapacity or impairment.

Diminished culpability (limited responsibility)

Non-exhaustive examples include:

- A joint landlord who has evidenced that compliance arrangements for the subject property were directed and controlled by another joint landlord, and not by them.
- A landlord who became involved only after an unforeseen change in circumstances (such as the death of the previous landlord) and who committed the breach or offence only for a limited period while putting their affairs in order.

The instruction of a managing or letting agent, or reliance on an agent's actions or omissions, will not of itself constitute diminished culpability.

Aggravating factors

7.26 The Council may increase the level of a civil penalty by up to 20% of the applicable starting point to reflect the presence of aggravating factors. Only in exceptional circumstances may the Council depart from the application of this policy in respect of aggravating factors and apply an increase of more than 20%. Exceptional circumstances are rare and unusual and are not established merely by the presence of multiple aggravating factors.

7.27 The following generic aggravating factors will be considered in respect of each breach or offence:

Previous history of non-compliance.

Non-exhaustive examples include:

- Previous successful prosecutions (including relevant spent convictions), previous civil penalties, previous rent repayment orders, previous works in default, previous simple cautions.

Concurrent investigations or proceedings relating to other civil penalties, prosecutions, or rent repayment orders will not be treated as previous non-compliance.

Non-cooperation with the Council.

Non-exhaustive examples include:

- Failure to comply with notices issued under section 16 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976, section 235 of the Housing Act 2004, or section 114 of the Renters' Rights Act 2025.
- Failing to provide a substantive response to a letter of alleged offence.
- Failing to attend previously agreed meetings.

Where the Council has prosecuted, or is pursuing a prosecution, in respect of the same act or omission involving failure to provide legally required information (including failure to comply with a statutory notice), that conduct will not also be treated as an aggravating factor for the purposes of setting the civil penalty, in order to avoid double counting.

Where multiple civil penalties are imposed against the same landlord at the same time, this aggravating factor will be applied only to the civil penalty with the highest starting point, unless there is a clear and reasoned basis for applying it differently.

Deliberate intent or negligence when committing the offence.

Non-exhaustive examples include:

- Knowledge that the breach or offence was occurring.
- Continuation of offending after communication from the Council.
- Premeditation or planning, including steps taken to prevent detection or effective investigation.
- Providing false or misleading information to the Council.
- Applying pressure to occupants to deter cooperation with the Council.

The number of occupants affected.

Non-exhaustive examples include:

- 3-5 occupants affected.

Duration of non-compliance

Non-exhaustive examples include:

- The offence or breach occurred over a 3–6 month period.

Vulnerability of occupants

Non-exhaustive examples include:

- Children and young adults, persons vulnerable by reason of age, disability or sensory impairment, persons with drug or alcohol dependency, victims of domestic abuse, children in care, persons with complex health needs, persons who do not speak English as a first language, victims of trafficking or sexual exploitation, refugees, asylum seekers, and pregnant women.

Financial considerations

- 7.28 The Council will review the amount of the civil penalty and consider whether it is sufficient to meet in a fair way the objectives of punishment; to act as an effective deterrent to future non-compliance and to remove the financial benefit gained through non-compliance.
- 7.29 Where the Council has evidence that it considers to be sufficiently reliable regarding rental income and/or asset value, it may determine that an increase in the level of the penalty is appropriate in order to achieve effective deterrence, and, similarly, the Council may determine that a reduction in the amount of penalty is appropriate, based on the rental income compared against the national average for monthly rental values as published by the Office for National Statistics (ONS). Therefore, in consideration of local rental values compared to national average monthly property rental values, the Council will apply a rent-level adjustment of 40%. This will be reviewed annually and amended according to changes in the ONS data.
- 7.30 Where a landlord seeks to rely on a strained or limited financial position as a basis for reducing the level of a civil penalty, that position must be supported by appropriate and verifiable evidence sufficient to enable the Council to assess the landlord's financial position consistently, objectively, and transparently. Unsupported assertions, partial disclosure, or selective provision of information will not be given weight.
- 7.31 At a minimum, and where such information exists, the following should be provided as part of any written representations:
- The last three full tax years full self-assessment tax returns filed with HMRC, including all additional and supplemental pages;
 - The last three full tax years' SA302 documents & tax year overviews;
 - The last three months' payslips;
 - The last three years P60 certificates;
 - The last twelve months' Universal Credit payment statements;

- A list of all property assets owned or jointly owned (not limited to rental properties), together with corresponding Land Registry title documents;
- A list of all property assets owned, or held on a long lease, by any corporate entity in which the landlord has a beneficial interest, together with corresponding Land Registry documentation;
- The most recent annual mortgage statement for each property, or the last twelve months' mortgage statements where the mortgage has been in place for less than twelve months;
- Valuation statements for all ISAs held;
- Statements from any crypt asset exchange accounts showing balances and valuations;
- A list of all shareholdings;
- Recent bank statements for any account holding a balance in excess of £5,000;
- Recent statements for all secured and unsecured loans;
- Bankruptcy orders and official notifications of bankruptcy.

7.32 Where the Council is not satisfied that it has been provided with sufficiently reliable, complete, and accurate information to assess the landlord's financial position, the Council may draw the inference that the landlord is able to pay the civil penalty as imposed.

7.33 A claimed inability to pay will not, of itself, outweigh the need to ensure effective deterrence or to remove any financial benefit obtained as a result of the breach or offence.

The Totality Principle

7.34 The Council will have regard to the totality principle to ensure that the overall outcome of its enforcement action is just and proportionate. In exceptional cases, and having regard to the particular circumstances of the case, the Council may take account of totality at an earlier stage by deciding not to pursue a civil penalty in respect of a specific breach or offence where doing so would render the overall outcome disproportionate.

7.35 In general, however, the application of the totality principle will form the final step in the Council's decision-making process, undertaken after any written representations have been considered and before final notices are issued, once the level of each individual civil penalty has been assessed in accordance with this policy.

7.36 As a final step before issuing final notices, the Council will consider whether multiple civil penalties being imposed under this policy against the same landlord at the same time result in an aggregate amount that is just and proportionate. Where the Council concludes that the aggregate amount would not be just and

proportionate, it will consider whether a proportionate reduction of the penalties is appropriate.

- 7.37 The totality principle does not operate across different legal persons who are separately liable in law, nor does it operate across civil penalties imposed at different times. In general, it applies only to multiple civil penalties imposed under this policy on the same person at the same time. Where, however, legislation provides that an officer of a body corporate, or a person concerned in its management, may be separately liable in relation to the same conduct as the body corporate, and that officer also holds a shareholding interest in the body corporate, the Council will, where civil penalties are imposed at the same time on both the body corporate and the officer arising from that same conduct, consider whether the combined outcome results in punitive duplication and is therefore not just and proportionate.
- 7.38 Where a reduction is applied under the totality principle, the Council will ordinarily do so by applying a uniform percentage reduction across all relevant civil penalties being issued at the same time, being those civil penalties that form part of the same totality assessment. Where, however, the application of the totality principle is required to address punitive duplication arising from a shared economic interest between a body corporate and an officer, the Council may apply a differential adjustment to ensure that the overall outcome is just and proportionate.
- 7.39 This approach reflects the statutory guidance on the application of the totality principle and is intended to promote consistency, transparency, and proportionality, while avoiding arbitrary or selective adjustment of individual penalties.
- 7.40 In accordance with the statutory guidance, any rent repayment orders made in respect of the same breach or offence will be disregarded for the purposes of assessing the totality of civil penalties under this policy.

Offences and breaches where a civil penalty may be levied and relevant considerations as to the level of that penalty

7.41 Protection from Eviction Act 1977 offences

Unlawful eviction and harassment of occupier - section 1 of the Protection from Eviction Act 1977				
Starting point	Statutory maximum civil penalty amount	Landlord Type downward adjustment	No Landlord Type adjustment	Landlord Type upward adjustment
£35,000	£40,000	£28,000	£35,000	£42,000

Offence-specific mitigating factors:

- None.

Offence-specific aggravating factors:

- Violence or threats of violence.
- Disposal of possessions or threats to dispose of possessions.
- Breach or evasion of an injunction or undertaking.
- Loss of home.

7.42 Housing Act 1988 breaches and offences

Failure to give a written statement of terms and any other prescribed information - section 16D of the Housing Act 1988				
Starting point	Statutory maximum civil penalty amount	Landlord Type downward adjustment	No Landlord Type adjustment	Landlord Type upward adjustment
£4,000	£7,000	£3,200	£4,000	£4,800

Offence-specific mitigating factors:

- Provision of some of the required terms and prescribed information within the required period.

Offence-specific aggravating factors:

- None

Attempting to let a property for a fixed term - section 16E(1)(a) of the Housing Act 1988				
Starting point	Statutory maximum civil penalty amount	Landlord Type downward adjustment	No Landlord Type adjustment	Landlord Type upward adjustment
£4,000	£7,000	£3,200	£4,000	£4,800

Offence-specific mitigating factors:

- None

Offence-specific aggravating factors:

- None

Attempting to end a tenancy by service of a notice to quit - section 16E(1)(b) of the Housing Act 1988				
Starting point	Statutory maximum civil penalty amount	Landlord Type downward adjustment	No Landlord Type adjustment	Landlord Type upward adjustment
£6,000	£7,000	£4,800	£6,000	£7,200

Offence-specific mitigating factors:

- None

Offence-specific aggravating factors:

- Tenant vacates property within four months of the date of vacation or equivalent specified in the notice to quit.

Attempting to end a tenancy orally or requiring that it is ended orally - section 16E(1)(c) of the Housing Act 1988				
Starting point	Statutory maximum civil penalty amount	Landlord Type downward adjustment	No Landlord Type adjustment	Landlord Type upward adjustment
£6,000	£7,000	£4,800	£6,000	£7,200

Offence-specific mitigating factors:

- None

Offence-specific aggravating factors:

- Tenant vacates property within four months of the date of vacation or equivalent specified in the notice to quit.

Serving a possession notice that attempts to end a tenancy outside the prescribed section 8 process - section 16E(1)(d) of the Housing Act 1988				
Starting point	Statutory maximum civil penalty amount	Landlord Type downward adjustment	No Landlord Type adjustment	Landlord Type upward adjustment
£6,000	£7,000	£4,800	£6,000	£7,200

Offence-specific mitigating factors:

- None

Offence-specific aggravating factors:

- Tenant vacates property within four months of the date of vacation or equivalent specified in the notice to quit.

Relying on a ground where the person does not reasonably believe that the landlord is, will, or may be able to obtain possession on that ground and the tenant(s) surrendered the tenancy within the period of four months beginning with the date of the contravention, without an order for possession of the dwelling-house being made - section 16E(1)(e) of the Housing Act 1988				
Starting point	Statutory maximum civil penalty amount	Landlord Type downward adjustment	No Landlord Type adjustment	Landlord Type upward adjustment
£6,000	£7,000	£4,800	£6,000	£7,200

Offence-specific mitigating factors:

- None

Offence-specific aggravating factors:

- None

Failing to provide a tenant with prior notice that a ground which requires it may be used - section 16E(1)(f) of the Housing Act 1988				
Starting point	Statutory maximum civil penalty amount	Landlord Type downward adjustment	No Landlord Type adjustment	Landlord Type upward adjustment
£3,000	£7,000	£2,400	£3,000	£3,600

Offence-specific mitigating factors:

- None

Offence-specific aggravating factors:

- None

Failure to give an existing tenant prescribed information about changes made by the Renters' Rights Act 2025 in the prescribed form and timeframe - paragraph 7(2) of schedule 6 to the Renters' Rights Act 2025				
Starting point	Statutory maximum civil penalty amount	Landlord Type downward adjustment	No Landlord Type adjustment	Landlord Type upward adjustment
£4,000	£7,000	£3,200	£4,000	£4,800

Offence-specific mitigating factors:

- Provision of some of the required prescribed information within the required period.
- Provision of prescribed information but not in the prescribed form.

Offence-specific aggravating factors:

- None

Continuation of conduct subject to a relevant penalty (under s.16I or s.16K Housing Act 1988) after the 28-day period (or, if appealed, after conclusion of the appeal) where the final notice has not been withdrawn — section 16J(3) of the Housing Act 1988				
Starting point	Statutory maximum civil penalty amount	Landlord Type downward adjustment	No Landlord Type adjustment	Landlord Type upward adjustment
Double the starting level for the two constituent breaches added together	£40,000	Dependant on the constituent breaches	Dependant on the constituent breaches	Dependant on the constituent breaches

Offence-specific mitigating factors:

- None

Offence-specific aggravating factors:

- None

Conduct giving rise to liability under s.16I, where within the preceding five years the person has either (i) had a relevant penalty (under s.16I or s.16K Housing Act 1988) imposed for different conduct and the final notice has not been withdrawn, or (ii) been convicted under s.16J for different conduct – section 16(J)(4) of the Housing Act 1988				
Starting point	Statutory maximum civil penalty amount	Landlord Type downward adjustment	No Landlord Type adjustment	Landlord Type upward adjustment
Double the starting level for the two constituent breaches added together	£40,000	Dependant on the constituent breaches	Dependant on the constituent breaches	Dependant on the constituent breaches

Offence-specific mitigating factors:

- Dependent on the most recent conduct giving rise to liability to a civil penalty under section 16I of the Housing Act 1988.

Offence-specific aggravating factors:

- Dependent on the most recent conduct giving rise to liability to a civil penalty under section 16I of the Housing Act 1988.

Relying on a ground where the person knows that the landlord would not be able to obtain an order for possession on that ground, or being reckless as to whether the landlord would be able to do so and the tenant(s) surrendered the tenancy within the period of four months beginning with the date the ground was relied on, without an order for possession of the dwelling-house being made – section 16J(1) of the Housing Act 1988				
Starting point	Statutory maximum civil penalty amount	Landlord Type downward adjustment	No Landlord Type adjustment	Landlord Type upward adjustment
£30,000	£40,000	£24,000	£30,000	£36,000

Offence-specific mitigating factors:

- None

Offence-specific aggravating factors:

- None

Breach of restrictions relating to reletting (s16(E)(2) Housing Act 1988) or remarketing (s16(E)(3) Housing Act 1988) a property within restricted period after using Grounds 1 or 1A of Schedule 2 Housing Act 1988 - section 16J(2) of the Housing Act 1988				
Starting point	Statutory maximum civil penalty amount	Landlord Type downward adjustment	No Landlord Type adjustment	Landlord Type upward adjustment
£25,000	£40,000	£20,000	£25,000	£30,000

Offence-specific mitigating factors:

- None

Offence-specific aggravating factors:

- None

7.43 Housing and Planning Act 2016 offences

Breach of a banning order - section 21(1) of the Housing and Planning Act 2016				
Starting point	Statutory maximum civil penalty amount	Landlord Type downward adjustment	No Landlord Type adjustment	Landlord Type upward adjustment
£35,000	£40,000	£28,000	£35,000	£42,000

Offence-specific mitigating factors:

- A single, isolated incident

Offence-specific aggravating factors:

- Concealment or evasion

7.44 Renters Rights Act 2025 breaches

Discrimination relating to children in the lettings process – section 33(1) of the Renters' Rights Act 2025				
Starting point	Statutory maximum civil penalty amount	Landlord Type downward adjustment	No Landlord Type adjustment	Landlord Type upward adjustment
£6,000	£7,000	£4,800	£6,000	£7,200

Offence-specific mitigating factors:

- None

Offence-specific aggravating factors:

- None

Discrimination relating to benefits in the lettings process – section 34(1) of the Renters' Rights Act 2025				
Starting point	Statutory maximum civil penalty amount	Landlord Type downward adjustment	No Landlord Type adjustment	Landlord Type upward adjustment
£6,000	£7,000	£4,800	£6,000	£7,200

Offence-specific mitigating factors:

- None

Offence-specific aggravating factors:

- None

Failure to specify proposed rent within a written advertisement or offer – section 56(2) of the Renters' Rights Act 2025				
Starting point	Statutory maximum civil penalty amount	Landlord Type downward adjustment	No Landlord Type adjustment	Landlord Type upward adjustment
£3,000	£7,000	£2,400	£3,000	£3,600

Offence-specific mitigating factors:

- None

Offence-specific aggravating factors:

- None

Inviting, encouraging or accepting any offer of rent greater than the stated rate – section 56(3) of the Renters' Rights Act 2025				
Starting point	Statutory maximum civil penalty amount	Landlord Type downward adjustment	No Landlord Type adjustment	Landlord Type upward adjustment
£4,000	£7,000	£3,200	£4,000	£4,800

Offence-specific mitigating factors:

- None

Offence-specific aggravating factors:

- None

7.45 The Electrical Safety Standards in the Private Rented Sector and Social Rented Sector (England) Regulations 2020 breach of duties

Failure to comply with The Electrical Safety Standards in the Private Rented Sector and Social Rented Sector (England) Regulations 2020 Regulation 3: (3)(b), (3)(d), (3)(e). Regulation 3D: (a), (b), (c), (f)				
Starting point	Statutory maximum civil penalty amount	Landlord Type downward adjustment	No Landlord Type adjustment	Landlord Type upward adjustment
£5,000	£40,000	£4,200	£5,000	£6,000

Offence-specific mitigating factors:

- The report or record evidences that the electrical installations were compliant at all points.

Offence-specific aggravating factors:

- The number or nature or severity of the issues observed on the report or record.

Failure to comply with The Electrical Safety Standards in the Private Rented Sector and Social Rented Sector (England) Regulations 2020 Regulation 3: (1)(a), (1)(b), (1)(c), (3)(a), (3)(c), (3)(ca), (5)(b), (5)(c). Regulation 3B: (1)(a), (1)(b), (1)(c). Regulation 3C: (1), (2)(a). Regulation 3D: (d), (e)				
Starting point	Statutory maximum civil penalty amount	Landlord Type downward adjustment	No Landlord Type adjustment	Landlord Type upward adjustment
£12,500	£40,000	£10,000	£12,500	£15,000

Offence-specific mitigating factors:

- The report or record evidencing that the electrical installations were compliant at all points.

Offence-specific aggravating factors:

- The number or nature or severity of the issues observed on the report or record.

Failure to comply with The Electrical Safety Standards in the Private Rented Sector and Social Rented Sector (England) Regulations 2020 Regulation 3: (4), (5a), (6). Regulation 3C: (2)(b), (4)				
Starting point	Statutory maximum civil penalty amount	Landlord Type downward adjustment	No Landlord Type adjustment	Landlord Type upward adjustment
£20,000	£40,000	£16,000	£20,000	£24,000

Offence-specific mitigating factors:

- None

Offence-specific aggravating factors:

- The number or nature or severity of the issues observed on the report or record.

7.46 Housing Act 2004 offences

Failure to comply with an Improvement Notice - section 30(1) of the Housing Act 2004				
Starting point	Statutory maximum civil penalty amount	Landlord Type downward adjustment	No Landlord Type adjustment	Landlord Type upward adjustment
£25,000	£40,000	£20,000	£25,000	£30,000

Offence-specific mitigating factors:

- The nature and extent of hazard(s) that are present once the deadline for compliance has passed.
- Whether the property is unoccupied once the deadline for compliance has passed.
- Access to the property was prevented by the actions or refusal of the occupant(s) and a landlord can evidence that they took steps to obtain access to the property for the purpose of carrying out the required works, but those steps fell short of establishing a reasonable excuse for non-compliance.

Offence-specific aggravating factors:

- The nature and extent of hazard(s) that are present once the deadline for compliance has passed.

Failure to comply with an overcrowding notice - section 139(7) of the Housing Act 2004				
Starting point	Statutory maximum civil penalty amount	Landlord Type downward adjustment	No Landlord Type adjustment	Landlord Type upward adjustment
£20,000	£40,000	£16,000	£20,000	£24,000

Offence-specific mitigating factors:

- None

Offence-specific aggravating factors:

- The level of overcrowding present

Failure to obtain a selective licence - section 95(1) of the Housing Act 2004				
Starting point	Statutory maximum civil penalty amount	Landlord Type downward adjustment	No Landlord Type adjustment	Landlord Type upward adjustment
£12,000	£40,000	£9,600	£12,000	£14,400

Offence-specific mitigating factors:

- None

Offence-specific aggravating factors:

- The landlord has knowledge or experience of licensing requirements.

Failure to obtain a HMO licence - section 72(2) of the Housing Act 2004				
Starting point	Statutory maximum civil penalty amount	Landlord Type downward adjustment	No Landlord Type adjustment	Landlord Type upward adjustment
£17,000	£40,000	£13,600	£17,000	£20,400

Offence-specific mitigating factors:

- None

Offence-specific aggravating factors:

- The landlord has knowledge or experience of licensing requirements.
- The condition of the unlicensed property.

Knowingly permitting over-occupation of an HMO - section 72(2) of the Housing Act 2004				
Starting point	Statutory maximum civil penalty amount	Landlord Type downward adjustment	No Landlord Type adjustment	Landlord Type upward adjustment
£20,000	£40,000	£16,000	£20,000	£24,000

Offence-specific mitigating factors:

- There are suitable amenity and space provisions in the HMO.

Offence-specific aggravating factors:

- The level of overcrowding present.

Failure to Comply with The Management of Houses in Multiple Occupation [England] Regulations 2006 and The Licensing and Management of Houses in Multiple Occupation (Additional Provisions) (England) Regulations 2007 – section 234(3) of the Housing Act 2004

7.47 The Management of Houses in Multiple Occupation (England) Regulations 2006 impose duties on the persons managing HMOs in respect of:

- Providing information to occupiers [Regulation 3]
- Taking safety measures, including fire safety measures [Regulation 4]
- Maintaining the water supply and drainage [Regulation 5]
- Supplying and maintaining gas and electricity, including having these services/appliances regularly inspected [Regulation 6]
- Maintaining common parts [Regulation 7]
- Maintaining living accommodation [Regulation 8]
- Providing sufficient waste disposal facilities [Regulation 9]

7.48 The Licensing and Management of Houses in Multiple Occupation (Additional Provisions) (England) Regulations 2007 impose duties on the persons managing HMOs as defined by Section 257 Housing Act 2004 in respect of:

- Providing information to occupiers [regulation 4]
- Taking safety measures, including fire safety measures [regulation 5]
- Maintaining the water supply and drainage [regulation 6]
- Supplying and maintaining gas and electricity, including having these services/appliances regularly inspected [regulation 7]
- Maintaining common parts [regulation 8]
- Maintaining living accommodation [regulation 9]
- Providing sufficient waste disposal facilities [regulation 10]

Where there are multiple breaches of a single Management Regulation at a single HMO, a single civil penalty will be imposed which will cover all the breaches of that Management Regulation.

Where multiple Management Regulations have been breached at a single HMO, a separate civil penalty will be imposed for each Management Regulation that has been breached.

Name of Management Regulation	Starting point	Statutory maximum civil penalty amount	Landlord Type downward adjustment	No Landlord Type adjustment	Landlord Type upward adjustment
Duty of manager to provide information to occupier	£3,000	£40,000	£2,400	£3,000	£3,600

Offence-specific mitigating factors:

- The nature and extent of offences within the specific regulation

Offence-specific aggravating factors:

- The nature and extent of offences within the specific regulation
- The landlord has refused to provide any outstanding contact information more than 48 hours after it has been requested by an occupant or on behalf of an occupant.

Name of Management Regulation	Starting point	Statutory maximum civil penalty amount	Landlord Type downward adjustment	No Landlord Type adjustment	Landlord Type upward adjustment
Duty of manager to take safety measures	£20,000	£40,000	£16,000	£20,000	£24,000

Offence-specific mitigating factors:

- The number, nature and extent of offences within the specific regulation

Offence-specific aggravating factors:

- The number, nature and extent of offences within the specific regulation

Name of Management Regulation	Starting point	Statutory maximum civil penalty amount	Landlord Type downward adjustment	No Landlord Type adjustment	Landlord Type upward adjustment
Duty of manager to maintain water supply and drainage	£10,000	£40,000	£8,000	£10,000	£12,000

Offence-specific mitigating factors:

- The number, nature and extent of offences within the specific regulation

Offence-specific aggravating factors:

- The number, nature and extent of offences within the specific regulation

Name of Management Regulation	Starting point	Statutory maximum civil penalty amount	Landlord Type downward adjustment	No Landlord Type adjustment	Landlord Type upward adjustment
Duty of manager to supply and maintain gas and electricity	£12,000	£40,000	£9,600	£12,000	£14,400

Offence-specific mitigating factors:

- The number, nature and extent of offences within the specific regulation

Offence-specific aggravating factors:

- The number, nature and extent of offences within the specific regulation

Name of Management Regulation	Starting point	Statutory maximum civil penalty amount	Landlord Type downward adjustment	No Landlord Type adjustment	Landlord Type upward adjustment
Duty of manager to maintain common parts, fixtures, fittings and appliances	£7,000	£40,000	£5,600	£7,000	£8,400

Offence-specific mitigating factors:

- The number, nature and extent of offences within the specific regulation

Offence-specific aggravating factors:

- The number, nature and extent of offences within the specific regulation

Name of Management Regulation	Starting point	Statutory maximum civil penalty amount	Landlord Type downward adjustment	No Landlord Type adjustment	Landlord Type upward adjustment
Duty of manager to maintain living accommodation	£7,000	£40,000	£5,600	£7,000	£8,400

Offence-specific mitigating factors:

- The number, nature and extent of offences within the specific regulation

Offence-specific aggravating factors:

- The number, nature and extent of offences within the specific regulation

Name of Management Regulation	Starting point	Statutory maximum civil penalty amount	Landlord Type downward adjustment	No Landlord Type adjustment	Landlord Type upward adjustment
Duty to provide waste disposal facilities	£7,000	£40,000	£5,600	£7,000	£8,400

Offence-specific mitigating factors:

- The nature and extent of offences within the specific regulation

Offence-specific aggravating factors:

- The nature and extent of offences within the specific regulation
- The lack of sufficient refuse and/or litter containers either inside and/or outside the property has been previously reported
- The refuse and/or litter that requires disposal includes hazardous materials

7.49 Breach of licence conditions – Section 72(3) Housing Act 2004

All granted HMO licences impose a set of conditions on the licence holder. It is important that the licence holder of a licensed property complies with all imposed conditions, but the Council recognises that a failure to comply with certain licence conditions is likely to have a much bigger impact on the safety and comfort of residents than others.

The starting levels for each different type of licence condition breach is set out below based on the seriousness of the offence. Where a licence condition could

be interpreted to fall within two different potential starting levels, the higher starting level will be chosen.

Where multiple licence conditions have been breached at a single property, a separate civil penalty will be imposed for each licence condition that has been breached.

Failure to comply with licence conditions related to:

- Signage or the provision of information for tenants
- Provision of written terms of occupancy for tenants
- Procedures regarding complaints
- Procedures regarding vetting of incoming tenants
- Compliance with deposit protection legislation
- The recording and provision of information regarding rent payments
- Procedures relating to rent collection
- The provision of information regarding occupancy of the property
- The provision of information regarding change of managers or licence holder details
- The provision of information related to changes in the property
- Requirements relating to the sale of the property
- Attending training courses
- Requirements to hold insurance
- The provision of insurance documentation
- The provision of or obtaining of suitable references
- The provision of keys and alarm codes
- Security provisions for access to the property
- The provision of suitable means for occupiers to regulate temperature
- Carrying out items on a schedule of works not otherwise mentioned in the HMO licence conditions section of this policy, relating to non-compliance with items on a schedule of works

Starting point	Statutory maximum civil penalty amount	Landlord Type downward adjustment	No Landlord Type adjustment	Landlord Type upward adjustment
£4,000	£40,000	£3,200	£4,000	£4,800

Offence-specific aggravating factors:

- The nature and extent of the licence condition breach

Offence-specific aggravating factors:

- The nature and extent of the licence condition breach

Failure to comply with licence conditions related to:

- Procedures and actions regarding Inspections
- Procedures regarding Repair issues
- Maintenance and use of common parts (including gardens, outbuildings and property exterior) and living areas
- Safeguarding occupiers and minimising disruption during works
- The provision of information regarding alterations and construction works
- Procedures regarding emergency issues
- Waste and waste receptacles, pests, minor repairs, alterations or decoration.
- Giving written notice prior to entry 21
- Allowing access for inspections
- Minimising risk of water contamination
- The compliance of furnishings or furniture with fire safety regulations
- Carrying out items on a schedule of works in relation to provision of mechanical extraction or electrical sockets

Starting point	Statutory maximum civil penalty amount	Landlord Type downward adjustment	No Landlord Type adjustment	Landlord Type upward adjustment
£7,000	£40,000	£5,600	£7,000	£8,400

Offence-specific mitigating factors:

- The nature and extent of the licence condition breach

Offence-specific aggravating factors:

- The nature and extent of the licence condition breach

Failure to comply with licence conditions related to:

- The provision of documentation regarding energy performance certificates, fire detection and prevention, emergency lighting, carbon monoxide detection, fire risk assessments, gas installations, electric installations and appliances
- Notification of legal proceedings, contraventions and other relevant information that may affect a fit and proper person status
- Procedures and actions regarding ASB Starting point Statutory maximum civil penalty amount
- Carrying out items on a schedule of works in relation to the provision of personal hygiene facilities, kitchen facilities or heating

Starting point	Statutory maximum civil penalty amount	Landlord Type downward adjustment	No Landlord Type adjustment	Landlord Type upward adjustment
£12,500	£40,000	£10,000	£12,500	£15,000

Offence-specific mitigating factors:

- The nature and extent of the licence condition breach

Offence-specific aggravating factors:

- The nature and extent of the licence condition breach

Failure to comply with licence conditions related to:

- Minimum floor areas
- Occupancy rates
- Occupancy of rooms or areas that are not to be used as sleeping accommodation
- Limits on number of households allowed to occupy the property or part of the property

Starting point	Statutory maximum civil penalty amount	Landlord Type downward adjustment	No Landlord Type adjustment	Landlord Type upward adjustment
£20,000	£40,000	£16,000	£20,000	£24,000

Offence-specific mitigating factors:

- The nature and extent of the licence condition breach

Offence-specific aggravating factors:

- The nature and extent of the licence condition breach

Failure to comply with licence conditions related to:

- The condition or existence of smoke alarms, carbon monoxide alarms, emergency lighting, gas installations, electric installations and appliances, fire detection or other fire safety features or requirements
- The provision and maintenance of safe means of escape, including requirements to keep escape routes and exits free from obstruction Starting point Statutory maximum civil penalty amount
- Carrying out items on a schedule of works in relation to fire safety or the provision of a Carbon Monoxide detector

Starting point	Statutory maximum civil penalty amount	Landlord Type downward adjustment	No Landlord Type adjustment	Landlord Type upward adjustment
£25,000	£40,000	£20,000	£25,000	£30,000

Offence-specific mitigating factors:

- The nature and extent of the licence condition breach

Offence-specific aggravating factors:

- The nature and extent of the licence condition breach

7.50 Breach of licence conditions – Section 95(2) Housing Act 2004

All granted selective licences impose a set of conditions on the licence holder. It is important that the licence holder of a licensed property complies with all imposed conditions, but the Council recognises that a failure to comply with certain licence conditions is likely to have a much bigger impact on the safety and comfort of residents than others.

The starting levels for each different type of licence condition breach is set out below based on the seriousness of the offence. Where a licence condition could be interpreted to fall within two different potential starting levels, the higher starting level will be chosen.

Where multiple licence conditions have been breached at a single property, a separate civil penalty will be imposed for each licence condition that has been breached.

Failure to comply with licence conditions related to:

- Signage or the provision of information for tenants
- Provision of written terms of occupancy for tenants
- Procedures regarding complaints
- Procedures regarding vetting of incoming tenants
- Compliance with deposit protection legislation
- The recording and provision of information regarding rent payments
- Procedures relating to rent collection
- The provision of information regarding occupancy of the property
- The provision of information regarding change of managers or licence holder details
- The provision of information related to changes in the property
- Requirements relating to the sale of the property
- Attending training courses
- Requirements to hold insurance
- The provision of insurance documentation
- The provision of keys and alarm codes
- Security provisions for access to the property
- The provision of suitable means for occupiers to regulate temperature
- Carrying out items on a schedule of works not otherwise mentioned in the selective licence conditions section of this policy, relating to non-compliance with items on a schedule of works

Starting point	Statutory maximum civil penalty amount	Landlord Type downward adjustment	No Landlord Type adjustment	Landlord Type upward adjustment
£3,000	£40,000	£2,400	£3,000	£3,600

Offence-specific mitigating factors:

- The nature and extent of the licence condition breach

Offence-specific aggravating factors:

- The nature and extent of the licence condition breach

Failure to comply with licence conditions related to:

- Procedures and actions regarding Inspections
- Procedures regarding Repair issues £3,000 £3,600
- Maintenance and use of common parts (including gardens, outbuildings and property exterior) and living areas
- Safeguarding occupiers and minimising disruption during works
- The provision of information regarding alterations and construction works,
- Procedures regarding emergency issues
- Waste and waste receptacles, pests, minor repairs, alterations or decoration.
- Giving written notice prior to entry
- Allowing access for inspections Starting point
- Minimising risk of water contamination

Starting point	Statutory maximum civil penalty amount	Landlord Type downward adjustment	No Landlord Type adjustment	Landlord Type upward adjustment
£5,250	£40,000	£4,200	£5,250	£6,300

Offence-specific mitigating factors:

- The nature and extent of the licence condition breach

Offence-specific aggravating factors:

- The nature and extent of the licence condition breach

Failure to comply with licence conditions related to:

- The provision of documentation regarding energy performance certificates, fire detection and prevention, emergency lighting, carbon monoxide detection, fire risk assessments, gas installations, electric installations and appliances
- Notification of legal proceedings, contraventions and other relevant information that may affect a fit and proper person status
- Procedures and actions regarding ASB
- Minimum floor areas
- Occupancy rates
- Occupancy of rooms that are not to be used as sleeping accommodation
- Limits on number of households allowed to occupy the property or part of the property

Starting point	Statutory maximum civil penalty amount	Landlord Type downward adjustment	No Landlord Type adjustment	Landlord Type upward adjustment
£9,375	£40,000	£7,500	£9,375	£11,250

Offence-specific mitigating factors:

- The nature and extent of the licence condition breach

Offence-specific aggravating factors:

- The nature and extent of the licence condition breach

Failure to comply with licence conditions related to:

- The condition or existence of smoke alarms, carbon monoxide alarms, emergency lighting, gas installations, electric installations and appliances, fire detection or other fire safety features or requirements
- The provision and maintenance of safe means of escape, including requirements to keep escape routes and exits free from obstruction

Starting point	Statutory maximum civil penalty amount	Landlord Type downward adjustment	No Landlord Type adjustment	Landlord Type upward adjustment
£15,000	£40,000	£12,000	£15,000	£18,000

Offence-specific mitigating factors:

- The nature and extent of the licence condition breach

Offence-specific aggravating factors:

- The nature and extent of the licence condition breach

Process for imposing a civil penalty and the right to make written Representations

Notice of intent

7.51 Before imposing a civil penalty on a landlord, the Council will give the landlord a notice of intent. The notice of intent will set out:

- The amount of the proposed civil penalty
- The reasons for proposing to impose the civil penalty
- Information about their right to make written representations

Right to make written representations

7.52 A landlord who is given a notice of intent may make written representations to the Council about the proposal to impose a civil penalty. Any representations must be made within a period of 28 days beginning with the day after the date on which the notice of intent was given.

Decision after the representations period

7.53 After the end of the period for representations the Council will:

- Decide whether to impose a civil penalty on the landlord; and,
- If it decides to impose a civil penalty, decide the amount of the penalty. This amount can be higher or lower than the amount stated in the notice of intent.

7.54 A landlord's rectification of the identified breach or offence during the representations period will rarely, of itself, lead the Council to conclude that the imposition of a civil penalty is inappropriate. However, compliance at that stage will usually be relevant to the assessment of mitigating factors that may reduce the level of any civil penalty imposed.

7.55 Similarly, an admission of liability will rarely, of itself, lead the Council to conclude that the imposition of a civil penalty is inappropriate. An admission of liability will, however, usually be relevant to the assessment of mitigating factors that may reduce the level of any civil penalty imposed.

Final notice

7.56 If, following the receipt of written representations and/or the expiry of the time period to make written representations, the Council decides to impose a civil penalty on the landlord, it will give the landlord a final notice imposing that penalty. The final notice will set out:

- The amount of the civil penalty

- The reasons for imposing the penalty
- Information about how to pay the penalty
- The period for payment of the penalty
- Information about rights of appeal
- The consequences of failure to comply with the notice

Discount for prompt payment

- 7.57 Where a civil penalty imposed by a final notice is paid in full within the period specified in that notice (normally 28 days beginning with the day after the final notice is given), the Council will apply a discount of 15% to the amount of the civil penalty.
- 7.58 The availability of the discount is conditional upon full payment being received within the specified period. The discount period will not be extended or suspended by the bringing of an appeal. A landlord who chooses to appeal may still benefit from the discount by paying the civil penalty in full within the specified period; however, where payment is not made within that period, the discount will not apply.

Illustrative example of the application of the discount

The landlord of an HMO property fails to obtain a licence. They only operate two HMO properties and there are no other relevant factors or aggravating features. The starting point for the offence under the Council's civil penalties matrix is £17,000.

Following the issue of a notice of intent proposing a civil penalty of £17,000, the landlord makes written representations. Having considered those representations, the Council determines to impose a civil penalty of £16,000, as set out in the final notice.

If the landlord pays the civil penalty in full within the payment period specified in the final notice, a 15% prompt payment discount is applied, resulting in a discounted payment of £13,600.

Appeals

- 7.59 A landlord who is given a final notice may appeal to the First-tier Tribunal (Property Chamber) against the decision to impose a civil penalty and/or the amount of the civil penalty. Any appeal must be made within 28 days beginning with the day after the date on which the final notice was given.
- 7.60 Where an appeal is brought, the final notice is suspended until the appeal is finally determined or withdrawn.

- 7.61 An appeal to the First-tier Tribunal is by way of a re-hearing of the Council's decision. In determining an appeal, the Tribunal may have regard to matters of which the Council was unaware at the time the decision to impose the civil penalty was made.
- 7.62 The Tribunal may dismiss an appeal if it is satisfied that the appeal is frivolous, vexatious, an abuse of process, or has no reasonable prospect of success.
- 7.63 The First-tier Tribunal may invite the parties to consider mediation or another form of alternative dispute resolution. The Council will not generally agree to mediation in relation to the level of a civil penalty, as civil penalties are determined by reference to this Policy to promote fair, consistent, and proportionate outcomes. Agreeing reductions outside the Policy framework would risk undermining consistency and the Council's enforcement objectives.

On determination of an appeal, the Tribunal may:

- Confirm the civil penalty
 - Vary the amount of the civil penalty (whether by increase or reduction)
 - Cancel the civil penalty Where the Tribunal varies a civil penalty by increasing its amount, it may do so only up to the applicable statutory maximum for the relevant breach or offence (£7,000 or £40,000, as applicable).
- 7.64 A party to the appeal may apply for permission to appeal the decision of the First-tier Tribunal to the Upper Tribunal (Lands Chamber).

8 Roles and responsibilities

- 8.1 All officers duly authorised to carry out enforcement activities will apply this policy when carrying out investigations and when determining the most appropriate course of action to address a breach(es) of law in regard to landlord and rented accommodation legislation.
- 8.2 The contact and application of the policy will be brought to the attention of all officers involved in the enforcement of laws relevant to the service and will be referenced when making enforcement decisions.
- 8.3 Lead / Principal Officers and Managers shall ensure that the policy is adhered to and shall report to their Head of Service any breach or variation from the policy.

9 Supporting policies, procedures and standards

9.1 This policy forms part of a framework of policies and documents that establish the processes and decision making involved in the delivery of services.

Included within the framework are the following

- Statement of Licensing Policy
- Civil penalties under the Tenant Fees Act 2019
- General Enforcement Policy for Public Protection, Neighbourhoods and Environmental Enforcement.

10 Monitoring and review

10.1 The Head of Service shall have responsibility for the formal review of the policy, the monitoring of its application and of the enforcement decisions made in line with the policy and will ensure the policy is applied in accordance with Council and Directorate delegated powers / scheme of delegation.

11 Evaluation

11.1 This policy will be reviewed and evaluated annually to ensure it remains applicable and appropriate to current laws, government guidance and other relevant legislative provisions

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1. Summary

- 1.1. This policy sets out how the Council's Public Protection, Neighbourhoods and Environmental Enforcement services use law and enforcement activities to protect the interests of residents, visitors and businesses in Middlesbrough, using a broad range of legislative powers, national standards, statutory and non-statutory guidance and established legal practice, which includes but not limited to:
- The Code for Crown Prosecutors
 - The Regulators' Code, introduced under the Legislative and Regulatory Reform Act 2006
 - The Regulatory Enforcement and Sanctions Act 2008
 - Human Rights Act 1998
 - Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000
 - Guidance issued by central government including by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, the Home Office, the Office for Product Safety and Standards, the Food Standards Agency, the Health and Safety Executive, the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, the Gambling Commission, and the Ministry of Justice.
- 1.2. Underlying this policy are the five principles of good regulation, as defined in Section 21 of the Legislative and Regulatory Reform Act 2006, which are:
- proportionality in the application of law and in securing compliance
 - accountability for the enforcement action taken
 - consistency of approach
 - transparency about how the Council operates and what those who are regulated can expect from the Council
 - targeting of enforcement action
- 1.3. When considering the most appropriate course of action to ensure compliance, we aim to follow the Macrory penalty principles, which state that enforcement and sanctions should:
- aim to change the behaviour of the offender
 - aim to eliminate any financial gain or benefit from non-compliance
 - be responsive and consider what is appropriate for the particular offender and regulatory issue, which can include punishment and the public stigma that should be associated with a criminal conviction
 - be proportionate to the nature of the offence and the harm caused
 - aim to restore the harm caused by regulatory non-compliance, where appropriate
 - aim to deter future non-compliance

- 1.4. This policy does not apply to enforcement decisions leading to the issuing of civil financial penalties under the provisions of Section 126 and Schedule 9 of the Housing and Planning Act 2016 and Section 249A of the Housing Act 2004. The use of civil financial penalties with regard to relevant offences under these Acts is subject to the Private Sector Housing Enforcement Policy, which stands on its own.

2. Context

- 2.1 This policy is designed to ensure that regulatory services with the Council are delivered in an impartial, open and consistent manner, achieved through education, mediation, advice, inspections and monitoring, and by regulating the activities of individuals and business as necessary. Compliance with legislative standards will be achieved through informal and formal action including written information and warnings, good conduct agreements, a range of enforcement notices and orders, fixed financial penalties and civil financial penalties and where necessary and appropriate the prosecution of offences.
- 2.2 The Council seeks to ensure compliance with the law by:
- Helping and encouraging businesses and individuals to understand their duties and responsibilities under relevant laws and standards by providing information, education, advice and guidance.
 - Responding proportionately and fairly to suspected contraventions or breaches of law.
 - Using service planning processes to ensure that resources and regulatory activities are appropriately targeted, based on risk and impact.
- 2.3 All officers whose duty it is to undertake regulatory functions must have regard to the principles of good enforcement set out in this policy.

3. Purpose

- 3.1 This policy sets out what can be expected of officers when carrying out their regulatory functions involving enforcement decisions.
- 3.2 The policy aims to ensure that enforcement activities are focused towards matters with the greatest risk to public health, safety, economic and environmental wellbeing of the community; to ensure that enforcement decisions are applied consistently, fairly and transparently; and, to help businesses and individuals understand our regulatory actions and to reduce the regulatory burden on businesses.

4. Definitions

- 4.1 The terms 'regulatory services' and 'regulatory or enforcement activities' refers to the whole range of regulatory options and interventions available to the Council.
- 4.2 The terms 'business or businesses' is used throughout this document to refer to businesses, organisations, individuals and other regulated entities.
- 4.3 A 'person' may be an individual, a company or other legal entity.

5. Scope

5.1 This policy applies to all persons who are authorised by the Council to deliver statutory duties and functions and non-statutory regulatory services and who determine and use the range of enforcement measures relevant to their role. This includes officers and other members of staff within the following service areas.

- Environmental Health
- Environmental Protection
- Trading Standards
- Private Sector Housing
- Selective Landlord Licensing
- Licensing
- Neighbourhoods
- Environmental Enforcement

5.2 This policy is a five-year policy and will be reviewed periodically and whenever there are significant changes in legislation and national guidance. Compliance with the policy will be monitored through service delivery processes.

6. Legislative and regulatory framework

6.1 Regulatory services incorporate a broad and substantial range of legislation including Acts of Parliament, Regulations and Orders. This includes laws on:

- the manufacturing, importation, marketing, sale and supply of food and other goods
- the health, safety and wellbeing of persons at work and those who may be affected by workplace activities
- the protection of the environment, including air, land and watercourses
- the prevention of nuisance
- the protection of public health
- the protection of tenants' rights
- the protection of lawful business and consumer interests
- the development and use of land
- the protection of buildings
- the licensing of regulated activities
- the prevention of anti-social behaviour
- the detection and prevention of crime

6.2 This policy supports the Council to meet its statutory obligations and to succeed on its ambitions for a successful and ambitious town, to ensure communities are safe and resilient, and to help residents live longer, healthier lives.

7. Policy Detail

7.1 It is the aim of this policy to

- ensure that enforcement activities are focused towards matters with the greatest risk to public health, safety, economic and environmental wellbeing of the community
- ensure that enforcement decisions are applied consistently, fairly and transparently
- help businesses and individuals understand our regulatory actions and to reduce the regulatory burden on businesses.

7.2 The Regulators Code, laid before Parliament in accordance with the Legislative and Regulatory Reform Act 2006, underpins the enforcement decisions made in line with this policy. The Council services to which this policy applies will:

1. Carry out enforcement activities in such a way that supports those we regulate to comply and grow.

- Businesses and residents are encouraged to proactively seek advice and support without fear of triggering enforcement action
- Where appropriate, we will consult businesses and residents on the guidance we provide on regulation to make sure it meets their needs.
- Where more than one regulator is involved, we will work collaboratively to make sure the advice we give is consistent, avoids duplication and over-burdening businesses
- We will avoid imposing unnecessary regulatory burdens and will consider whether similar outcomes could be achieved by less burdensome means.
- Our services will support economic growth for businesses that are complying with the law by:
 - understanding and minimising negative economic impacts of regulatory activities
 - minimising the costs for compliance for those we regulate
 - improving confidence in compliance for those we regulate
 - encouraging and promoting compliance.
- We will ensure our officers have the knowledge and skills needed to support businesses and apply fair, proportionate and effective measures.
- The performance and competency of our officers will be monitored through nationally recognised schemes in relation to their area of work, and/or through internal performance monitoring processes.

2. Provide simple and straightforward ways to engage with those we regulate.

- We will publish information on the services we provide and what businesses and the public should expect from us. The Council's compliments and complaints process will be brought to the attention of anyone who wishes to raise a concern regarding the service they have received.

- We will consider the impact on businesses of our policies, practices or delivery of service and seek feedback from those we regulate.
- Information, guidance and advice will be made available using a range of media including Middlesbrough Council's website and linked websites, leaflets, letters, social media and press information.
- Where an immediate enforcement action is needed to address non-compliance, or where providing an opportunity to respond to advice would likely defeat the purpose of enforcement action, we will, where appropriate, provide those subject to such action with information on the reasons for the action at the earliest opportunity after the action has been taken.
- Information on statutory appeals to enforcement action will be provided with enforcement forms, notices or other relevant documents and correspondence.
- Where there is no appeal process within the law, or the complaint relates to issues outside of the legal appeal process, e.g. an officer's conduct, the business or citizen will be directed to the Head of Service or the Corporate Complaint Process.

3. Base our regulatory activities on risk

Enforcement action will be proportionate to the risks and circumstances involved. Factors that will be taken into consideration include but are not limited to: -

- the risk non-compliance poses to the health, safety or welfare of the public, the economic impact on individuals and other businesses, and any adverse impact on the amenity or broader environment.
- pre-meditation, intent or reckless disregard in the commission of an offence.
- failure to comply with the requirements of a statutory notice or order.
- history of non-compliance and previous warnings for the same or similar offence(s) and the general record and approach of the offender including intent or attitude
- aggravated circumstances, such as obstruction or aggressive behaviour
- the offence is widespread in the area where it is committed or, has been identified as being a priority to local people or the subject of political direction.
- death or serious injury resulted from a breach of law
- the gravity of an offence taken together with the seriousness of actual or potential harm
- false or misleading information has been knowingly or recklessly provided, or there has been intent to deceive - including deliberate concealment of an unlawful activity
- the size and capacity of the business
- the extent of financial gain because of the breach

We aim to use national risk assessment frameworks by default. However, where the delivery of our regulatory services diverges from national frameworks, the reasons for this will be clearly explained.

4. Share information about compliance and risk

- Information gathering will follow a 'collect once, use many times' basis whenever possible.
- Secure mechanisms will be used to share information about businesses and individuals subject to regulation.
- The sharing of information with other regulators about businesses and individuals will follow data protection principles, and the sharing of information will seek to help target resources, to detect and prevent crime, remove or reduce risks to the public or businesses and to minimise duplication of enforcement actions.

5. Provide clear information, guidance and advice will be available to help those we regulate to meet their responsibilities to comply

- We will provide information and advice to businesses and individuals in a way that will enable them to clearly understand what the law requires. We will differentiate between legal requirements, recommendations, advice or good practice, to avoid unnecessary burdens on business.
- We will engage with businesses and individuals to seek their views on our policies and service standards in relation to our regulatory role.
- We will ensure that decisions are not influenced by the gender, disability, religion or political belief, language, ethnicity or sexual preferences of offenders, victims or witnesses.
- When dealing with juveniles or vulnerable individuals we will consider any current Codes of Practice or guidance to ensure that juveniles and vulnerable people are treated fairly.
- Where advice may be given by more than one regulator, or where our opinion may differ from another regulator, we will follow published guidance to resolve any issues and reach agreement.

6. Ensure that our approach to our regulatory activity is transparent

- We will take a clear and balanced approach to enforcement. We will take robust action against irresponsible businesses and individuals and any others considered to be responsible, but we will assist and minimise the regulatory burden on those who are conscientious and generally compliant.
- Enforcement action will always be undertaken by suitably qualified/experienced officers. We will ensure that our officers have the necessary skills and knowledge to support those they regulate and to choose proportionate and effective approaches.

- 7.3 Where evidence is found of a flagrant disregard for the law or deliberate or persistent failure to follow advice or comply with requests made by the Council, it may be deemed that informal action is not appropriate. Under these circumstances enforcement action may be escalated directly to prosecution or other lawful sanction.
- 7.4 Decisions to prosecute or issue financial penalties or charges, to take injunctive action, to seek revocation, review or suspension of a licence, to seek closure orders or restricted premises or sales orders, will be taken by senior managers and not by the officer directly involved in the investigation.
- 7.5 A Scheme of Delegation exists that identifies the posts that have authority to make enforcement decisions.

Enforcement Decisions

- 7.6 It is the Council's responsibility to take the most appropriate course of action to address breaches of law. When determining the action to take and the specific charges to apply, the Council will carefully consider the nature and seriousness of any alleged criminal conduct, the evidence gathered to prove a case beyond all reasonable doubt and whether enforcement action is in the public interest to pursue.
- 7.7 To prosecute, the Council must produce a case that enables the Court to have adequate sentencing powers and cases must be presented in a clear and straightforward manner.
- 7.8 Charges may be brought against directors or other employees of a company where their actions or omissions led to the commission of the offence or where it can be shown that the offence was committed with their consent or connivance or was due to their neglect. This decision will only apply where the relevant statutory provision enables it.
- 7.9 Where a director, employee or other person of a company is charged, there must be sufficient evidence of their involvement and culpability. A Court may impose a sentence against a company and a separate sentence against any individual found guilty through their involvement in the offence. This may include a fine, a custodial sentence and/or a community sentence, and may impose orders ancillary to the prosecution such as disqualification as a director, confiscation of assets under proceeds of crime, a criminal behaviour order, forfeiture of equipment or vehicles used to commit the offence, compensation orders and remediation orders.
- 7.10 Taking legal action, such as a prosecution, is usually a last resort. A range of options will be considered when determining the most appropriate course of action. The following summarises the action that may be taken in line with the wide range of legislation enforced by regulatory services. This list is not exhaustive; the action may not be undertaken by some service areas and there may be other more specific enforcement options available in legislation that are not described below but may still be used.

- *Advice and education*

Whenever it is possible and appropriate, officers will give advice, guidance and support so that legal requirements are communicated well to promote compliance and best practice.

- *Informal action*

Less serious breaches or contraventions of law will usually involve the provision of a letter,

notice or action plan, setting out a required course of action or providing advice, information or warning to prevent a further breach or contravention. A clear distinction between breaches or contraventions of law and recommendations, guidance and advice will be made.

- *Enforcement notices / orders*

Enforcement notices / orders may be issued for more serious matters or for repeated contraventions. There are numerous types of notice / order, including Community Protection, Compliance, Prohibition, Improvement and Remedial Action, Suspension, Withdrawal or Stop Notice. The notice / order will set out clearly the nature of the breach or contravention, any restriction imposed, or remedial action required, and any timescales in which action must be taken.

Failure to comply with certain notices or orders enables the Council to carry out works in default of compliance to address the breach and recover all reasonable costs incurred. All notices / orders will be approved, signed and served by appropriately authorised officers. Information about how and where to appeal against a notice / order or the recovery of costs will be included with the notice or other accompanying documentation.

- *Fixed penalty notices and financial penalties*

Some offences may be discharged by payment of a fixed penalty notice and some breaches of law may be subject to a financial penalty.

Fixed penalty notices give the offender an opportunity to avoid prosecution by paying a fine. It is not an offence to fail to pay a fixed penalty, but non-payment would, under normal circumstances, result in a prosecution for the original breaches.

A financial penalty can be issued for breaching certain laws and must be paid. Non-payment of a financial penalty would result in court proceedings to recover the debt. This may include a Warrant of Control, a Third-Party Debt Order, A Charging Order, bankruptcy or insolvency.

- *Revocation, review and suspension of licences*

The Council has the power to refuse, suspend, revoke, vary or review a range of licences, including licences for operating taxis, selling alcohol, houses in multiple occupation and selective landlord licensing, selling or storage fireworks, and animal related activities (eg pet shops and boarding kennels). Some of these powers rest with officers but in other cases the law demands that decisions are made by a committee or elected councillor(s).

For reviews or revocations, licence holders have the right to attend hearings and have a right to appeal against decisions.

Application for some licences may include a determination of the “fitness” of the applicant to engage in a particular area of business. In making this assessment we will consider several factors, including but not limited to any history of non-compliance, evidence of honesty and integrity, prior convictions and relevant warnings, and to any investigations or complaints received regarding their conduct.

- *Injunctive actions*

In certain instances, such as repeat offending, dangerous circumstances or significant consumer detriment, we can seek orders from the Civil Courts that apply a restriction or prohibition. In certain circumstances we will first seek agreement from the business / individual concerned to cease a particular action and sign a written undertaking to this effect.

If an injunction is granted and subsequently ignored by a business or individual concerned, this represents contempt of court that can carry a penalty of imprisonment.

- *Seizure of items*

In some instances, officers have the power to seize goods, equipment or documents. This may include equipment used to cause nuisance, counterfeit and/or unsafe goods, unsafe foodstuffs, products or materials with false or misleading claims, short-weight products or incorrect weighing or measuring instruments.

- *Forfeiture of items*

At the conclusion of an investigation items may need to be disposed of to prevent them re-entering the supply chain or being used to create further problems. Where this is needed, we will make an application to the Court to grant forfeiture, unless a voluntary agreement has been reached with the person who owns the items to surrender them.

- *Confiscation of assets*

We believe that people should not profit from their criminal behaviour. As a result, when people have been convicted of offences and it can be shown that they have profited financially, we may seek Confiscation Orders under the Proceeds of Crime Act 2002.

- *Closure orders*

Where the behaviour of an individual or business is shown to be anti-social, including links to criminality, we may seek a Court Order to close any premises (private dwelling or commercial unit) that is linked to the commission of an offence, anti-social behaviour or nuisance. Extensions to Closure Orders may be sought where there is a likelihood of the behaviour recurring, leading to further anti-social behaviour.

- *Restricted premises orders / restricted sales orders*

Where an individual or business is shown to make persistent sales of age restricted products, we may seek a restricted premises order or restricted sales order to prevent that individual / business from being able to sell such products.

- *Enforced sale*

Where a financial penalty has been issued, or where the Council has incurred costs in undertaking its enforcement functions and has levied a charge(s), the Council may seek to exercise a power of sale to recover moneys owned.

- *Works carried out in default of legal notices.*

Where legislation permits, the Council may carry out any works that are specified in an enforcement notice, where there has been a failure to comply with the requirements of the notice. Works in default will predominantly be carried out to protect the safety and wellbeing of persons affected and to protect environment and community interests.

- *Prosecution*

Prosecution is usually a last resort and is reserved for more serious offences or where there is disregard for law or a pattern of behaviour of repeated breaches of law. In determining whether to prosecute, the provisions of the Code for Crown Prosecutors are carefully considered. To instigate a prosecution there must be sufficient evidence of the offence and it must be in the public interest to pursue.

A prosecution will not be commenced or continued unless there is sufficient, admissible and reliable evidence that a criminal offence has been committed by an identifiable party and that there is a realistic prospect of conviction. The public interest must be considered in each case where there is enough evidence to provide a realistic prospect of conviction.

A decision to prosecute will be based on the following: -

- nature and severity of the offence
- foreseeability of the offence or the circumstances leading to it
- intent of the offender
- history of offending
- attitude of the offender
- deterrent effect of the prosecution on the offender and others
- personal circumstances of the offender

Prosecution will usually be considered the most appropriate course of action where:

- there has been a blatant disregard of the law
- there is a refusal to achieve minimum legal requirements
- the offence involves a risk to public health, safety or wellbeing, significant financial detriment to consumers, harm to the environment, an adverse effect on the trading environment including where an unacceptable business advantage is gained
- the offender has been given a reasonable opportunity to comply with a statutory requirement and has failed to do so
- the offence involves failure to comply with an enforcement order or notice
- evidence suggests that the offence was premeditated
- there is a history of similar offences
- an officer was intentionally obstructed or deceived in the course of their duties or attempts had been made to conceal the unlawful activity

In the case of a work-related death, where it is within the Council's health and safety enforcement remit and an investigation reveals that the death was a direct result of a breach of the legislation, this will normally lead to prosecution. However, there may be occasions where the public interest does not require a prosecution, depending on the nature of the breach and the surrounding circumstances of the death.

- *Criminal Behaviour Orders*

Upon conviction for any criminal offence under anti-social behaviour laws, we may seek a Criminal Behaviour Order prohibiting an offender from engaging in further criminal or anti-social behaviour specified in the Order.

8. Roles and responsibilities

- 8.1 All officers duly authorised to carry out enforcement activities will apply this policy when carrying out investigations and when determining the most appropriate course of action to address a breach(es) of law. The content and application of the policy will be brought to the attention of all officers involved in the enforcement of laws relevant to the service and will be referenced when making enforcement decisions.
- 8.2 Lead / Principal Officers and Managers shall ensure that the policy is adhered to and shall report to their Head of Service any breach or variation from the policy.

9. Supporting policies, procedures and standards

- 9.1 This policy forms part of a framework of policies and documents that establish the processes and decision making involved in the delivery of regulatory services.

Included within the framework are the following

- Statement of Licensing Policy (under the Licensing Act 2003) 2025-2030
- Statement of Gambling Policy 2026-2029
- Private Hire and Hackney Carriage Licensing Policy 2022
- Civil Penalties under the Renters' Rights Act 2025 and other housing legislation
- Civil Penalties under the Tenant Fees Act 2019
- Private Sector Housing Enforcement Policy

10. Monitoring and review

Heads of Service shall have responsibility for the formal review of the policy, the monitoring of its application and of the enforcement decisions made in line with the policy and will ensure the policy is applied in accordance with Council and Directorate delegated powers / scheme of delegation.

11. Evaluation

This policy will be reviewed and evaluated annually to ensure it remains applicable and appropriate to current laws, government guidance and other relevant legislative provisions

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1. Summary

- 1.1. This policy forms part of the Council's framework for the delivery of regulatory services that support the Council to satisfy its statutory duties and functions, which aim to protect public health, safety and welfare, prevent crime and anti-social behaviour, protect and enhance the environment, ensure fair and equitable trading practices, protect consumer interests and support the local economy.
- 1.2 This policy sets out the Council's principles for enforcing and executing its duties as a Housing Authority under relevant laws, including:-
- The Housing Act 2004, which imposes a duty on Councils to keep housing conditions in their district under review with a view to identifying any action that may need to be taken by them.
 - The Renters' Rights Act 2025, which imposes a duty on the Council to enforce the Landlord Legislation, comprised of the following:
 - Chapters 3 and 6 of Part 1 of the Renters' Rights Act 2025 (Discriminatory practices)
 - Part 2 of the Renters' Rights Act 2025 (Landlord Redress Schemes and Private Rented Sector Database)
 - Sections 1 and 1A of the Protection from Eviction Act 1977 (Unlawful Eviction and Harassment)
 - Chapter 1 of Part 1 of the Housing Act 1988. (Assured Tenancies)
 - Section 110 of the Renters' Rights Act 2025 imposes a duty on the Council to report to the Secretary of State on the exercise of its functions under the Landlord Legislation.

2. Context

- 2.1 This policy is designed to ensure that enforcement activities and actions under housing-related laws are conducted in an impartial, open and consistent manner.
- 2.2 The Council seeks to ensure compliance with housing-related laws by helping and encouraging landlords, agents and others to understand their duties and responsibilities under relevant housing laws by providing information, education, advice and guidance.
- 2.3 The Renters' Rights Act 2025 and the 'Landlord Legislation' (as defined by Section 107) sit outside of the Regulators' Code, and its provisions do not apply.

2.4 Part 1 of the Housing Act 2004 (housing conditions) is also outside of the scope of the Regulator's Code's. Notwithstanding this, the following legislation and its enforcement does come within the Legislative and Regulatory Reform (Regulatory Functions) Order 2007 and is therefore within the scope of the Regulators Code and the principles of good regulation:

- Parts 8, 9 and 10 of the Housing Act 1985 (incl. area improvement, slum clearance and overcrowding)
- Part 8 of the Housing Act 1996 (incl. offences by corporate bodies)
- Parts 2 to 5 of the Housing Act 2004 (incl. licensing of houses and management orders)

3. Purpose

- 3.1 This policy sets out what owners, landlords, their agents or any other person involved in the letting or management of privately rented accommodation, and tenants of private rented sector properties, can expect from officers when dealing with non-compliance.
- 3.2 All enforcement action will be taken in accordance with relevant statutory Codes of Practice, Council procedures and protocols and official government guidance.
- 3.3 This policy aims to ensure that enforcement activities are focused towards matters with the greatest risk to the health or safety of tenants in the private rented sector and to anyone who may be affected by the condition of rented dwellings; to ensure compliance with tenancy rights and protections; to ensure landlord duties and responsibilities are met, to ensure the marketing and letting of rented dwellings is compliant with expected standards; and, to ensure that enforcement decisions are applied consistently, fairly and transparently and ensure that the regulatory burden on landlords is reduced.

4. Definitions

- 4.1 The term 'landlord' should be read as including letting agents, managing agents, licensors, property owners, directors of corporate landlords and any other person involved in the letting or management of privately rented accommodation.
- 4.2 The term 'House of Multiple Occupation' (HMO) is defined by the Housing Act 2004
- 4.3 A 'person' may be an individual, a company or other legal entity.
- 4.4 The term 'landlord legislation' refers to duties under Chapters 3 and 6 of Part 1 of the Renters' Rights Act 2025, Part 2 of the Renters' Rights Act 2025, Sections 1 and 1A of the Protection from Eviction Act 1977, and Chapter 1 of Part 1 of the Housing Act 1988.

4.5 The term 'rented accommodation legislation' means sections 1 and 1A of the Protection from Eviction Act 1977; Chapter 1 of Part 1 of the Housing Act 1988; Parts 1 to 4 and 7 of the Housing Act 2004 so far as relating to qualifying residential premises within the meaning given by section 2B of that Act; section 83(1) or 84(1) of the Enterprise and Regulatory Reform Act 2013; sections 21 to 23 of the Housing and Planning Act 2016; and, Chapter 3 of Part 1 and Part 2 of the Renters Rights Act 2025.

5. Scope

5.1 This policy applies to all persons who are authorised by the Council to deliver statutory duties and functions relating to housing and landlord legislation.

5.2 This policy is a five-year policy and will be reviewed periodically and whenever there are significant changes in legislation and national guidance. Compliance with the policy will be monitored through service delivery processes.

6. Legislative and regulatory framework

6.1 The Council wants to support responsible landlords to raise housing standards and protect tenants' rights. However, the Council expects landlords to have a good understanding of the housing standards and management issues that should be met in privately rented accommodation.

6.2 This policy supports the Council to meet its statutory obligations and to succeed in its ambitions for a successful and ambitious town, to ensure communities are safe and resilient, and to help residents live longer, healthier lives.

7. Policy Detail

7.1 It is the aim of this policy to ensure that enforcement activities in relation to landlord and rented accommodation legislation are applied consistently and transparently.

7.2 Landlords, agents and others engaged in the private rented sector must understand their duties and responsibilities in respect of the marketing, rental and management of the properties they are responsible for, and they must understand the regulatory actions they may be subject to in order to enhance compliance and reduce the regulatory burden on them.

7.3 Section 5 of the Housing Act 2004 places a duty on Councils to take appropriate enforcement action where a 'Category 1' hazard exists.

7.4 Section 7 of the Housing Act 2004 gives Councils a discretionary duty to act where a Category 2 hazard exists. The Council will usually act where Category 2 hazards exist

where there are also Category 1 hazards. Enforcement action for Category 2 hazards will be determined by the nature and extent of the hazard and the overall standards within a rented dwelling, or where there is an evidenced lack of effective management of the property.

- 7.5 In addition, Council officers will often investigate and identify the need to take enforcement action through a range of routes, including (but not limited to): proactive inspections of dwellings through licensing provisions; in response to a complaint or request for assistance; and referrals from other public bodies. All investigations will be carried out in accordance with the relevant statutory requirements. The Council will ensure that appropriate governance is in place to ensure that action is taken in accordance with appropriate policies.
- 7.6 The Council may commence enforcement with formal action instead of informal action in the first instance. In deciding whether to do so, the circumstances of the case will be considered, and relevant factors may include but are not limited to:
- Where there is a risk to public health
 - Where there is a blatant or deliberate contravention of the law
 - Where there is history of non-compliance

The Council will usually take formal action in the first instance if there has been:

- Non-compliance with previous formal or informal action
- Offences in relation to the licensing of HMOs
- Offences in relation to the licensing of houses in a designated selective landlord licensing area.
- Any breach of the Landlord Legislation.

Investigatory powers

- 7.7 In addition to the Council's informal and formal powers of enforcement, there are investigatory powers relating to the collection of information and relating to the entry of premises including, but not limited to, the powers detailed below:
- 7.8 Section 114 of the Renters' Rights Act 2025 gives the Council power to issue a notice to a relevant person to require the person to provide specified information to the Council. This notice may be given to any person with an estate or interest in the land; the licensor; their agents; or a marketer of a property. It may be given in regard to any offence under the following Legislation:
- Sections 1 and 1A of the Protection from Eviction Act 1977;
 - Chapter 1 of Part 1 of the Housing Act 1988;
 - Section 83(1) or 84(1) of the Enterprise and Regulatory Reform Act 2013;

- Sections 21 to 23 of the Housing and Planning Act 2016;
- Chapter 3 of Part 1 and Part 2 of the Renters' Rights Act 2025.

Failure to comply with a section 114 notice is an offence under section 131 of the Renters' Rights Act 2025, as is being obstructive and intentionally or recklessly making false or misleading statements in response to a section 114 notice.

- 7.9 Section 115 of the Renters' Rights Act 2025 permits the Council when it reasonably suspects a breach of the 'Rented Accommodation Legislation' to issue a notice to any person requiring them to provide the information specified. This may only be done to investigate whether a breach has occurred under the Rented Accommodation Legislation, or to determine the amount of a penalty.
- 7.10 Where an individual has not complied with a section 115 notice, section 116 of the Renters' Rights Act 2025 enables the Council to make an application to the Court to enforce the provisions of the notice and seek reimbursement for the costs of the application.
- 7.11 Section 131 of the Renters' Rights Act 2025 provides that, in addition to the offence of non-compliance with a section 114 notice, it is an offence for an individual to obstruct a Council officer seeking to exercise their powers without reasonable excuse. It is also an offence to fail to give an officer any additional assistance or information which they reasonably require without reasonable excuse.
- 7.12 Section 235 of the Housing Act 2004 allows the Council to issue a notice to relevant individuals, including occupiers, directing them to provide specified documents under their control for the purpose of investigating whether an offence has been committed under Parts 1 to 4 of the Housing Act 2004 or exercising the Council's functions under Parts 1 to 4 of the Housing Act 2004.
- 7.13 Section 16 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 also permits the Council to issue a notice to an occupier, manager, or individual with an interest in the land to compel them to provide the Council with information on the nature of their interest and the names and addresses of current occupiers and of any others with an interest in the land.
- 7.14 Section 118 of the Renters' Rights Act 2025 permits Council officers to enter business premises of relevant people (including landlords, letting agents, and marketers) if it is necessary for the production or seizure of documents under sections 122 and 123 of the Renters' Rights Act 2025. This power will be exercised without a warrant.
- 7.15 Section 121 of the Renters' Rights Act 2025 allows a Council officer named in a warrant to enter premises used for a rental sector business which is not mainly accommodation if there are documents on the premises which the officer could require under section 122 or seize under section 123 of the Act. In addition, for this power to be exercised, one of the following conditions must be met:
- That access to the premises has been or is likely to be refused, and the Council has provided notice of their intention to apply for a warrant to the occupier;

- Those documents on the premises would likely be concealed or interfered with if notice of entry were to be given;
- That no occupier is present, and waiting for their return might defeat the purpose of the entry.

7.16 Following a section 118 or section 121 of the Renters' Rights Act 2025 entry, section 122 allows an officer at any reasonable time to require a relevant person on the premises to produce any documents relating to the business and to take copies of them. This may only be exercised to ascertain whether there has been a breach of the Rented Accommodation Legislation where an officer reasonably suspects there has been a breach or an offence; or to ascertain whether the documents may be required in evidence for proceedings regarding a breach or offence.

7.17 Following a section 118 or section 121 of the Renters' Rights Act 2025 entry, section 123 authorises Council officers to seize and detain documents that the officer reasonably suspects may be required as evidence in proceedings relating to a breach or an offence under the Rented Accommodation Legislation. When doing so, the officer will provide evidence of the officer's identity and authority if reasonably practicable. The officer will take reasonable steps to inform the person from whom documents have been seized that they have been seized and will provide that person with a written record of what has been taken.

7.18 Section 126 of the Renters' Rights Act 2025 permits the Council to enter residential premises used for a tenancy at a reasonable time if the officer considers it necessary as part of an investigation into potential offences specified in subsection 1(b). Where required, the Council will give at least 24 hours' notice of this to the occupier and individuals with an interest in the property as per subsection 1(c), detailing in writing why the entry is necessary and the suspected offences. Where there are occupiers found on the premises, the officer will provide evidence of the officer's identity and authority to at least one of the occupiers if reasonably practicable. In addition, section 239 of the Housing Act 2004 permits Council officers to enter, if necessary and at a reasonable time, a property in order to carry out a survey or examination. This may be done if any one of the following is met:

- to determine if any Part 1-4 enforcement functions should be exercised;
- the premises are part of an Improvement Notice or Prohibition Order;
- a management order is in force under Chapter 1 or 2 of Part 4 on the premises.

In certain circumstance the Council may obtain a warrant to enter, by force if necessary, under section 240 of the Housing Act 2004.

Informal action

7.19 Informal action taken by the Council may be written or verbal advice. Additionally, a visit may be made at the outset by Council Officers in cases where the initial complaint or contact indicates that an immediate investigation is warranted.

7.20 In cases where officers visit an address, whether this is a result of a landlord's failure to adequately resolve a highlighted issue or as part of an audit or other investigation, written

or verbal advice may be deemed sufficient should the inspection highlight only very minor deficiencies.

7.21 Where written advice is deemed appropriate by the Council and is provided, timescales will normally be included to undertake any specified work or actions.

7.22 While the Council will use its discretion on whether to carry out informal action for a Category 2 hazard, it does not need to provide written or verbal advice before commencing formal action.

Formal action

7.23 If formal action is considered appropriate, the following options are available to the Council.

Housing Act 2004 Part 1:

- Issue an Improvement Notice in respect of any Category 1 hazards and any Category 2 hazards on the property. This requires the person to whom it is served to undertake the remedial action specified on the Notice within a given timeframe. The mandated work and the timeframe will be determined by the Council depending on the nature and scale of the work.
- Issue a Prohibition Order in respect of any Category 1 hazards and any Category 2 hazards on the property. This prevents occupation of whole or part of the property, or can be used to limit occupant numbers, within a specified time frame.
- Issue a Hazard Awareness Notice in respect of any Category 1 hazards and any Category 2 hazards on the property. This makes the owner and occupiers aware of the hazards identified; however, it does not require remedial action. As a result, and because it does not secure risk-reducing works within a specified timeframe, a Hazard Awareness Notice will not usually be the most appropriate course of action where remedial works are necessary to reduce the risk of harm to occupiers or potential occupiers.
- Make an Emergency Prohibition Order. This immediately prohibits the use of all or part of a dwelling if there is an imminent risk of serious harm to the health or safety of the occupants or others.
- Where there is a Category 1 hazard present, Section 40 of the Housing Act 2004 allows the Council to undertake Emergency Remedial Action on the Category 1 hazard without prior notice.
- The Council also has the power to suspend action taken under Part 1 of the Housing Act 2004 in situations where it has the power or duty to take enforcement action through the service of an Improvement Notice or Prohibition Order. This will be at the Council's discretion and will normally be considered for the purpose of minimising inconvenience to the current occupiers.
- Demolition and Clearance are options for both Category 1 or Category 2 hazards.

- Section 30 of the Housing Act 2004 provides that failure to comply with an Improvement Notice is an offence, which will normally be followed by prosecution or the issuing of a civil penalty.
- Section 32 of the Housing Act 2004 provides that failure to comply with a Prohibition Order is an offence, which will normally be followed by prosecution.
- Other formal notices served by the Council may not relate to the landlord undertaking remedial works but may cover a range of other matters including, but not limited to, exercising a right of entry under section 239 of the Housing Act 2004 and a request to provide information or the need to abate or avoid overcrowding.

Work in default

7.24 The enforcement options for non-compliance with formal Notices or breach of licence conditions include the carrying out of works specified in the Notice. This power may be exercised in addition to other enforcement proceedings taken for non-compliance. The Council has no duty to undertake works in default and it will be at its discretion.

Emergency or suspended enforcement action

- 7.25 Where there is a Category 1 hazard present, section 43 of the Housing Act 2004 permits the Council to issue an Emergency Prohibition Order. This immediately prohibits the use of all or part of a dwelling if there is an imminent risk of serious harm to the health or safety of the occupants or others.
- 7.26 Section 40 of the Housing Act 2004 allows the Council to undertake Emergency Remedial Action on the Category 1 hazard without prior notice. The Council may then seek reimbursement of costs incurred.
- 7.27 The Council also has the power to suspend action taken under Part 1 of the Housing Act 2004 in situations where it has the power or duty to take enforcement action through the service of an Improvement Notice or Prohibition Order. This will be at the Council's discretion and will normally be considered for the purpose of minimising inconvenience to the current occupiers.

Licence conditions

- 7.28 Conditions can be added to licences to require work to meet specified standards or mandated requirements. In general, we will seek to identify, remove or reduce category 1 or category 2 hazards by exercising powers in Part 1 of the Housing Act 2004 and not by means of licence conditions. However, this does not prevent the Council from imposing licence conditions relating to the installation or maintenance of facilities or equipment even if the same result could be achieved by the exercise of Part 1 powers.
- 7.29 Failure to comply with licence conditions is an offence, which may result in prosecution or the issuing of a civil penalty.

Other Legislative alternatives

7.30 There may be other legislative alternatives available to remedy deficiencies that cause Category 2 hazards, which we may choose as a more appropriate enforcement approach.

Prosecution

7.31 Where a Civil Financial Penalty is an available alternative to prosecution, the Council will consider using its power to prosecute under Part 1 of the Housing Act 2004 in more serious cases. The General Enforcement Policy for Public Protection, Neighbourhoods and Environmental Enforcement shall take precedent when deciding if a criminal prosecution is being considered.

Civil Financial Penalties for specified offences

7.32 This section relates exclusively to Civil Financial Penalties issued by the Council for breaches of the housing law below.

- Unlawful eviction and harassment of an occupier as defined under the Protection from Eviction Act 1997
- Failure to comply with an Improvement Notice [section 30 of the Housing Act 2004]
- Offences in relation to licensing of Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) [section 72 of the Housing Act 2004]
- Offences in relation to the Selective Licensing of houses [section 95 of the Housing Act 2004]
- Failure to comply with an Overcrowding Notice [section 139 of the Housing Act 2004]
- Failure to comply with a management regulation in respect of an HMO [section 234 of the Housing Act 2004]
- Offences in relation to Regulation 3 of the Electrical Safety Standards in the Private Rented Sector (England) Regulations 2020
- Failure to comply with a banning order [section 21 of the Housing and Planning Act 2016]
- Failure to give a written statement of terms under section 16D of the Housing Act 1988
- Failure to give an existing tenant information about changes made by the Renters' Rights Act under paragraph 7(2) of schedule 6 to the Renters' Rights Act 2025
- Attempting to let a property for a fixed term under section 16E of the Housing Act 1988
- Attempting to end a tenancy orally or by service of a notice to quit under section 16E of the Housing Act 1988
- Serving an eviction notice that attempts to end a tenancy outside the prescribed section 8 process under section 16E of the Housing Act 1988
- Relying on a ground where the person does not reasonably believe that the landlord is/will be able to obtain possession under section 16E of the Housing Act 1988

- Relying on a ground knowing the landlord would not be able to obtain possession or being reckless as to whether they would under section 16J of the Housing Act 1988
- Failing to provide a tenant with prior notice that a ground which requires it may be used under section 16E of the Housing Act 1988
- Reletting or remarketing a property before expiry of the 12 month no-let period after using the moving and selling grounds under sections 16E and 16J of the Housing Act 1988
- Discriminating against prospective tenants during the letting process on the grounds that those tenants are in receipt of benefits or have children under sections 33 and 34 of the Renters' Rights Act 2025
- Marketing a letting without stating the proposed rent under section 56 of the Renters' Rights Act 2025
- Inviting or encouraging any person to offer to pay an amount of rent under the proposed letting that exceeds the stated rent under section 56 of the Renters' Rights Act 2025
- Accepting an offer from any person to pay an amount of rent under the proposed letting that exceeds the stated rent under section 56 of the Renters' Rights Act 2025

Rent Repayment Orders

- 7.33 Part 2 of the Housing and Planning Act 2016 permits the Council to seek a Rent Repayment Order at the First Tier Tribunal: Property Chamber, to require the landlord of the property where the offence(s) has been committed to refund rent to the tenants or the Council. Section 48 of the Housing and Planning Act 2016 places a duty on the Council to consider applying for Rent Repayment Orders.
- 7.34 Where a landlord has been convicted or received a Civil Financial Penalty in respect of the offence, the Tribunal must award the maximum applicable amount, except in exceptional circumstances.
- 7.35 This power will be considered in response to all qualifying offences and where there is sufficient evidence for a successful application to the First Tier Tribunal. The qualifying offences are:
- Unlawful eviction and harassment of occupiers as defined under the Protection from Eviction Act 1997
 - Failure to comply with an Improvement Notice [section 30 of the Housing Act 2004]
 - Offences in relation to unlicensed HMOs [section 72(1) of the Housing Act 2004]
 - Offences in relation to unlicensed houses [section 95(1) of the Housing Act 2004]
 - Failure to comply with an Improvement Notice [section 30(1) of the Housing Act 2004]
 - Failure to comply with a Prohibition Order [section 32(1) of the Housing Act 2004]
 - Breach of a Banning Order [section 21 of the Housing and Planning Act 2016]
 - Using Violence to secure entry [section 6(1) of the Criminal Law Act 1977]

- Knowingly or recklessly misusing a possession ground [section 16J(1) of the Housing Act 1988]
- Letting or marketing of a property within twelve months of using the 'moving in' or 'selling' ground of eviction [section 16J(2) of the Housing Act 1988]
- Continuous breach of certain tenancy reform requirements [section 16J(3) of the Housing Act 1988]

7.36 An application for a Rent Repayment Order may be in addition to other formal action, such as prosecution proceedings or the imposition of a Civil Penalty. Where the Council has issued a Civil Financial Penalty or pursued prosecution, it will usually apply for a Rent Repayment Order where public funds have been paid to a landlord who has committed a qualifying offence.

Banning Orders

7.37 Part 2, Chapter 2 of the Housing and Planning Act 2016 permits the Council to apply for a Banning Order against a person who has been convicted of one or more of the relevant offences. This would prevent the landlord from:

- Letting housing in England;
- Engaging in English letting agency work;
- Engaging in English property management work; or
- Doing two or more of those things.

7.38 The Council may consider a Banning Order for the more serious offenders. It will take into account the seriousness of the offence(s), whether the landlord has committed other offences (or received any Civil Penalty in relation to a Banning Order offence) and any history of failing to comply with their obligations or legal responsibilities. It will also take into account other relevant factors, including but not limited to:

- The harm, or potential harm, caused to the tenant;
- The need to punish the offender;
- The need to deter the offender from repeating the offence;
- The need to deter others from committing similar offences.

Costs and Charges

7.39 The Council incurs costs in carrying out its functions. Where legislation allows, the Council will seek to recover reasonable costs and expenses associated with its enforcement, licensing and wider regulatory activity. This may include (non-exhaustively) costs arising from inspections, investigation, evidence gathering, notices and other statutory documentation, follow-up action, compliance monitoring, and works or other interventions.

7.40 Recovery may be pursued using all available lawful routes, which may include civil action, local land charges, and enforcement against the property. Where permitted, interest may be applied to outstanding sums until paid.

8 Roles and responsibilities

- 8.1 All officers duly authorised to carry out enforcement activities will apply this policy when carrying out investigations and when determining the most appropriate course of action to address a breach(es) of law in regard to landlord and rented accommodation legislation.
- 8.2 The contact and application of the policy will be brought to the attention of all officers involved in the enforcement of laws relevant to the service and will be referenced when making enforcement decisions.
- 8.3 Lead / Principal Officers and Managers shall ensure that the policy is adhered to and shall report to their Head of Service any breach or variation from the policy.

9 Supporting policies, procedures and standards

- 9.1 This policy forms part of a framework of policies and documents that establish the processes and decision making involved in the delivery of regulatory services.

Included within the framework are the following

- Statement of Licensing Policy
- Civil penalties under the Renters' Rights Act 2025 and other housing legislation
- Civil penalties under the Tenant Fees Act 2019
- General Enforcement Policy for Public Protection, Neighbourhoods and Environmental Enforcement 2026-2031

10 Monitoring and review

The Head of Service shall have responsibility for the formal review of the policy, the monitoring of its application and of the enforcement decisions made in line with the policy and will ensure the policy is applied in accordance with Council and Directorate delegated powers / scheme of delegation.

11 Evaluation

This policy will be reviewed and evaluated annually to ensure it remains applicable and appropriate to current laws, government guidance and other relevant legislative provisions

Appendix 1 – Statement of principles to determine the amount of a penalty charge under Part 4 of The Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarm (England) Regulations 2015 as amended by The Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarm (Amendment) Regulations 2022 (“the Regulations”)

Section 13 of the Regulations requires local housing authorities to prepare and publish a statement of principles which they propose to follow in determining the amount of a penalty charge.

The Regulations introduced legal requirements on relevant landlords to:

1. Equip a smoke alarm on each storey of the premises on which there is a room used wholly or partly as living accommodation.
2. During any period when the premises were occupied under the tenancy, to ensure that a carbon monoxide alarm is equipped in any room of the premises which is used wholly or partly as living accommodation, and which contains fixed combustion appliance other than a gas cooker.
3. Carry out checks by or on behalf of the landlord to ensure that each prescribed alarm is in proper working order on the day the tenancy begins if it is a new tenancy.
4. Where, following a report made on or after 1st October 2022 by a tenant or by their nominated representative to the landlord, a prescribed alarm is found not to be in proper working order, the alarm is repaired or replaced.

For the purposes of the legislation, living accommodation includes a bathroom or lavatory.

Where the Council believe that a landlord is in breach of one or more of the above duties, the Council must serve a remedial notice on the landlord. The remedial notice is a notice served under Regulation 5 of the Regulations.

If the landlord then fails to take the remedial action specified in the notice within the specified timescale, the Council can require a landlord to pay a penalty charge and can arrange for remedial action to be taken under certain circumstances. The power to charge a penalty arises from Regulation 8 of the Regulations. Failure to comply with each remedial notice can lead to a fine of up to £5,000. Fines will be applied per breach, rather than per landlord or property.

The Council will impose a penalty charge where it is satisfied, on the balance of probabilities, that the landlord has not complied with the action specified in the remedial notice within the required timescale.

A landlord will not be considered to be in breach of their duty to comply with the remedial notice if they can demonstrate they have taken all reasonable steps to comply. Where there is evidence, including written correspondence, of repeated and consistent efforts to obtain access to the property, with access repeatedly being prevented by the occupant(s) of the property, a landlord will not be considered to be in breach of their duty to comply with the remedial notice. A landlord will be expected to have:

- Communicated the risk of harm that the lack of functioning alarms posed to all occupants in writing on multiple occasions
- Requested access to comply with the remedial notice on a regular basis of no longer than every seven days in writing

In considering the imposition of a penalty, the Council may look at the evidence concerning the breach of the requirement of the notice. A non-exhaustive list of methods that may be used to obtain relevant evidence includes, but is not limited to:

- Evidence obtained from a property inspection
- Evidence provided by the tenant or agent
- Evidence provided by the landlord demonstrating compliance with the Regulations by supplying dated photographs of alarms, together with installation records
- That all detector heads have not passed their expiration or replacement date

Landlords need to take steps to demonstrate that they have met the testing requirements at the start of the tenancy requirements. A non-exhaustive list of methods that may be used to evidence compliance with these testing requirements includes, but is not limited to:

- Tenants signing an inventory form which states that they observed the alarms being tested and confirming that the alarms were in working order at the start of the tenancy

Where a landlord is in breach, the local housing authority may serve a remedial notice. Failure to comply with each remedial notice can lead to a fine of up to £5,000. Fines will be applied per breach, rather than per landlord or property

When determining the amount of the penalty charge, regard will be had to whether this is a first breach under the Regulations.

Determining the amount of the penalty charge for a first breach

The minimum amount of a penalty charge for a first breach of the Regulations will be £2500. Only in exceptional circumstances may the Council depart from the application of this statement of principles and issue a penalty charge for less than £2500.

Exceptional circumstances are rare and unusual and are not established merely by the presence of multiple mitigating factors

The starting level of a penalty charge for a first breach of the Regulations will be £3000. The penalty charge amount will then be varied depending on aggravating and mitigating factors.

Aggravating factors include, but are not limited to:

- The number of alarms not working or missing (the Regulations state there should be one per storey)
- Other fire safety concerns/defects in the property which increase the risk posed to the occupants
- The length of time the offence is believed to have been on-going
- The frequency of complaints by the occupiers to the landlord about the non-working or missing alarms
- The costs of any remedial work the Council have carried out in response to the breach
- Whether the property is let as a HMO (which increases the overall risk)
- The number of occupants living in the property
- Presence of vulnerable occupiers such as elderly, children or disabled people
- Any history of previous enforcement or non-compliance of the landlord
- Attempts to obstruct the investigation

Mitigating factors include, but are not limited to:

- The property being small and low-risk (for example a one-bedroom ground floor flat with a large number of fire escapes including large windows)
- A single occupant living in the property
- Evidence that all required alarms were checked and in working order at the start of the tenancy
- Written evidence that some efforts to gain access and comply with the remedial notice were made and access was prevented by the occupant

Determining the amount of the penalty charge for a subsequent breach

The penalty for subsequent breaches by the same landlord will be £5000. Only in exceptional circumstances may the Council depart from the application of this statement of principles and issue a penalty charge for less than £5000. Exceptional circumstances are rare and unusual and are not established merely by the presence of multiple mitigating factors.

Appendix 2: Statement of principles to determine the amount of a penalty charge for a breach of minimum energy efficiency standards (MEES) with respect to domestic privately rented property

The Energy Efficiency (Private Rented Property) (England and Wales) Regulations 2015 (“the Regulations”) make it unlawful to rent out a domestic property if it has an EPC (Energy Performance Certificate) rating of F or G (unless a valid exemption has been registered on the PRS Exemptions register).

The Regulations make it unlawful to fail to comply with a compliance notice served by the Council.

The Regulations cover all relevant properties, even where there has been no change of tenancy.

The Regulations were introduced to improve the energy efficiency of housing in the private rented sector and to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and tackle climate change. They should help make tenants’ homes more thermally efficient.

An energy performance certificate (EPC) gives the property an energy efficiency rating – A rated properties are the most energy efficient and G rated are the least efficient. It’s valid for 10 years and must be provided by the owner of a property, when it is rented or sold.

If you are a landlord and you fail, when requested, to provide an EPC for the start of a tenancy, you will be in breach of the Regulations.

An EPC contains information about the type of heating system and typical energy costs. It also gives recommendations about how the energy use could be reduced, lowering running costs. You can find the recommended energy efficiency improvements on the current EPC.

If you’re a private landlord, you must either:

- ensure your rented properties have an EPC with a minimum ‘E’ rating
- register a valid PRS exemption on the PRS exemptions register

Failure to do either of these is a breach of the Regulations.

The Council investigates any potential breaches of the regulations. If the Council is satisfied that you are or have at any time in the 18 months preceding the date of service of the penalty notice, breached the Regulations, you may be subject to a penalty notice imposing a financial penalty. The Council may also impose a publication penalty.

The “publication penalty” means publication, for a minimum period of 12 months, or such longer period as the Council may decide, on the PRS Exemptions Register of such of the following information in relation to a penalty notice as the Council decides:

- Where the landlord is not an individual, the landlord’s name
- Details of the breach of these Regulations in respect of which the penalty notice has been issued

- The address of the property in relation to which the breach has occurred, and
- The amount of any financial penalty imposed.

The Council will impose the following financial penalties:

- (a) letting a property with an F or G rating for less than 3 months: £2,000
- (b) letting a property with an F or G rating for more than 3 months: £4,000
- (c) registering false or misleading information on the PRS exemptions register:
£1,000
- (d) failing to provide information to the Council demanded by a compliance notice:
£2,000

The Council may not impose a financial penalty under both subsections (a) and (b) above in relation to the same breach of the Regulations. But they may impose a financial penalty under either paragraph (a) or paragraph (b), together with financial penalties under paragraphs (c) and (d), in relation to the same breach. Where penalties are imposed under more than one of these paragraphs, the total amount of the financial penalty may not be more than £5,000.

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MIDDLESBROUGH COUNCIL	
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Report of:	Director of Public Health South Tees, Mark Adams
Relevant Executive Member:	Executive Member for Public Health, Cllr Jan Ryles
Submitted to:	Executive
Date:	6 May 2026
Title:	Director of Public Health Annual Report 2026
Report for:	Information
Status:	Public
Council Plan priority:	A healthy place
Key decision:	No
Why:	Report is for information only
Subject to call in?	Not Applicable
Why:	Not Applicable
Proposed decision(s)	
N/A – Information only	

Executive summary	
<p>The Director of Public Health Annual Report explains how we work together to improve the health and wellbeing of our communities.</p> <p>The 2026 report focuses on preventing ill health across South Tees. Many people here live shorter and less healthy lives, often because of conditions that could have been prevented. The report explains why prevention matters. It helps people stay well, reduces pressure on local services, and supports efforts to reduce long standing inequalities.</p> <p>The report also describes the four levels of prevention and the need to act early. It shows how wider factors (such as good housing, education, income, jobs, and safe, well-designed places) shape people’s health.</p> <p>Prevention works best when organisations work together. The NHS, local councils, charities, voluntary groups, and local communities all play an important part.</p>	

South Tees still faces major health challenges. The area has high levels of deprivation and lower life expectancy than the national average. There are big differences in health between neighbourhoods. Many residents spend years in poor health due to smoking, obesity, alcohol harm, and lack of physical activity. Case studies in the report show how local programmes (such as reducing smoking in pregnancy, community immunisation work, and Eat Well South Tees) are helping to improve health.

The report reinforces that prevention is a collective responsibility. It shares examples from the NHS, including cancer screening and heart health checks. It also highlights prevention work in Adult Social Care, such as early help and intermediate care. Other key factors include transport, planning, green spaces, and support for children in their early years. Community involvement is vital. For example, community blood pressure checks help reach people who may not use traditional services.

The report also explains the role of the Health Determinants Research Collaboration (HDRC), which strengthens local evidence and helps guide future decisions.

The report ends with recommendations for improving prevention across the whole system. A key recommendation is to work together to design a South Tees prevention framework. This will support joint action and help all residents to Start Well, Live Well and Age Well.

- 1. Purpose of this report and its contribution to the achievement of the Council Plan ambitions**
- 1.1 Set out the Director of Public Health's (DPH) strategic focus on Ill Health Prevention, explaining why prevention is essential for improving population health, reducing inequalities, and supporting the long-term sustainability of essential services.
- 1.2 Provide senior leaders and elected members with an overview of the key prevention challenges and opportunities across South Tees, highlighting where coordinated action is needed.
- 1.3 Strengthen collective responsibility for prevention across the Council, ensuring that preventative approaches are embedded within strategic planning and operations, including through honouring existing service level agreements (SLAs).
- 1.4 Promote consistent, system wide collaboration with partners, supporting a shared approach to improving outcomes.
- 1.5 The below table sets out how the report and recommendations will support delivery of Council ambitions in alignment with the corporate plan.

Our ambitions	Summary of how this report will support delivery of these ambitions and the underpinning aims
A successful and ambitious town	The report and recommendations look to enable a healthier, more productive population – enabling better participation in education, work and community life.
A healthy Place	The report and recommendations directly address health inequalities, promoting early intervention and prevention and encourages healthier environments, improving access to services and reducing poverty by supporting residents to stay healthy, active and able to work and study.
Safe and resilient communities	Prioritising prevention can help residents remain healthier and independent for longer, reduces crisis demand and supports stronger community resilience.
Delivering best value	Prioritising prevention reduces future costs to essential services and the wider health and social care system.

2. Recommendations

2.1 That Executive:

- i. NOTE the Director of Public Health Annual Report 2026 (as the report is information only).
- ii. NOTE the Council’s shared responsibility in preventing ill health. It depends on joint working across the Council and with our partners. This includes the service level agreements (SLAs) between Public Health and Directorates to promote and support working together effectively.

2.2 Building on this approach, the Report has a series of recommendations each with an ill-health prevention focus. These aim to enhance the work we are already doing and support an ambitious strategic direction going forward. These recommendations will be monitored and reviewed over the next year, incorporated into relevant programme actions plans, and progressed as collaborative commitments with key partners.

2.3 The recommendations of the Director of Public Health Annual Report are as below:

Topic	Recommendation
Smoking	1. To achieve the 5% smoking prevalence ambition by 2030, continued investment in the South Tees system wide smoking cessation infrastructure is essential. Strengthening and sustaining our partnership pathways will be critical to ensuring effective identification and targeted support for priority groups across our communities.

Topic	Recommendation
Alcohol	2. To improve the early identification of harmful drinking and develop a targeted prevention and harm-reduction campaign for South Tees.
Physical Activity	3. To embed and broaden physical activity offers in care homes and schools, whilst sustaining the collaborative, system-wide physical activity principles established through the You've Got This programme.
Obesity	4. Embed the Healthy Weight Declaration into core South Tees policy and governance so that creating healthier environments becomes a shared, system wide responsibility across all departments and partners.
Health and Social Care	<p>5. Strengthen joint working between Public Health and Adult Social Care by improving connections across teams and sharing public health intelligence to support joint approaches for identifying emerging needs.</p> <p>6. Embed a population health, prevention, and health equity lens across clinical pathways with the aim of reducing health inequalities in access, experience, and outcomes.</p> <p>7. Poverty proofing our public services by ensuring that services are fully accessible and responsive to the needs of low-income households.</p>
Wider Determinants	<p>8. Strengthen a 'Health in All Policies' approach across the council by identifying priority policies for review, and work with wider stakeholders to embed preventative and inequalities focused approaches into work programmes and plans, aligning with the Marmot principles and our socio-economic duties.</p> <p>9. Lived experience – working with our communities and building on existing insights to understand poverty in South Tees, and to design and co deliver interventions that ensure policies are effective and meaningful.</p>
Communities	10. Build community capacity for prevention and embed prevention approaches within key communities to address health inequalities.
System Wide	11. In our role as anchor organisations, we will work to address the drivers of poverty within South Tees by targeting employment opportunities towards residents in our most deprived wards and ensuring the delivery of social value across all our contracts.

Topic	Recommendation
	12. Develop and implement a Prevention Framework for South Tees to support system partners to embed prevention within their organisations and services, through a shared understanding of prevention, an agreed set of principles, and the use of evidenced based tools.
HDRC	13. Partners to pledge to progress and support prevention focused research to improve outcomes for residents in South Tees.

3. Rationale for the recommended decision(s)

- 3.1 The report provides insight into local health needs and current work programmes, noting its contents ensures Executive is informed of the key issues and priorities for preventing ill health.
- 3.2 Endorsing the recommendations strengthens our shared, system-wide commitment to preventing ill health, supporting co-ordinated action across Public Health, the wider Council and with partners to improve outcomes for residents.

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

- 4.1 No alternative options have been considered as the Annual Report is a statutory requirement and is for information only. It is not subject to amendment or approval.

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

Topic	Impact
Financial (including Social Value)	There are no specific financial consequences arising from this report.
Procurement	There are no specific consequences arising from this report.
Legal	The Director of Public Health Annual Report is a professional and statutory requirement. It gives an independent and factual assessment of the health of the local population, based on recognised public health evidence. The report fulfils this duty and there are no legal implications, and no further legal considerations are required.
Risk	There is a risk that if we do not act on these recommendations, we would limit our ability to reduce preventable ill health, slow progress in tackling health inequalities and miss opportunities to reduce pressure/
Human Rights, Public Sector Equality Duty	There are no specific consequences arising from this report. An equality impact assessment will be completed for the recommendations and the implementation of these.

and Community Cohesion	
Reducing Poverty	The report and the subsequent recommendations aim to support reduction of poverty by targeting the underlying factors that link poor health with financial hardship – i.e. strengthening early intervention and making services more accessible to low-income households. This approach supports people to stay healthier for longer, reduces avoidable health-related costs and improves opportunities to help break the cycle between ill health and poverty.
Climate Change / Environmental	There are no specific consequences arising from this report.
Children and Young People Cared for by the Authority and Care Leavers	There are no specific consequences arising from this report.
Data Protection	There are no specific consequences arising from this report.

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

Action	Responsible Officer	Deadline
Endorse and support the recommendations, including ongoing joint working, delivery of SLAs, and incorporate actions into relevant programme plans.	Executive	April 2027

Appendices

1	Director of Public Health Annual Report 2026
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Background papers

Body	Report title	Date
None	N/A	N/A

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DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC HEALTH ANNUAL REPORT

2026

A PUBLIC HEALTH APPROACH TO PREVENTION

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC HEALTH ANNUAL REPORT 2026: A PUBLIC HEALTH APPROACH TO PREVENTION

INTRODUCTION

This year's Director of Public Health Annual Report highlights the progress around preventing ill health prevention and the need to continue to strengthen prevention approaches across South Tees. Many residents continue to live shorter and less healthy lives than they should, often due to conditions that are preventable.

WHY FOCUS ON PREVENTION?

Prevention is essential for improving population health, reducing pressure on health and care services, and tackling long standing inequalities. Prevention is everyone's business, and examples throughout the report show how partners across the system are contributing to this shared ambition.

This report outlines the four levels of prevention: primordial, primary, secondary and tertiary. There is good evidence for investing earlier in the life course. Prevention requires tackling and improving the conditions that shape health (including housing, education, income, employment), and the design of our environment. The report highlights the importance of system wide collaboration across the NHS, local authorities, businesses, the voluntary sector, and communities.

HEALTH IN SOUTH TEES

South Tees is home to around 295,000 residents, with some of the highest levels of deprivation nationally and significant gaps in health outcomes between communities. Life expectancy is well below the England average, with gaps of up to 16 years for men and 13 years for women across neighbourhoods. Many people spend 20–25 years in poor health, influenced by smoking, obesity, alcohol harm, physical inactivity, and wider social and economic conditions. Middlesbrough has one of the highest preventable mortality rates in the country, underscoring the need for sustained focus on early intervention and prevention.



WHAT INFLUENCES HEALTH?

Mental health and wellbeing are fundamental to overall health and are strongly shaped by the social and economic conditions in which we live. These factors include where we live, the quality of our housing, our family and friends, education and skills, access to services, good jobs, nutritious food and whether we have enough money to meet our needs. Together these are the building blocks of health.

The report sets out four key health behaviours that drive poor health in South Tees, which have been identified by the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA). These are smoking, obesity, alcohol misuse and physical inactivity. Promoting good mental wellbeing across the life course is also essential to improving overall health, reducing inequalities and supporting individuals, families and communities to thrive. Local case studies, from reductions in mothers smoking at delivery to Eat Well South Tees and community-based immunisation projects, demonstrate the progress being made when partners work together to support healthier choices.

PREVENTION IS EVERYONE'S BUSINESS

The NHS plays a key role in early detection and management of long term conditions, including cancer screening and cardiovascular risk assessment. A case study on the Lung Cancer Screening Programme highlights the benefits of targeted clinical prevention. As an anchor institution, there are greater opportunities to influence poverty, employment and housing.

Prevention within Adult Social Care is explored through the "Prevent, Reduce, Delay" framework, the development of early intervention services such as the Prevention Hub in Middlesbrough, and the Meadowgate Intermediate Care Centre in Redcar & Cleveland. These approaches help residents stay independent, prevent deterioration, and reduce demand for statutory care.

Wider determinants - including transport, housing, green spaces, planning, and the local environment - remain central to tackling health inequalities. Embedding health into planning policy and supporting early years development through initiatives like Thrive at Five can create healthier communities and long term change.

The report highlights the importance of working closely with communities, building trust, and co producing solutions that reflect local needs and strengths. Community based blood pressure testing is an example of how taking services into neighbourhoods can improve access and reach at risk groups.

Research also plays a central role. Through the Health Determinants Research Collaboration (HDRC), South Tees is developing a stronger evidence base to guide system wide prevention, focusing on reducing key risk factors, improving early detection, and strengthening the link between research, policy, and practice.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The report concludes with a series of recommendations that set out the next steps for strengthening prevention and reducing inequalities across South Tees. A key recommendation is the co design of a prevention framework that not only guides Public Health practice but embeds prevention principles across the whole system, creating a unified, partnership wide approach. The recommendations will guide the next phase of the prevention strategy, with a focus on reducing preventable illness, narrowing inequalities, and ensuring that every resident has the opportunity to Start Well, Live Well and Age Well.

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FOREWORD



Welcome to the 2026 Director of Public Health Annual Report for South Tees.

As Joint Director of Public Health for Middlesbrough and Redcar & Cleveland, it is my role to promote and protect the health and wellbeing of our population. My report aims to raise awareness and understanding of local health issues, highlight areas of specific concern, and make recommendations for change.

I am delighted to share this year's report, which focuses on prevention and shines a light on how we're working together in South Tees to take action to improve the health and wellbeing of our communities.

South Tees is a fantastic place to live and work, but we know the area faces many challenges. Persistent health inequalities driven by high levels of deprivation, unemployment, and poor housing conditions mean that too many of our residents live in poor health. We know that a lot of these health conditions can be prevented or managed in ways that support people to live well and independently for longer.

Our population is slowly changing, growing, and ageing. Combined with the increasing complexity of health needs, we know that the impact on the quality of life for our residents is considerable. There is also an increased demand placed on the health and social care sector to meet these changing needs.

Prevention is everyone's business. All organisations and areas of society play a vital role. Throughout this report, we champion our collaborative and multi-agency approaches to preventing ill health. In our case studies, we showcase areas of innovation and good practice from the NHS, Adult Social Care, the voluntary sector and local authority teams, where a real difference is being made to our residents and communities.

The message is simple: prevention is our growth strategy for better health. It protects budgets, strengthens communities, and creates the conditions for people in our communities to live longer, healthier lives. Prevention is one of the strongest tools we have in South Tees.

I am grateful to everyone who has contributed to this report by sharing their stories and expertise. Thank you to my colleagues and partners for sharing some great examples of the preventative approaches they are taking to support the health and wellbeing of our population.

This report sets out recommendations for Middlesbrough and Redcar & Cleveland Councils, partners, and communities to take action to strengthen prevention across our local health and care system. These recommendations will allow us to keep working towards a South Tees where everyone starts well, lives well, and ages well.

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a stylized 'M' followed by a long horizontal line.

Mark Adams

Joint Director of Public Health,
Middlesbrough and Redcar & Cleveland



1. INTRODUCTION

This year's DPH report focuses on prevention, and highlights how we are leading on preventative approaches to improve the health and wellbeing of everyone living in South Tees.

But what do we mean by 'prevention'? Prevention, simply put, is about how health and care services and teams can take action to stop people becoming unwell, or reduce the severity of their existing illness.

The Live Well South Tees Health and Wellbeing Board has a strategy to improve the health and wellbeing of everyone living in South Tees, and this sits alongside the North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board's strategy for local health services. These strategies outline a range of prevention approaches across South Tees. These include ensuring children and young people have the best start in life, creating places and systems that promote wellbeing, and supporting older people to live more independent lives. At a national level, the NHS 10 Year Health Plan for England champions prevention to improve life expectancy, reduce obesity levels, create a smoke-free future, and support good mental health across the population.

In South Tees, many of our residents live in poor health. We know that many of these health conditions can be prevented or managed in ways that improve quality of life, supporting people to live well and independently for longer.

Our population continues to face significant health challenges. In line with other areas in the country, we have an ageing population that is increasing in size, with more people living with at least one health condition. Not only does this impact on the quality of life for our residents, but there is also an increased demand placed on the health and social care sector to meet these changing needs.

Investing in prevention therefore makes sense in helping to improve the health outcomes of the population. However, it is also worthwhile for protecting against future costs to the NHS and social care, as well as providing wider local societal and economic benefits.

All organisations and areas of society can play an important role in prevention. Throughout this report, we champion our collaborative and multi-agency approaches to prevention. In case studies, we showcase areas of innovation and good practice, where a real difference is being made to our residents and communities.

From local authority planning teams prioritising wellbeing through improving access to green space and active travel, to community pharmacists delivering blood pressure checks to prevent heart attacks or strokes, to a GP practice vaccinating children to prevent harm from infectious diseases to a hospital professional providing cardiac rehabilitation to prevent further complications and improve quality of life: we know that prevention is everyone's business, and we will continue to work cohesively as a system to prioritise this.

2. THE HEALTH OF OUR POPULATION IN SOUTH TEES

2.1 POPULATION SUMMARY

Approximately 295,000 residents live in South Tees, spanning the communities of Middlesbrough and Redcar & Cleveland. Our population is diverse in terms of age, health outcomes, and socioeconomic circumstances.

South Tees faces persistent health inequalities, driven by high levels of deprivation, unemployment, and poor housing conditions. Middlesbrough ranks among the most deprived local authorities in England, and Redcar & Cleveland also contains areas of significant disadvantage.

Our population is also slowly changing, with modest growth in Middlesbrough and a more static population in Redcar & Cleveland. These trends, combined with an ageing population and increasing complexity of health needs, require a strong focus on prevention and early intervention. Figure 1 shows a snapshot of the South Tees population.

2.2 JOURNEY THROUGH THE LIFE COURSE IN SOUTH TEES

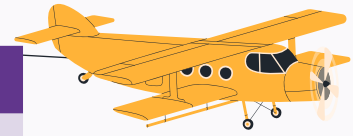
Figure 2 highlights health issues our residents face as they move through different stages of their lives. The indicators highlighted in red show rates that are significantly worse than the England average, those in yellow show where we are broadly in line with the national average, and those in green indicate where we are performing better. Understanding these inequalities helps us to improve our focus to make sure our residents have the best start in life, live well, and age well through taking a life course approach to prevention.



THE POPULATION OF SOUTH TEES

POPULATION

	MIDDLESBROUGH	REDCAR & CLEVELAND
Total population¹	156,200	139,200
Growth - 10 years	+12%	+3%
Age - 0-17 proportion¹	23%	20%
Growth - 10 years	+12%	+1%
Age - 18-64 proportion¹	61%	56%
Growth - 10 years	+11%	-1%
Age - 65+ proportion¹	17%	24%
Growth - 10 years	+18%	+16%
Ethnic minority groups²	21%	4%
Growth - 10 years	+53%	+49%
Area¹	54 sq. km	245 sq. km
Density¹	2,800 per sq. km	563 per sq. km



	MIDDLESBROUGH	REDCAR & CLEVELAND
Deprivation rank nationally³	2nd/296	37th/317
Live in most deprived 10%³	50%	25%
Child poverty⁴	40%	30%
Older people poverty³	26%	21%
Economic inactivity rate⁵	32%	22%
Unemployment⁵	6%	4%



Figure 1: The population of South Tees

Source: 1 - ONS mid 2024 estimates, 2 - Census 2021, 3 - IMD 2025, 4 - DWP CiLIF, 5 - Fingertips, OHID

JOURNEY THROUGH THE LIFE COURSE IN SOUTH TEES

START WELL

	MIDDLESBROUGH	REDCAR & CLEVELAND
Breastfeeding (%)	60.7%	54.5%
Smoking in pregnancy (%)	8.4%	8.4%
Babies vaccinated at 12 months (%)	91.3%	94.7%
Children eligible for free school meals (%)	43.3%	33.0%
Good level of development at 5 years (%)	61.3%	66.9%
Dental decay at 5 years (%)	30.5%	24.3%
Vaccinated by 5 years - MMR (%)	77.9%	89.1%
Obesity at 11 years (%)	25.6%	25.2%
Pupils with social, emotional & mental health needs (%)	4.7%	5.2%
Under 18 conceptions (rate per 1k)	29.2	34.4
English & Maths GCSE (%)	58.3%	64.9%



LIVE WELL

	MIDDLESBROUGH	REDCAR & CLEVELAND
Physically active (%)	61.1%	63.4%
Overweight adults (%)	71.4%	68.2%
Smoking prevalence (%)	14.1%	13.8%
Alcohol related hospital admissions (rate per 100k)	667	608
Adults in drug misuse services (rate per 1k)	15.4	8.0
Unemployment (%)	5.6%	3.9%
Long term mental health problem (%)	12.1%	17.0%
Suicides (rate per 100k)	20.2	20.2
Cancer incidence (ratio per 100)	112.7	107.7
COPD prevalence (%)	2.8%	3.5%
Heart disease prevalence (%)	3.2%	4.0%
Violent crime (rate per 1k)	63.2	54.5
New STI diagnosis (rate per 100k)	890.0	624.0



AGE WELL

	MIDDLESBROUGH	REDCAR & CLEVELAND
Dementia prevalence (%)	0.8%	1.0%
Flu vaccination coverage 65+ years (%)	75.9%	81.8%
Admissions for falls in 65+ years (rate per 1k)	63.2	54.5
Male healthy life expectancy at 65 years	7.8	8.7
Female healthy life expectancy at 65 years	8.8	9.2
Older people living in poverty (%)	26%	21%



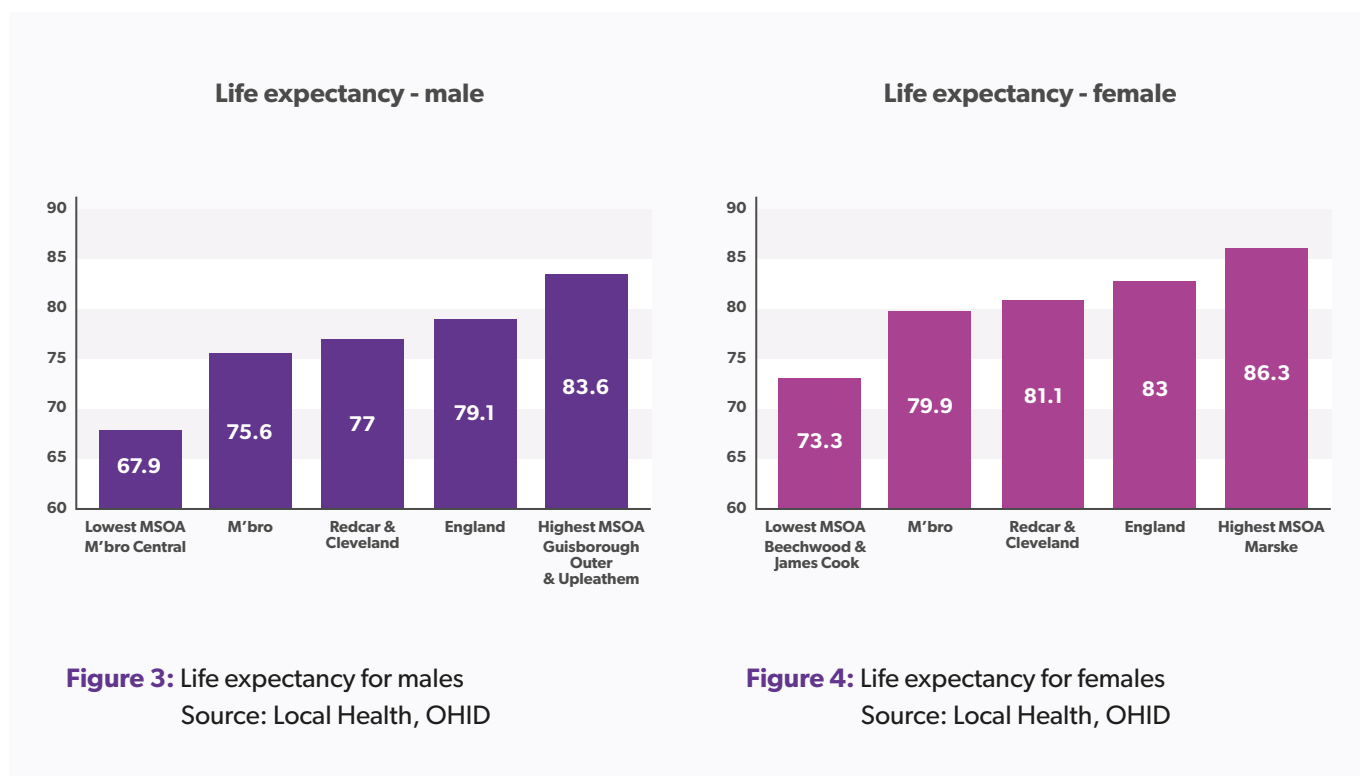
Figure 2: Journey through the life course in South Tees
Source: Fingertips, OHID

2.3 LIFE EXPECTANCY OF OUR RESIDENTS

There are stark inequalities in life expectancy across South Tees. We are using MSOA-level data to show life expectancy across South Tees. A Middle Area Super Output Area (MSOA) is a statistical geography created by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) with a consistent population size. We use MSOAs instead of ward-level data because they are standardised areas designed for reliable health and population analysis, whereas ward boundaries can vary in size and change over time.

For men, life expectancy ranges from 67.9 years in Middlesbrough Central MSOA to 83.6 years in Guisborough Outer & Upleatham MSOA. This represents a gap of nearly 16 years within the same local area. Both Middlesbrough (75.6 years) and Redcar & Cleveland (77 years) fall below the England average of 79.1 years.

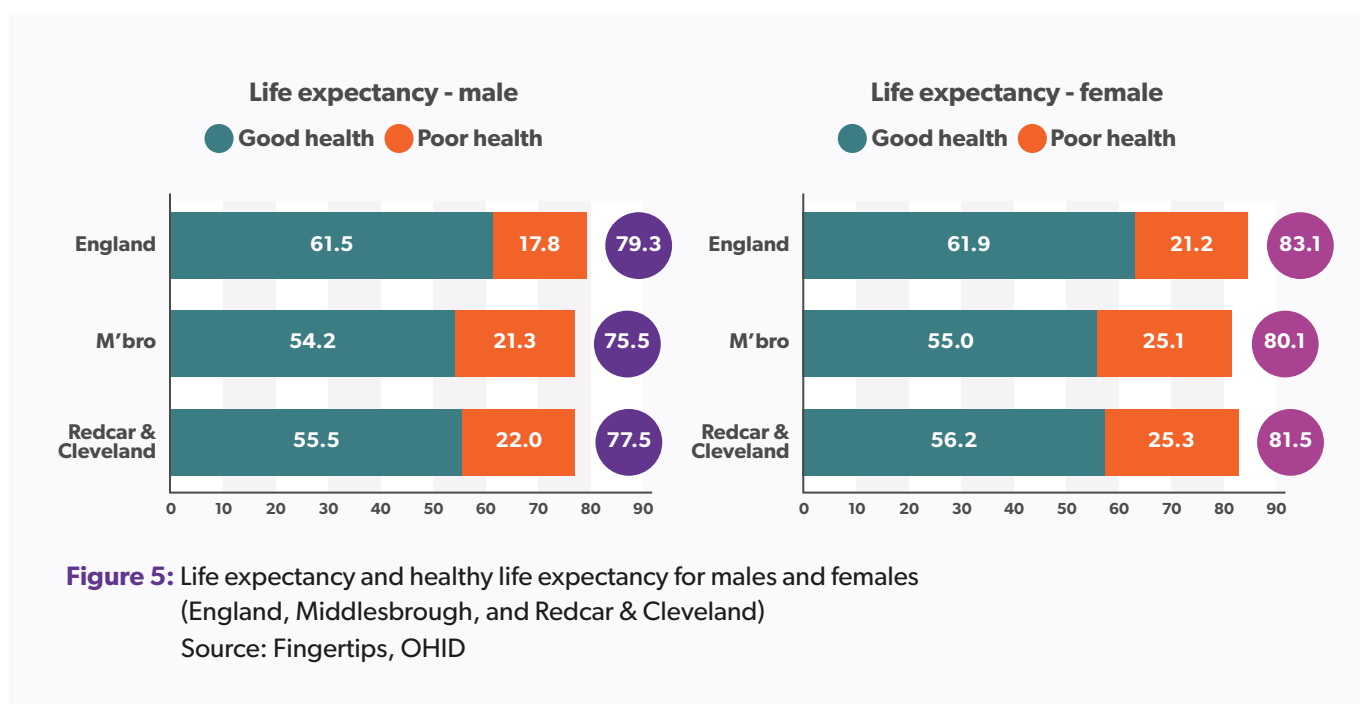
For women, the pattern is similar, though the gap is slightly smaller. Life expectancy ranges from 73.3 years in Beechwood & James Cook to 86.3 years in Marske - a difference of 13 years. Middlesbrough (79.9 years) and Redcar & Cleveland (81.1 years) again sit below the England average of 83 years.



People living in the most deprived areas experience significantly shorter lives and spend more years in poor health compared to those in more affluent areas. These differences reflect deep-rooted health inequalities driven by deprivation, lifestyle risk factors, and wider social determinants.

Not only do people in South Tees live shorter lives, but they also spend more of their years living in poor health (see Figure 5). For men in Middlesbrough, average healthy life expectancy is just 54.2 years, meaning they spend over 21 years in poor health on average. In Redcar & Cleveland, men live 55.5 years in good health, compared to 61.5 years nationally. For women, the picture is similar. Middlesbrough women have a healthy life expectancy of 55 years, spending 25 years in poor health. Redcar & Cleveland women fare slightly better at 56.2 years, but still below the England average of 61.9 years.

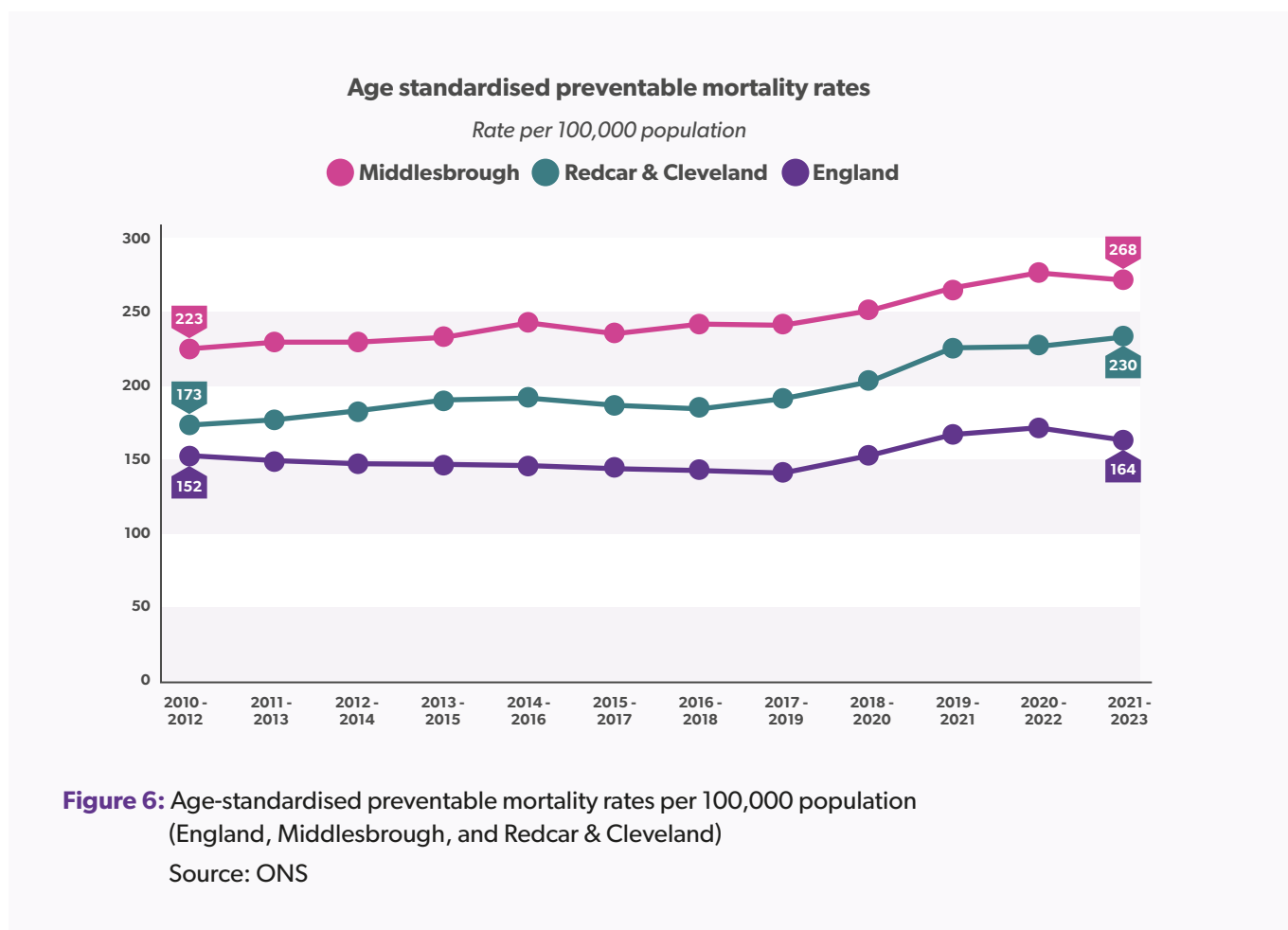
In South Tees, many residents spend a quarter of their lives managing illness or disability. Improving healthy life expectancy requires a strong focus on prevention across the life course - reducing smoking, obesity, and alcohol harm, and addressing wider determinants such as housing, education, and employment.



2.4 PREVENTABLE DEATHS & HEALTH INEQUALITIES

Mortality rates (the number of people who die each year per 100,000 population) give a general measure of the health of a population. A death is considered preventable if it can be avoided through effective public health and primary prevention interventions. Many of the deaths that causes illness and early death in South Tees are preventable.

Figure 6 shows the age-standardised preventable mortality rate for consecutive 3-year periods. The most recent data for 2021-23 shows there were 979 preventable deaths in Middlesbrough or a rate of 268 per 100,000 and 935 preventable deaths in Redcar & Cleveland or a rate of 230 per 100,000. Both local authority rates are significantly higher than the England rate of 164 per 100,000, with Middlesbrough rate 3rd highest nationally and Redcar & Cleveland 18th highest. The widening gap between South Tees and England highlights persistent health inequalities and the urgent need for prevention-focused strategies. These rates may reflect the lasting impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, which disproportionately affected already vulnerable communities, exacerbating existing health inequalities and contributing to higher levels of ill health.



2.5 DEPRIVATION

The Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) is the official measure to assess deprivation levels in different neighbourhoods in England. It combines data across seven areas (income, employment, education, crime, housing and the living environment) to show where communities face greatest disadvantage and are therefore at higher risk of poorer health outcomes.

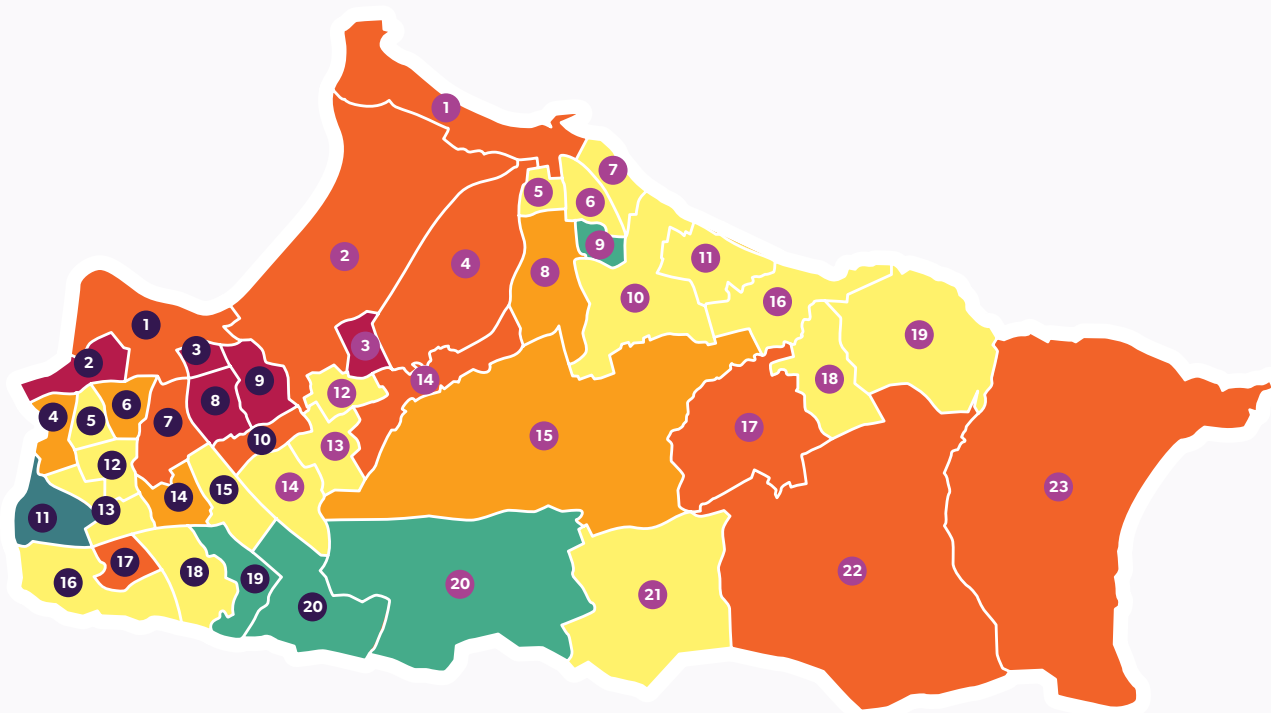
Middlesbrough remains one of the most deprived local authorities in England, ranking the second highest in the country according to the 2025 Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD). Nearly half of its Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) fall into the most deprived 10% in England. Redcar & Cleveland also ranks among the most deprived areas being 37th highest nationally, with around a quarter of its LSOAs in the most deprived 10%.

Figure 7 shows the map of South Tees according to IMD ward. There are 5 wards in the top 1% most deprived in England, with a further 11 wards in the top 10% most deprived. In Middlesbrough, the deprivation is concentrated in central and eastern parts of the town. Deprivation is associated with poorer health outcomes. Disability, lower incomes, and low levels of employment are the strongest drivers of health inequalities in these wards, alongside persistent gaps in education and skills. In Redcar & Cleveland, deprivation is most severe in coastal communities and former industrial areas, where employment and income inequalities dominate, compounded by health inequalities and barriers to good quality housing.



IMD 2025 Ward Rankings

● Top 1%
 ● 1-10%
 ● 10-20%
 ● 20-80%
 ● 80-100%



Middlesbrough

- 1 Central
- 2 Newport
- 3 North Ormesby
- 4 Ayresome
- 5 Linthorpe
- 6 Park
- 7 Longlands & Beechwood
- 8 Berwick Hills & Pallister
- 9 Brambles & Thorntree
- 10 Park End & Beckfield
- 11 Trimdon
- 12 Kader
- 13 Acklam
- 14 Ladgate
- 15 Marton East
- 16 Stainton & Thornton
- 17 Hemlington
- 18 Coulby Newham
- 19 Marton West
- 20 Nunthorpe

Redcar & Cleveland

- 1 Coatham
- 2 South Bank
- 3 Grangetown
- 4 Dormanstown
- 5 Newcomen
- 6 West Dyke
- 7 Zetland
- 8 Kirkleatham
- 9 Wheatlands
- 10 Longbeck
- 11 St Germain's
- 12 Teesville
- 13 Normanby
- 14 Ormesby
- 15 Guisborough
- 16 Saltburn
- 17 Skelton West
- 18 Skelton East
- 19 Brotton
- 20 Hutton
- 21 Belmont
- 22 Lockwood
- 23 Loftus

Figure 7: Map of South Tees according to IMD ward
Source: IMD 2025, MHCLG

3. WHAT IS PREVENTION?

Prevention is one of the key pillars of public health, it focuses on actions that keep people healthy, prevent disease, and reduce inequalities by addressing risks before they cause harm.

Prevention can be classified on whether it focuses on populations, particular groups or individuals, as well as according to at what point in the progression of a disease action is taken.

Prevention efforts can be targeted at specific groups, such as those who are at a higher risk of developing a particular health condition. For example, diabetes prevention may involve a focus on people with a higher weight, as this is a risk factor for diabetes. However, prevention can also be focused on more universal efforts over a wider population. These actions can benefit people who are not necessarily high risk. For diabetes prevention, an example of this would be a tax on products high in sugar. Both universal and targeted approaches are useful for the prevention of ill health.

Prevention is often categorised into different 'levels', based on taking action at different points (see Table 1).




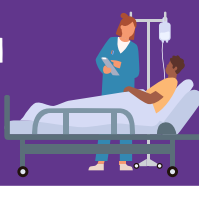
<p>LEVEL 1. PRIMORDAL PREVENTION</p> 	<p>Action to prevent exposure to risk factors in the first place.</p> <p>This tends to focus on population-wide interventions on a range of social determinants of health, such as poverty reduction, taxing unhealthy food, or ensuring access to parks or other green spaces for exercise.</p>
<p>LEVEL 2. PRIMARY PREVENTION</p> 	<p>Action taken to prevent disease and ill health from occurring by reducing risk factors and promoting healthy lifestyles.</p> <p>For example, healthy weight and physical activity programmes, vaccinations, smoking bans, and seat belt legislation.</p>
<p>LEVEL 3. SECONDARY PREVENTION</p> 	<p>Action to focus on early detection by identifying problems or diseases before symptoms have progressed and stopping the disease worsening.</p> <p>For example, breast, bowel, and cervical cancer screening, cardiovascular disease case finding, and treatment for hypertension.</p>
<p>LEVEL 4. TERTIARY PREVENTION</p> 	<p>Action to help people manage symptoms and prevent further disease progression once disease has already developed.</p> <p>This includes rehabilitation for stroke patients, cardiac rehabilitation, and addressing social and economic needs for those with a long-term condition through counselling and welfare support.</p>

Table 1: Levels of prevention

Prevention approaches can be applied to a wide range of activities that usually require engagement from partners across the system and wider society. For example, cardiovascular disease is one of the biggest causes of preventable death in South Tees. A preventative approach to tackle CVD across the 4 levels of prevention are depicted below:



Figure 8: A preventative approach to tackling cardiovascular disease

3.1 EVIDENCE FOR PREVENTION

The evidence in support of prevention shows that investing early pays. Nationally, every £1 put into Public Health prevention returns approximately £14 in benefits.

As Figure 9 shows, preventative interventions tend to be the most cost-effective ways of improving the health and wellbeing of our population while reducing pressures on our services.

For an area like South Tees, with many of our residents experiencing long-term conditions, complex social pressures, and significant health inequalities, this return is potentially greater because of our baseline population health outcomes.

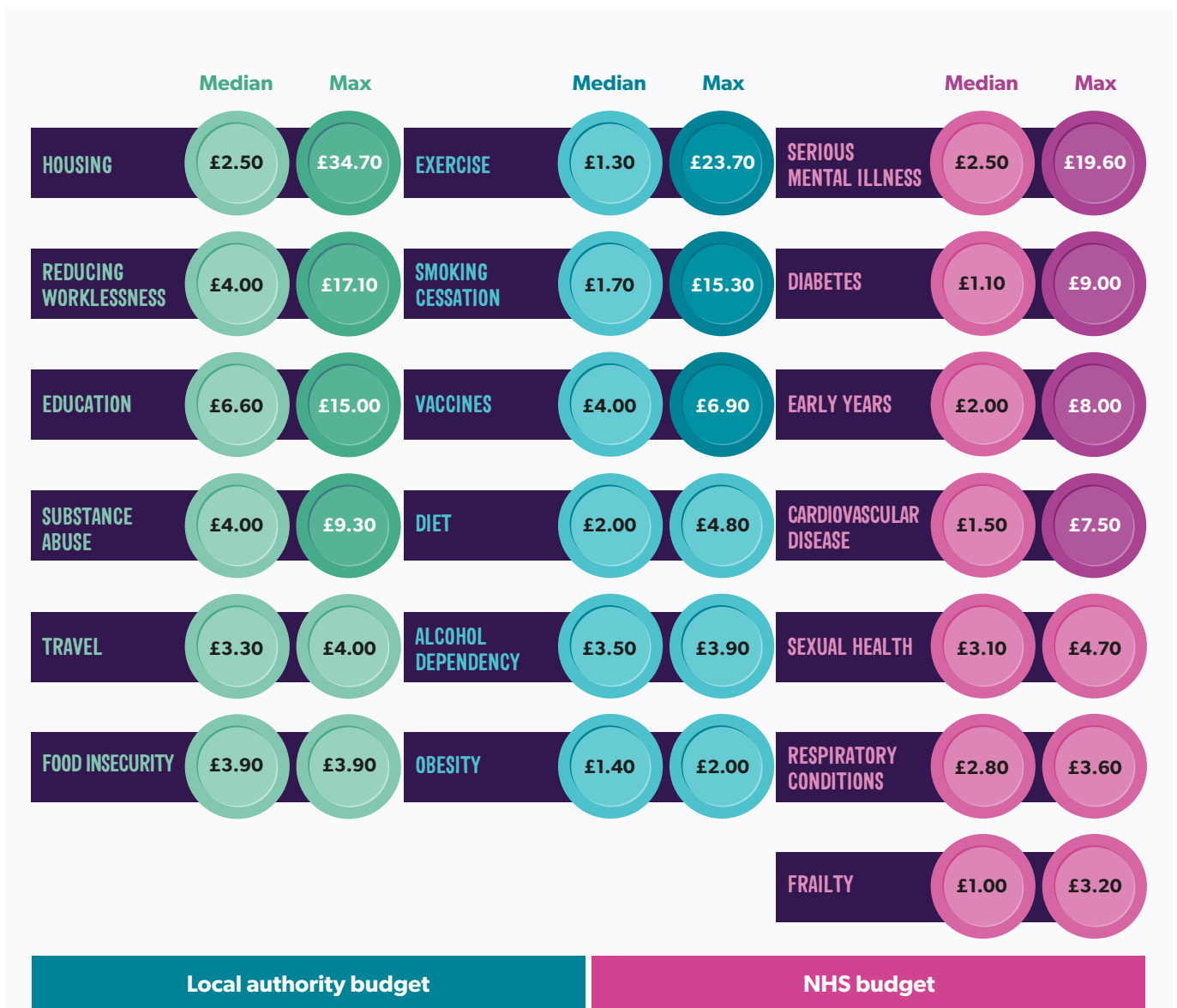


Figure 9: Median five-year adjusted Return of Investment by intervention category
 Source: Adapted from Wood et al. (2024)

We see the impact of preventable illness everyday across Middlesbrough and Redcar & Cleveland. Smoking, poor housing, cardiovascular risk, mental health challenges, and early childhood vulnerabilities continue to drive demand right across the system, from primary care to emergency departments to social care. These are the issues where prevention works best, and the evidence shows the benefits are seen quickly. Tobacco control, active travel, home safety and warmth measures, and early years support consistently deliver some of the highest returns on investment in public health.

For places like North Ormesby, South Bank, Grangetown, Eston and Loftus, prevention is also one of the most powerful tools we have for reducing inequalities. Focusing effort on the communities with the highest need doesn't just improve health outcomes, it reduces avoidable demand at scale. The gap in smoking, chronic disease and mental health between our most and least deprived areas translate directly into the avoidable costs we face as a system. Tackling those gaps is both the right thing to do and a financially strategic priority.

A prevention first approach is also essential for keeping our system sustainable. Without it we stay locked in a cycle of reacting to crises rather than slowing the flow of demand coming in. Embedding prevention into core business from planning and housing to our Integrated Care Systems-led and major conditions work, to neighbourhood teams and community organisations, offers the strongest approach to reducing the pressure on frontline services and improving quality of life for our residents in South Tees.

The message is simple: prevention is our growth strategy for better health. It protects budgets, strengthens communities, and creates the conditions for people in our communities to live longer, healthier lives.

Prevention is therefore one of the strongest tools we have in South Tees.



3.2 WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR PREVENTION?

Everyone has a responsibility to preventing ill health and promote good health and wellbeing. The NHS, local authorities, voluntary sector, communities, and individuals all have important roles to play.

Within the NHS, the focus tends to be on more secondary and tertiary prevention such as detecting disease or managing long term conditions, whereas local authorities can focus more primordial and primary prevention, addressing the social determinants of health such as housing, education, and creating healthier environments to encourage active travel and access of green spaces.

Voluntary and community sector organisations (VCSO) also have a key role in prevention. This sector is the gateway to our local communities and provides crucial support to some of our most vulnerable residents. The VCSO in South Tees provides and champions opportunities for peer support in the management of health conditions, as well as harnessing the voice of local people through community engagement and development approaches to help improve local services.

The Tees Valley Anchor Network is an example of partnership working at scale to address the needs of our local population. With strong leadership from the Director of Public Health South Tees and the Deputy Chief Executive of University Hospital Tees, together with local leaders from across local authorities, health, education, voluntary and community organisations based on a shared commitment to improving the health and wellbeing of local people.

As large organisations rooted in communities, anchors can use their collective resources, employment, procurement, land and buildings to tackle poverty and reduce inequalities.



Table 2: Our promise to communities

Table 3 shows the ways that different organisations focus on prevention across South Tees.

	NHS - PRIMARY AND SECONDARY CARE	LOCAL AUTHORITIES	VOLUNTARY AND COMMUNITY SECTOR ORGANISATIONS (VCSO)	ACADEMIC SECTOR - HEALTH DETERMINANTS RESEARCH COLLABORATION (HDRC) SOUTH TEES
PRIMORDIAL PREVENTION: Preventing the emergence of risk factors for disease 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tees Valley Anchor Network working across employment, procurement, sustainability, and estates • Social Prescribing link workers supporting patients to access support, finance, and reduce social isolation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tees Valley Anchor Network working across employment, procurement, sustainability, and estates • Safe and affordable housing • Improving access to green spaces • Warm homes schemes • Dementia-Friendly services and support • Healthy Weight Declaration and Eat Well South Tees 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tackling loneliness and isolation through community support, services and groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing research ideas that focus on the wider determinants of health • Understanding food provision and eating environments in special schools
PRIMARY PREVENTION: Preventing disease before it occurs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Embedding Making Every Contact Count (MECC) conversations in the workforce • Improving vaccination uptake 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Smoking cessation services • Weight management and improving physical activity, including Bring It On Boro • Public mental health services • Commissioning 0-5 services to support Best Start in Life 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision of mental health training to reduce stigma and improve access to support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Addressing the importance of physical fitness to reduce health inequalities for children and young people • Understanding the barriers and facilitators to ethnic minoritised groups accessing smoking cessation/tobacco harm reduction services in South Tees
SECONDARY PREVENTION: Detecting and intervening early in progression of health problems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Breast, bowel, cervical and lung cancer screening • Case finding for disease risk factors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commissioning Public Health services such as NHS Health checks, and integrated Sexual Health services • Safe Haven Service 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health Champions offering blood pressure tests in community venues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research on increasing the uptake of breast, cervical, bowel, and abdominal aortic aneurysm screening in ethnic minority communities
TERTIARY PREVENTION: Managing and reducing the impact of existing health problems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cardiac and Stroke rehabilitation • Management of long-term conditions • Alcohol detox initiatives • Emergency Department High Volume User Service 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commissioning drug and alcohol detox and recovery programmes • Reablement services, social care support for independent living 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education programmes for long term condition management • Peer groups for cancer survivors 	

Table 3: Organisations working across different levels of prevention in South Tees
 Table adapted from the King's Fund (2025)

3.3 KEY PRINCIPLES OF PREVENTION

In South Tees, we champion public health prevention principles. These principles ensure a strong focus on prevention across our local priorities and workstreams, spanning the entire public health and social care system. They support a shared local approach that reduces disease risk factors, addresses the wider determinants of health, and applies primary, secondary, and tertiary prevention to improve population health.

These principles are not exhaustive but underpin effective approaches to prevention, as outlined in the national evidence-base and as championed by our partners. These key principles are featured throughout the good practice case studies featured in this report.

KEY PRINCIPLES	
EVIDENCE-BASED	Using the best available evidence, from a variety of sources, to inform and improve practice and policies.
PLACE-BASED	A focus on place - where people live, bring up their families, work, and spend their leisure time: the level where people access most of what they need.
COLLABORATION & CO-PRODUCTION	Working closely with our partners and communities. Everyone has a role in preventing ill health and promoting good health - from the local authority, the NHS, the voluntary sector, employers, communities and individuals.
POPULATION HEALTH-BASED APPROACH	An approach aimed at improving the health of an entire population. Proportionate Universalism (Marmot Principle) - providing support to everyone, but with greater intensity for those with greater needs, ensuring actions are universal but proportionate to the level of disadvantage.
STRONG FOCUS ON WIDER DETERMINANTS	The wider determinants of health are a broad range of social, economic and environmental factors that influence people's health and wellbeing.
DATA DRIVEN	Using up-to-date population health data and intelligence to inform system priorities and shape work programmes.
TRAUMA INFORMED & STRENGTHS BASED	An approach transforms care by shifting the focus from "what's wrong with you" to "what happened to you," prioritising safety, trust, choice, collaboration, and empowerment.
SHARED PRACTICE, LEARNING & EVALUATION	A commitment to monitoring and evaluation to understand what's working well and where improvements can be made. Sharing this learning, including good practice and any challenges, with the wider system.
UTILISE LIVED EXPERIENCE	Recognise the personal knowledge and impact of people who access health and care services, and ensure their voices and experiences are heard and responded to.
EQUITY FOCUSED	Ensuring equity across communities means ensuring everyone has the same chances to live their healthiest lives.
BEHAVIOURAL & SOCIAL SCIENCES LED	Assess local needs and priorities with an understanding of the health behaviours of the population and/or a target group.
LIFE-COURSE APPROACH	Consider the critical stages, transitions, and settings across the life course where large differences can be made in promoting or restoring health and wellbeing.
HEALTH INEQUALITIES - PRIORITY POPULATIONS	A focus on health inequalities, which are unfair and avoidable differences in health across the population and between different groups within society.

Table 4: Key principles and their definitions

3.4 WHAT INFLUENCES HEALTH?

Below are some of the key influences on our health, along with examples of the work we and our partners are doing in South Tees to strengthen them:

MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING

Mental health and wellbeing are fundamental to overall health and should carry the same importance as physical health. Higher levels of wellbeing are consistently associated with better physical health, improved recovery from illness, reduced healthrisk behaviours, stronger educational and employment outcomes, and greater social participation. Good mental wellbeing also strengthens resilience, supports people to manage everyday stresses, and contributes to safer, more connected and prosocial communities.

Taking a preventative approach to mental health is therefore essential. By promoting wellbeing across the life course - starting in childhood and extending into adulthood - we can reduce future need, narrow inequalities, and help create the conditions in which individuals, families and communities can thrive. Improving mental health and wellbeing for our local population is a key priority, with a focus on children, young people, adults, families and neighbourhoods.

SOCIAL & ECONOMIC CONDITIONS

Social and economic conditions can have a profound impact on our health. These factors include where we live, the quality of our housing, our family and friends, education and skills, access to services, good jobs, nutritious food and whether we have enough money to meet our needs. Together these are the building blocks of health (see Figure 10).

Building a healthy society, and healthy communities, is like constructing a sturdy building. To succeed, we need all the right blocks in place.

MONEY & RESOURCES

Having limited access to money and resources, and the impact of poverty, can significantly affect health outcomes. By improving access to financial support and essential services, health outcomes can also be improved. A great example of the work we have done to address this includes the auto-enrolment of Free School Meals to address childhood poverty and support families on low incomes.

HOUSING

Plays a critical role in shaping health and wellbeing. Poor quality housing can increase the risk of respiratory illness, injury and poor mental health. We can help prevent negative health outcomes by working to ensure access to safe, warm and affordable housing. In South Tees, this is supported by work to address poor living standards and improve energy efficiency for those most vulnerable, helping to make homes safer and warmer.

EDUCATION & SKILLS

Access to education, good attainment and strong health literacy are important for good health. When people have the skills to understand health information and how to access support, their health outcomes can improve significantly. We work closely with schools to educate on health and wellbeing and support good attendance and attainment. We embed health literacy approaches across our services to ensure people can access information and make informed decisions about their health.

WORK

Secure employment is a key driver of mental and physical health. Fair pay, good working conditions and security all contribute to better health outcomes, while unemployment or poor quality work can increase health inequalities. Through our role as anchor institutions, we help create good quality employment opportunities and promote fair practices such as the Real Living Wage. We also champion and support initiatives to improve workplace wellbeing.

FAMILY, FRIENDS & COMMUNITY

Social connection and supportive communities are protective factors for health, reducing loneliness and isolation. When people feel connected, they are more resilient and experience better wellbeing. Some of the work within South Tees includes supporting Voluntary and Community Sector groups for those with loneliness and isolation, providing Social Prescribing and supporting Dementia Friendly Communities.

THE FOOD WE EAT

Access to nutritious and affordable food is vital for a healthy weight and lifelong wellbeing. Poor diet is a major contributor to long-term health conditions, yet many families face barriers in accessing healthy options. Our work supports healthier food access through initiatives such as the Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) programme which supports children during the school holidays. The Managing Undernutrition South Tees Service (MUST) also provides nutritional screening in care homes to help identify and support those at risk of malnutrition.

TRANSPORT

Safe and reliable transport enables people to reach education, work and essential services – all fundamental to good health. Lack of transport can contribute to isolation, missed appointments and reduced opportunities. We support this by promoting active travel initiatives and championing improvements to public transport.

OUR SURROUNDINGS

The environment in which we live, including access to green space, clean air and safe streets, has a significant impact on health. Greener, well-designed neighbourhoods encourage physical activity, reduce stress and support community connection. We are working closely with planning colleagues to provide public health insight into planning decisions for local spaces and continue to work closely with communities to advocate for the improvement of green spaces and their use for physical activity

Differences in access to these building blocks leads to health inequalities which impacts on the health and wellbeing of our most disadvantaged communities. It is therefore essential that as a system we focus on prevention across of these factors.

BUILDING BLOCKS OF HEALTH

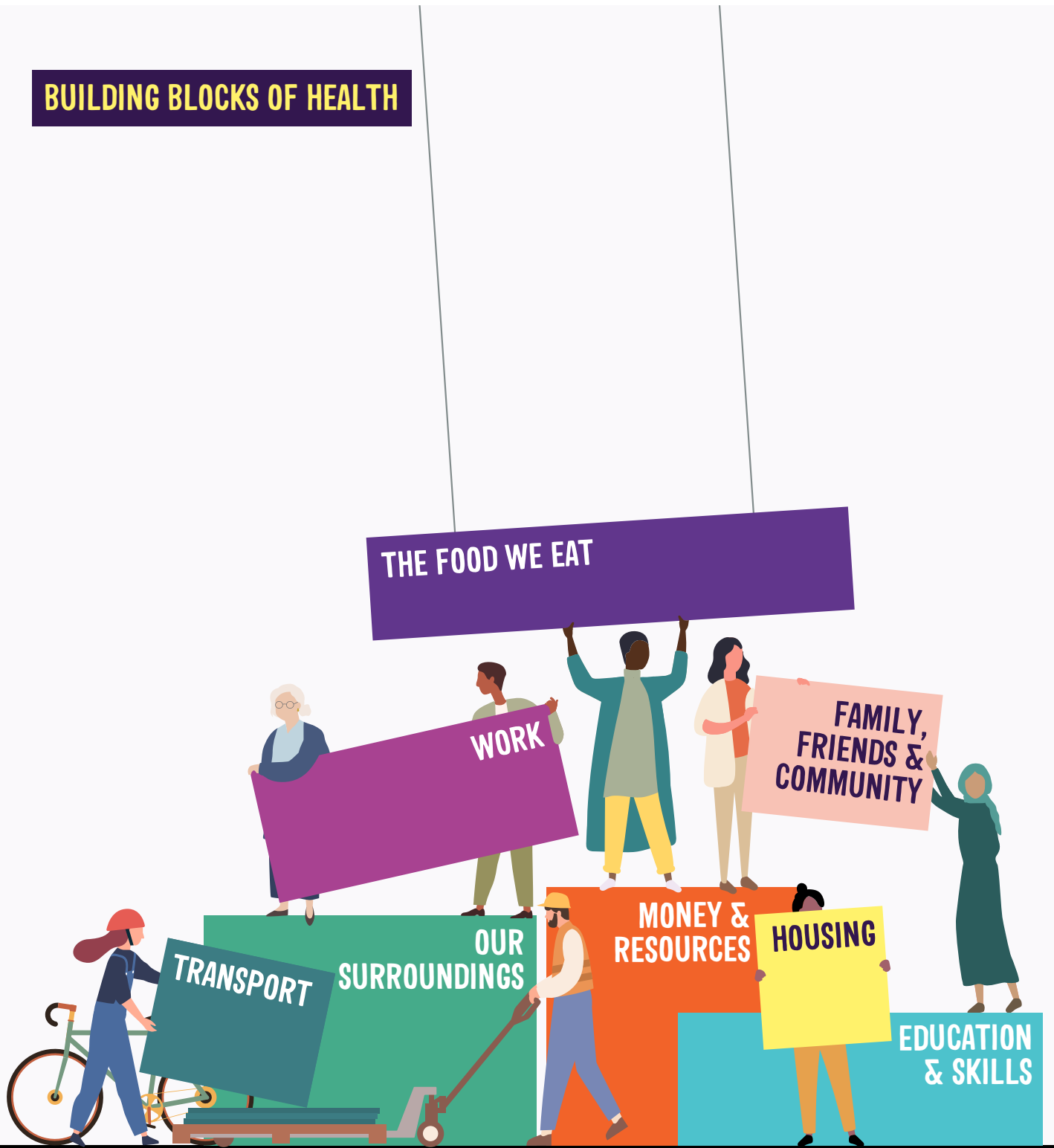


Figure 10: The building blocks of health

4. HEALTH BEHAVIOURS

Health and lifestyle behaviours can impact on the risks of developing preventable illness and contribute to shorter life expectancy. The South Tees Joint Strategic Needs Assessments (JSNAs) highlight that the biggest preventable risk factors for ill health and early death in South Tees are smoking, obesity, alcohol misuse, and physical inactivity.

Many of these behaviours can begin early in childhood, with patterns around poor diet, lack of physical activity, smoking and alcohol shaped by family, environment and early life experiences. Without early support, these behaviours can become established and continue into adulthood and drive long-term health risks.

Reducing smoking, obesity, alcohol misuse, and physical inactivity are priorities in the South Tees Live Well Strategy 2024-30:



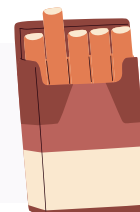
// Supporting people and communities to build better health by reducing the levels of smoking, harmful alcohol use, physical inactivity and poor diet and obesity will reduce the levels of poor health across South Tees. //

Reducing these risk factors across South Tees can only be achieved by working collaboratively with partners to develop preventative solutions that are informed by data and evidence, as well as public engagement, using public health tools such as Health Equity Audits and Health Needs Assessments, in combination with the lived experiences of our communities.



4.1 SMOKING

Smoking is the leading cause of preventable death in the UK. It is the biggest cause of health inequalities, accounting for half the difference in life expectancy between the most and least deprived areas. Smoking increases the risk of developing health conditions that affect many of our residents, including cancer, cardiovascular, and respiratory diseases.



In South Tees approximately 480 people die each year from causes associated with smoking that could have been preventable.

The target set by the government for England to be 'smokefree' by 2030 requires a national smoking prevalence of less than 5%. Figure 11 shows current projections to achieve this 'smokefree' status.

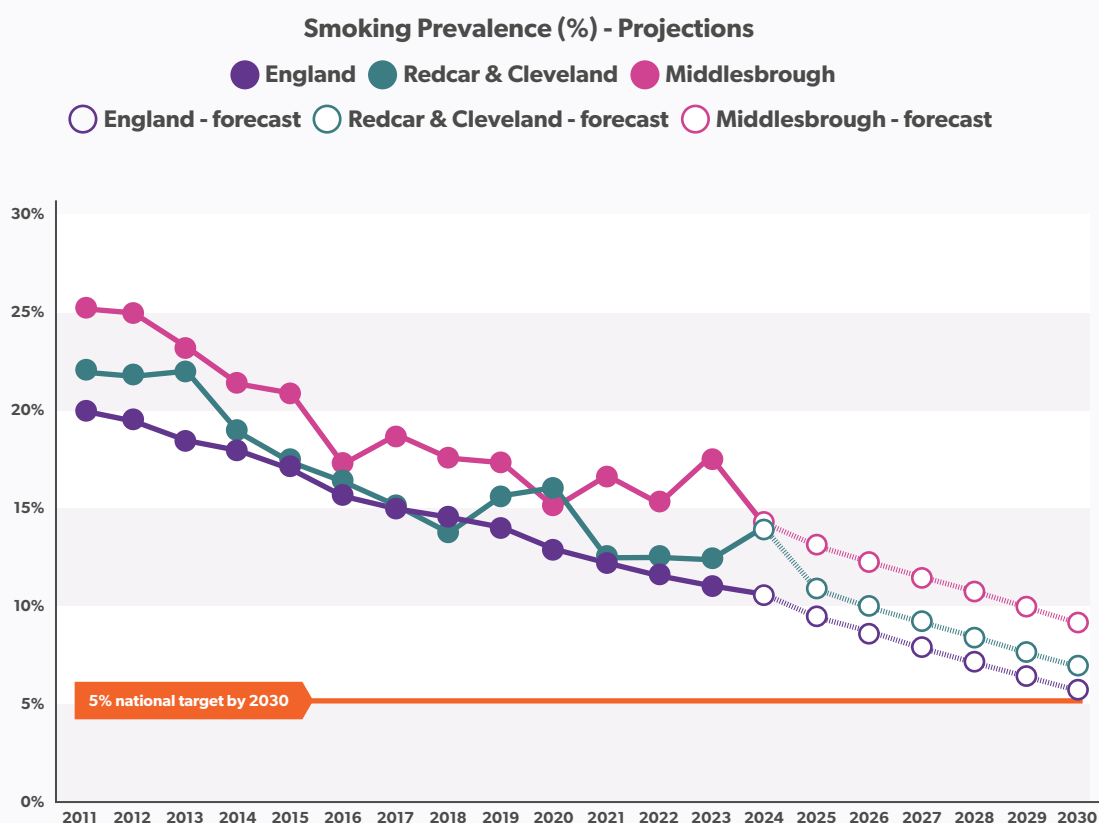


Figure 11: Smoking prevalence (%) projections (England, Middlesbrough, and Redcar & Cleveland)
Source: ONS

Locally, we know that reaching this 5% target will require considerable collective efforts based on current trends, and our stop smoking services are committed to working with local communities to reduce the prevalence of smoking across South Tees.

A recent Health Equity Audit (HEA) carried out across stop smoking services in South Tees including our community services, hospital inpatient, maternity, and mental health trust (Tees Esk and Wear Valley) helped us plan how we will reach the 2030 target.

A HEA is a process that helps us to:

- Examine how health services and resources are distributed to the health needs of different population groups
- Pinpoint specific groups that face disparities in health determinants, access to care or service outcomes
- Develop actions to help us address these inequalities to support our most vulnerable populations to stop smoking



HOW WILL SOUTH TEES REACH THE 2030 TARGET?

Our stop smoking services are committed to achieving the target through:



• INCREASED ACCESS ROUTES

Including public health sites, educational settings, family hubs, libraries and faith centres



• INCREASED ACCESS ROUTES

Through face-to-face appointments, telephone support, and digital access through our regional enhanced Smokefree App



• IMPROVED OPERATING HOURS

Including more late night and weekend clinics and a 24 hour support service through our digital offer



• IMPROVED TREATMENT OPTIONS

Maintaining 'Swap 2 Stop' for the next 3 years, the addition of Varenicline and Cytisincine, with standard nicotine replacement therapy (NRT) options remaining available



• IMPROVED STAFFING STRUCTURES

A more diverse team to meet the needs of the service, including specific leads to focus on substance use, mental health, young people and black and minority ethnic communities



• TARGETED MARKETING STRATEGIES

Our 2025-26 marketing strategy focused on the "Smoke Free" campaign, while our 2026-27 strategy will focus on underserved populations with the use of lived experience

In South Tees, we know there are high rates of women smoking in pregnancy with approximately 250 women who became pregnant in 2024–25 were identified as continuing to smoke during pregnancy (see Figure 12).

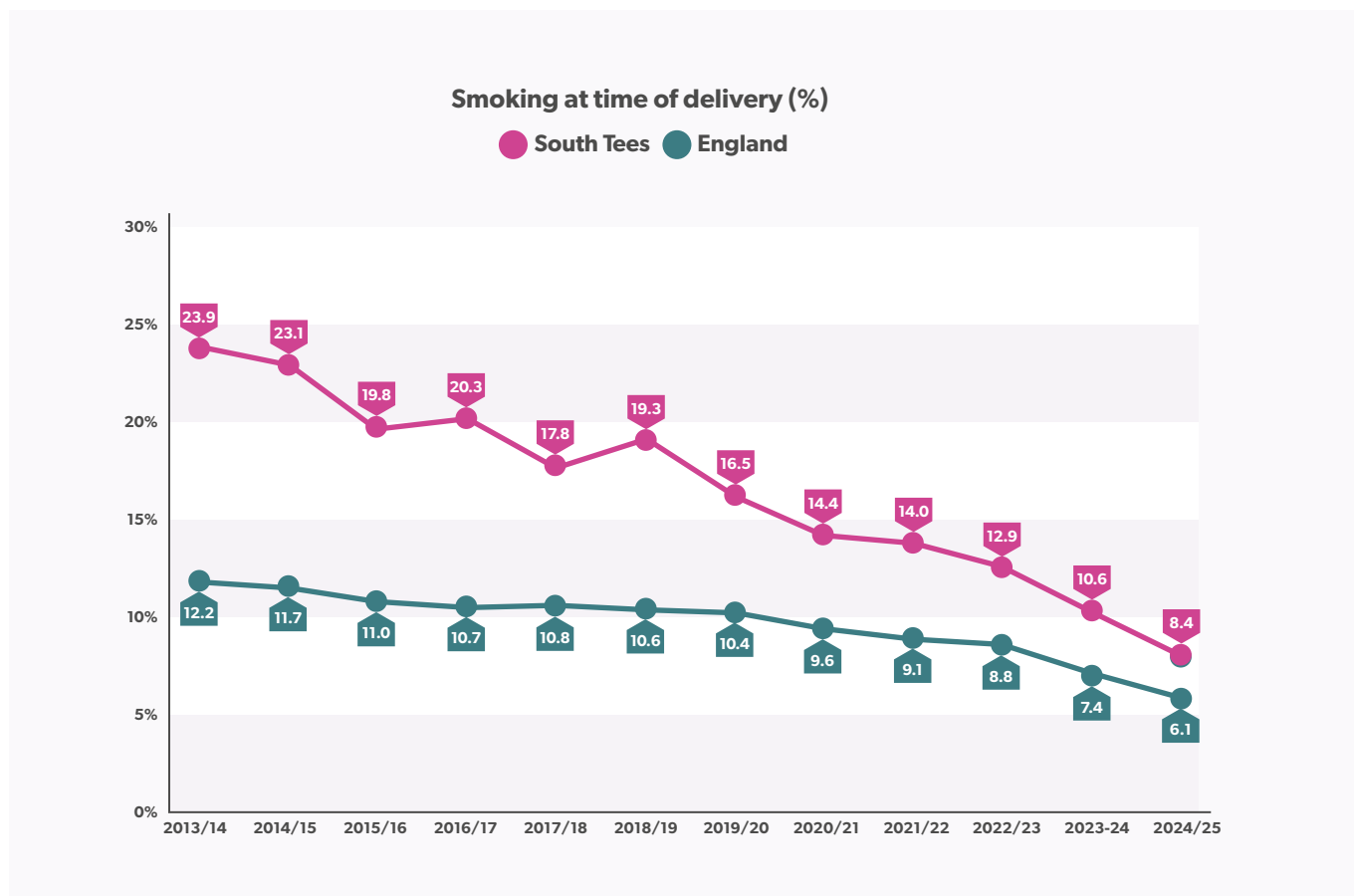
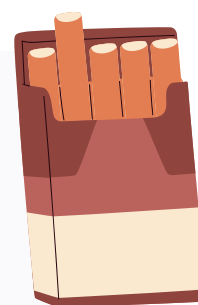


Figure 12: Smoking at time of delivery (%) (South Tees and England)
Source: Fingertips, OHID

Although the local rate is higher than England, there have been significant decreases locally over recent years because of planned support and evidence-led interventions, as described in the case study overleaf.

We have seen exceptional progress in South Tees and there has been a remarkable 65% reduction in maternal smoking since 2013/14.

Nationally, progress has been also been exceptional, with maternal smoking prevalence in England falling from 12.2% in 2013/14 to 6.1% in 2024/25.



CASE STUDY:

REDUCING SMOKING IN PREGNANCY IN JAMES COOK UNIVERSITY HOSPITALS

PRIMARY PREVENTION

CORE PRINCIPLES

- Evidence-based
- Behavioural and social science led
- Life-course approach
- Health inequalities - priority populations



THE WHY

Supporting people who are pregnant to be smoke free is important, and protecting an unborn baby from tobacco smoke is one of the best ways to give a child a healthy start in life. Smoking while pregnant increases the risk of complications in pregnancy and birth such as stillbirth, premature birth, miscarriages, low birth weight, and sudden infant death syndrome.

THE WHAT

In South Tees NHS Foundation Trust midwives have been supporting pregnant people and their partners to quit through an innovative service that meets the needs of pregnant people. The in-house maternity tobacco dependency service was set up in July 2022.

The team consists of three smoking cessation support workers who work in the community ensuring ease of access for pregnant people, and 2 support staff that work in the Friarage and James Cook hospital providing in-patient and clinic support.

Pregnant people and their families are given one-to-one support to stop smoking through their pregnancy and until 28 days after birth. Behavioural support and nicotine replacement therapy (NRT) products are proven to be the most effective way to help people stop smoking. Incentives are also offered to support people to quit. The Trust is part of the national incentive scheme which means that people are offered up to £400 in shopping vouchers to stop smoking in pregnancy.

Following a successful pilot to demonstrate how vapes can be successfully embedded into the current tobacco dependency treatment package, the service is continuing this offer with support from Stop Smoking South Tees and the Trust Tobacco Dependency Team.



THE OUTCOME

In 2024, 427 referrals were made to the Best Start in Life service. 187 people engaged with the stop smoking service.

125 babies have now been born to newly smoke free homes across South Tees.

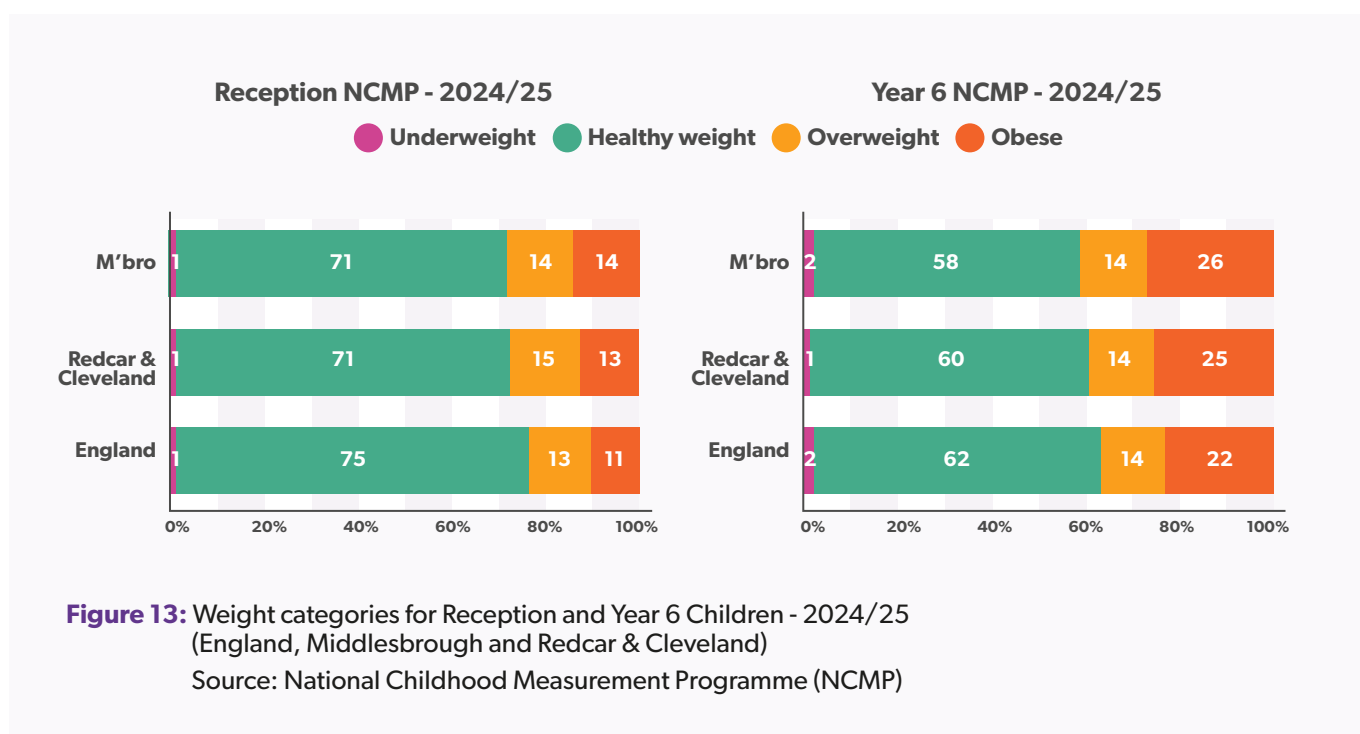
Our local rate for smoking status at time of delivery has reduced from 14% in 2021/22 to just over 5% for the first 9 months of 2025 (not yet reflected in the data above, as the figures do not cover the full year 2025). This is well below both the regional and national rates.



4.2 OBESITY

Obesity remains one of the most complex public health challenges in England and is a key driver of health inequalities across the life course. Obesity rates in South Tees are consistently higher than the national average.

Figure 13 shows our childhood obesity rates in comparison to the national average. Among reception-aged children (4–5 years), the prevalence of obesity and severe obesity is 14.3% in Middlesbrough and 13.2% in Redcar & Cleveland, compared to 10.5% nationally. Among Year 6 pupils (aged 10–11), obesity and severe obesity prevalence is 25.9% in Middlesbrough and 24.9% in Redcar & Cleveland, compared to 22.2% nationally.



Adult obesity remains a significant public health challenge in South Tees. In 2023/24, 71.4% of adults in Middlesbrough and 68.2% in Redcar & Cleveland were overweight or obese, both above the England average of 64.5%. More than two-thirds of adults in South Tees live with excess weight, which increases the risk of developing type 2 diabetes, cardiovascular disease, certain cancers, and mental health issues.

The causes of obesity are multi-layered and influenced by a combination of environmental, behavioural, and social factors, including:

- Limited access to affordable healthy food and safe spaces for physical activity
- Poor dietary habits and sedentary lifestyles further contribute to weight gain
- Social determinants such as poverty, education, and employment, which shape health behaviours and opportunities



Our vision in South Tees is to create healthier environments that encourage sustainable, inclusive food access and physical activity for the whole population. Through working with our partners and communities, we continue to strengthen our approach to reducing inequalities and promoting healthy weight across the life course. An example of this can be seen in the case study below.

CASE STUDY:

EAT WELL SOUTH TEES



PRIMARY PREVENTION

CORE PRINCIPLES

- Life-course approach
- Place-based
- Health inequalities - priority populations
- Data driven
- Collaboration and coproduction

THE WHY

Children, young people and families in South Tees are growing up in a food environment where healthier options are often harder to access and afford. Diet-related ill-health and food insecurity remain significant challenges, particularly in communities experiencing higher levels of health inequality.

The places where people spend their time - early years settings, schools, workplaces and local food businesses - play a critical role in shaping everyday eating habits. By improving the nutritional quality of food across these settings, the Eat Well Award helps create consistent, supportive environments that encourage healthier choices and reduce reliance on processed, high-fat, high-sugar options.

THE WHAT

The Healthy Weight Declaration (HWD) provides a framework to support a whole systems approach to obesity. The HWD consists of 16 commitments that support local authority departments to take systemic action to create healthier environments. The Eat Well South Tees programme is helping us to deliver on these commitments through supporting organisations to meet national food standards and embed healthy practices into everyday culture.

The programme offers:

- Training and guidance for staff to build confidence in providing nutritious meals.
- Menu reviews and practical support to ensure compliance with food standards.
- Food education and activities such as cooking sessions, growing projects, and breakfast clubs to encourage healthy habits.
- A tiered award system - bronze, silver, and gold - that recognises progress and motivates continuous improvement.



THE OUTCOME

Since the Eat Well Early Years and School Awards relaunch in September 2025, three schools have achieved the bronze award, demonstrating strong early engagement. A new business award will be piloted in 2026, extending support to commercial food providers. The ambition is for all three awards to be widely adopted by 2030.

The programme has strengthened the quality and consistency of food provision across participating settings, ensuring alignment with national standards. Catering teams and food providers have received targeted training, building knowledge and confidence to deliver balanced, nutritious options.

This approach has improved menu quality and helped organisations embed food education and wellbeing initiatives into everyday practice. As a result, healthier food environments are being created for children, families, and the wider community - supporting long-term improvements in diet and health.



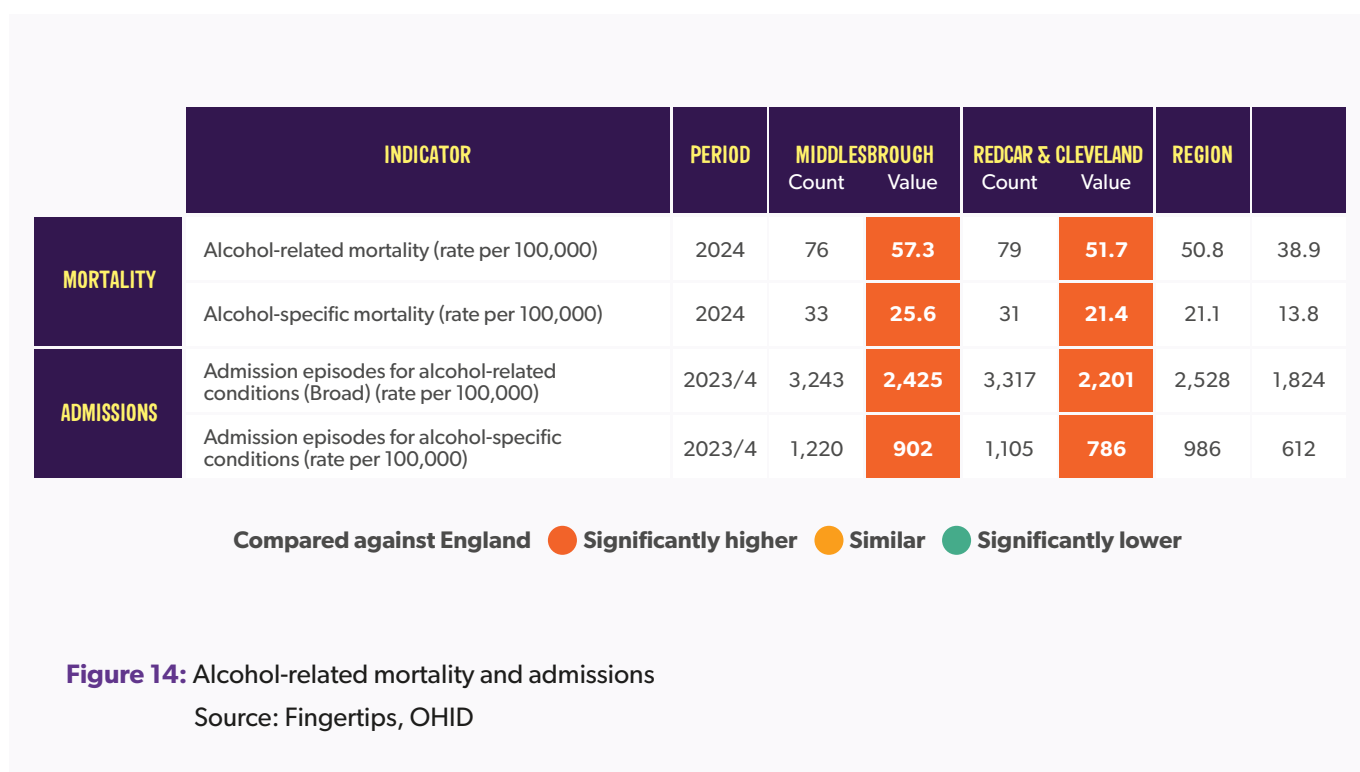
4.3 ALCOHOL

Alcohol-related harm is a significant public health challenge across South Tees, contributing to preventable illness, premature mortality, and widening health inequalities. Patterns of alcohol consumption are closely linked to deprivation, with higher rates of alcohol-related hospital admissions and chronic conditions in the most disadvantaged communities.

Alcohol-related mortality and hospital admissions in Middlesbrough and Redcar & Cleveland remain significantly higher than national levels (see Figure 14).

In 2024, Middlesbrough recorded 57.3 deaths per 100,000 from alcohol-related causes, compared to 38.9 nationally; Redcar & Cleveland was also high at 51.7. Alcohol-specific mortality shows a similar pattern.

Hospital admissions are also significantly higher locally in comparison to national averages. Middlesbrough had 902 per 100,000 for alcohol-specific conditions in 2023-24, well above England (612 per 100,000), and 2,425 per 100,000 for broader alcohol-related conditions. Redcar & Cleveland also exceeds national averages for alcohol-related hospital admissions.



Although the data shows significant challenges, close partnership working between health services, the local authority, the police, and the nighttime economy is helping make a difference to our residents. An example of this can be seen in the case study below, which focuses on an individual who received coordinated support made possible through collaborative working between partners.

CASE STUDY:

RECOVERY SOLUTIONS

SECONDARY PREVENTION

CORE PRINCIPLES

- Collaboration and coproduction
- Health inequalities - priority populations
- Trauma-informed and strengths-based

THE WHY

Multidisciplinary collaboration and person-centred care can have a hugely positive impact in supported complex recovery needs. These coordinated approaches are vital to mitigate the impact of multiple relapses, health complications, and social vulnerabilities on people recovering from alcohol dependency.

THE WHAT

Client A was referred to Recovery Solutions via the Alcohol Care Team within James Cook University Hospital (JCUH) following an upper gastrointestinal (GI) bleed, which required multiple blood transfusions. During his inpatient stay, an introductory meeting was held to assess Client A needs and goals, with an initial plan was put in place. However, Client A resumed alcohol consumption shortly after returning home.

A home visit was arranged to complete a holistic assessment and included discussion about potential detox and rehabilitation pathways. Client A, a former member of the armed forces, had completed two tours in Afghanistan and previously maintained strong ties with the Army, particularly through his Sergeant Major. He had also participated in walking groups in the Yorkshire Dales, reflecting his previous engagement in positive activities. Consistent engagement fostered trust and allowed for a deeper understanding of Client A's circumstances.





Identified needs included:

- Safeguarding referral due to self-neglect;
- Care Needs Assessment;
- Dual Diagnosis referral;
- Alcohol Nurse Assessment;
- Implementation of Drinks Diaries and SMART goals;
- Liaison with GP for medication review and initiation of MediPacks;
- Referral to Dietician;
- Regular contact was maintained through home visits, phone calls, and text messages to provide ongoing encouragement and support;
- Safeguarding Social Workers assessment;
- Support to attend healthcare appointments and advocacy around healthcare professionals to closely meet needs.

THE OUTCOME

Client A was approved for inpatient detoxification and residential rehabilitation. With reassurance and the coordinated efforts of his Blue Light Caseworker and Social Worker, Client A successfully transitioned to a detox unit in another city. Following hospital discharge, DP rejoined the rehab programme but requested to transfer to Recovery Connections in Middlesbrough to continue his recovery closer to home.

Upon returning to Middlesbrough, Client A experienced a brief lapse but re-engaged promptly with support services. He underwent a Nurse Assessment at Live Well East and experienced a smooth transition into Recovery Connections Rehab Unit. Client A completed 12 weeks of primary residential rehabilitation, followed by an additional 12 weeks. Upon completion, Client A successfully graduated from the programme.

Key milestones achieved:

- Regained his driving licence;
- Reconnected with his Sergeant Major, who supported him in securing employment;
- Secured accommodation and a salary;
- Established ongoing recovery support through a sponsor and regular attendance at AA meetings twice weekly.

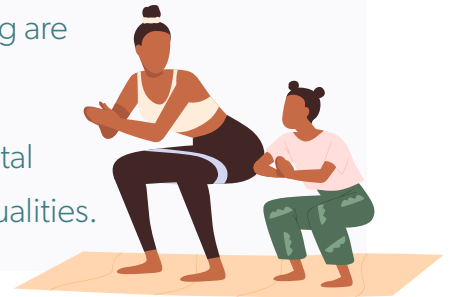
The coordinated approach between the Blue Light Caseworker, Recovery Solutions, Recovery Connections, healthcare providers and social services enabled Client A to rebuild stability, achieve abstinence and reintegrate into meaningful employment and independent living.

4.4 PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

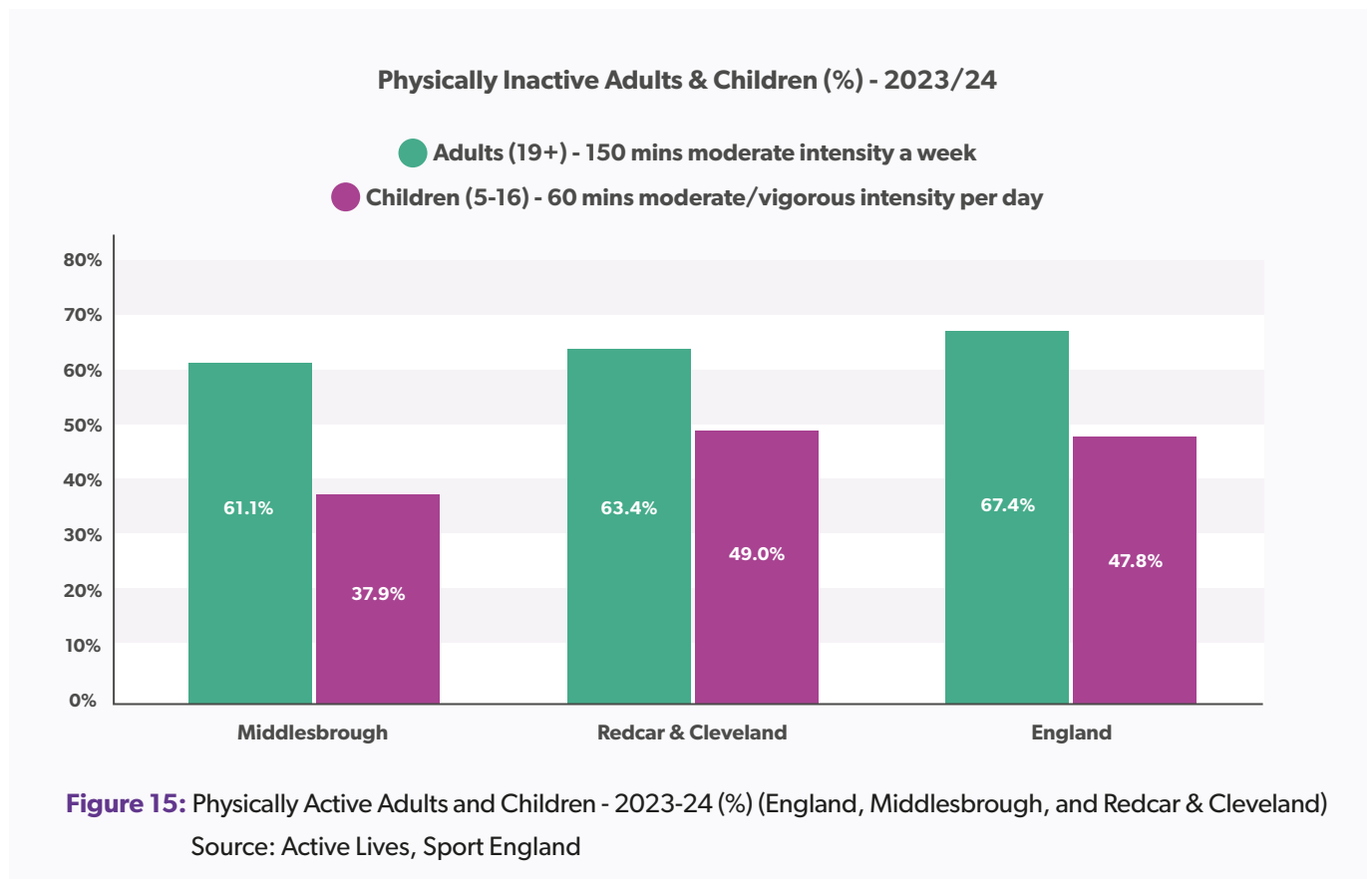
Low levels of physical activity remain a major contributor to poor health outcomes across South Tees.

Barriers such as limited access to safe, affordable spaces, transport challenges, and socioeconomic pressures mean that opportunities for active living are not equally available to all our communities.

Increasing physical activity is essential to improving physical and mental wellbeing, reducing long-term conditions, and reducing health inequalities.



Physical activity levels among adults and children are lower locally than the England average (see Figure 15). In 2023-24, 61.1% of adults in Middlesbrough and 63.4% in Redcar & Cleveland met the recommended 150 minutes of moderate activity per week, both below the national figure of 67.4%. Children's activity levels show a larger gap: only 37.9% in Middlesbrough and 49.0% in Redcar & Cleveland achieved 60 minutes of daily activity, compared with 47.8% nationally.



One way Middlesbrough is addressing physical inactivity is through the 'Bring It On! Boro' holiday activities and food programme for children and young people in receipt of free school meals.

CASE STUDY:

EMBEDDING PHYSICAL ACTIVITY WITHIN THE HOLIDAY ACTIVITIES AND FOOD PROGRAMME (HAF)



PRIMARY PREVENTION

CORE PRINCIPLES

- Shared practice, learning and evaluation
- Health inequalities - priority populations
- Sustainability
- Collaboration and coproduction
- Life-course approach

THE WHY

The Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) programme (branded as Bring It On!) serves children across South Tees who receive free school meals during school holidays, offering 69,765 places with £1.73m investment in 2024/5. Each provider is required to deliver 60 minutes of daily physical activity. However, insight from the HAF team and their Young Inspectors, revealed there to be inconsistent provision in the delivery of physical activity. This created an opportunity to improve outcomes for our local young people, while ensuring physical activity was delivered appropriately across the year.

THE WHAT

Middlesbrough's Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) Programme implemented a comprehensive physical activity training initiative for its 50 local providers. The training involved 95 staff members and was delivered through a collaboration of eight local organisations including Everyone Active, Redcar & Eston School Sport Partnership, North East Wellbeing, Cleveland School Sport Partnership, Groundwork North East, Tees Dance, RCVDA and Middlesbrough FC Foundation. The training covered making activities inclusive for all audiences, supporting youth-led activities, maximising small spaces and venues, embedding movement throughout the day, and utilising open spaces effectively.



THE OUTCOME

The training produced measurable improvements with a marked upturn in average quality scores.

Providers reported better engagement with children, increased variety of age-appropriate activities for different needs, and enhanced provision of tailored support around movement.

The training is now mandatory for new providers and will be funded through HAF's 15% development budget, with plans for a 'train the trainer' package to create sustainable capacity within the workforce around physical activity.



5. PREVENTION IN THE NHS

The NHS has a role in the prevention of ill health within the population at all levels, particularly secondary and tertiary prevention, through detection of disease and management, and improving the quality of life of people living with long term health conditions.

In South Tees NHS Foundation Trust there is a robust programme of work underway to improve population health and reduce healthcare inequalities for the population we serve, informed by national, regional and local policy drivers including the NHS 10-year Health Plan for England.

The framework for delivery requires collaborative working and integrated partnerships with external organisations, which will be achieved through the development of neighbourhood health plans, embedding patient and public engagement in service improvement and enabling the use of population health management approaches to reduce disparities in healthcare access, experience and outcomes.

Our Hospital Trust is also the provider of many public health and prevention services, helping us go further faster from treatment to prevention. Below is a list of current public health provision across South Tees NHS Foundation Trust.

- Tobacco dependency treatment service (acute in patient and maternity)
- Paediatric Stop Smoking service
- Alcohol care team and recovery navigator
- Waiting well
- Cancer prehabilitation
- High Intensity use case workers in Emergency department
- Violence reduction navigator in children & young people's emergency department
- Cardiology social prescribing link worker
- Cervical screening - colposcopy
- Diabetic eye screening
- Maternity vaccination
- Maternity vulnerabilities workers
- Digital inclusion midwife
- Access and attendance (health inequalities care navigator)
- BBV & syphilis testing in Emergency department
- Lung health checks
- Active hospitals



5.1 DETECTING ILL HEALTH EARLY THROUGH SECONDARY PREVENTION

One of the missions in the South Tees Health and Wellbeing Strategy is to find more disease and ill health earlier, and in doing so promote clinical prevention interventions and pathways across the system. One of the ways we are doing this is through screening to address some of the main causes of preventable death for our residents in South Tees.

Detecting a health condition early makes treatment more effective, encourages lifestyle changes to deal with the health issue, and provides individuals with information to make informed choices about their health. Health screening can ultimately save lives and result in better long-term outcomes.

Cancer screening is offered to many different target groups at risk of certain conditions based on their age, gender, and lifestyle conditions. This includes bowel, breast, lung and cervical screening programmes.

The NHS work closely with Public Health to:

- Promote the importance of screening to the public
- Ensure the screening offer is accessible, convenient and inclusive
- Engage with target groups to increase uptake and reduce inequalities in screening uptake



The following case studies highlights a successful approach of engaging high-risk communities in cancer screening, ensuring that more disease is identified at an earlier stage.

CASE STUDY:

LUNG CANCER SCREENING PROGRAMME

SECONDARY PREVENTION

CORE PRINCIPLES

- Collaboration and coproduction
- Health inequalities - priority populations
- Equity-focused
- Evidence based
- Life-course approach
- Data driven

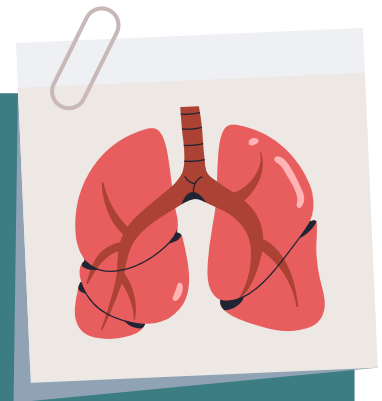
THE WHY

Lung cancer is one of the most common cancers in the UK, but outcomes are consistently poor. One reason for this is that people are often diagnosed at a late stage, where there are fewer treatment options available. Across the health sector, there is a desire to improve lung cancer outcomes, but this is complex and needs to be tackled using different approaches. The national roll-out of lung screening, to those with a history of smoking, is outlined in the NHS 10 Year Plan.

THE WHAT

The NHS Lung Cancer Screening Programme invites people aged 55-74 years of age who have ever smoked to a free lung health check and CT scan to find lung cancer early, thus significantly improving early diagnosis and treatment outcomes.

In South Tees eligible individuals are contacted by letter and telephone and invited to attend the mobile unit for a chest scan. To ensure ease of access mobile units are situated in local communities such as supermarkets or shopping centres ensuring screening services are in the heart of the community, closer to home making it easier for our residents to attend health screening appointments.



THE OUTCOME

Our uptake rates across the Tees Valley are higher than the England average despite covering areas of significant deprivation. The reason for higher uptake is the personalised care approach we provide through a telephone call and having appointments and CT scans within the communities where people live. These techniques used to recruit patients have been successfully trialled in cervical screening.

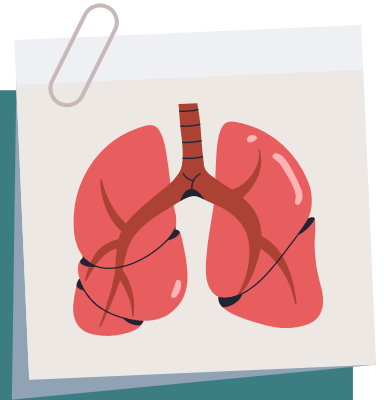
As well as higher than national average uptake rates, 80% of lung cancers have been diagnosed earlier at Stages 1 and 2 meaning treatment outcomes are better for individuals. We have also diagnosed approximately 40 other cancers that may have gone undiagnosed.

Jonathan Ferguson, Lung Cancer Surgeon and Clinical Lead for the NHS Lung Cancer Screening Programme in South Tees, said:

“Lung cancer is one of the most serious cancers we treat, and unfortunately it often develops without obvious symptoms in its early stages. By the time people feel unwell, the disease can already be advanced. Screening changes that. It allows us to detect lung cancer much earlier, sometimes before symptoms develop, which means we have more treatment options and a much better chance of successful treatment.

This NHS lung screening programme is designed to make early detection accessible to people in our communities, particularly those at higher risk. The goal is simple - to find cancer earlier, treat it more effectively, and ultimately save lives. What’s important is that screening is safe, quick, and can provide reassurance for the vast majority of people who attend.

Early diagnosis makes a real difference. It gives patients more time, more options, and more hope. That’s why programmes like this are so important for improving outcomes and protecting the health of our population.”



6. PREVENTION IN LOCAL AUTHORITIES

Local authorities are well-placed to lead on prevention. By shifting focus from crisis management to early intervention, local authorities can tackle the root causes of poor health and poverty. Services such as adult social care, public health, housing, planning, and community safety all work together to improve the health and wellbeing of our residents and reduce inequalities. Ensuring these services are joined up, and that teams work across services, directorates, and partnerships, allow us to strengthen these approaches further.

In South Tees, we have strong leadership and a commitment to prevention. Local authorities lead on the Health and Wellbeing Strategy and the Health and Wellbeing Board, where strategic priorities for the future of the population's health are agreed with local partners such as the NHS and VCSO. These mechanisms are important for ensuring there is shared accountability and governance regarding improving the health of our population.

Two key local authority services highlighted in this chapter are adult social care and planning.

6.1 PREVENTION IN ADULT SOCIAL CARE

Prevention is a key aspect of the social care offer in South Tees.

Adult social care continues to face challenges such as tighter local budgets, an ageing population with increased care needs, workforce shortages, and cost of living pressures. Prevention helps in the long-term to manage these pressures and minimise or delay significant care costs.

Adult social care is a key part of the public health system, working to improve health outcomes, prevent illness, and support individuals in maintaining a high quality of life. Adult social care and public health continue to work closely to identify risks early, intervene sooner and reduce preventable illness.

Key areas of work include:

- **Embedding evidence-based practice - working with the Health Determinants Research Collaboration (HDRC) and shared learning.**
- **Upskilling with training - providing Making Every Contact Count, mental health, dementia, healthy weight and other training to support earlier intervention.**
- **Improving access to preventative services and raising awareness of these - smoking cessation, substance misuse, NHS health checks.**
- **Shared strategic planning - our Service Level Agreements and Joint Strategic Needs Assessments support our joint working approach.**
- **Promote independence and healthy ageing - falls prevention, active care homes, Age Friendly approaches.**

These principles embed prevention across the system - aiming to improve long term health and reduce pressure on services.

Redcar & Cleveland's Adult Social Care Prevention Strategy (2024-27) highlights how services are focused on preventing the development of care needs, delaying the onset of needs, and giving people the support they need to regain their independence.

CASE STUDY:

MEADOWGATE - SUPPORTING RECOVERY, RESTORING INDEPENDENCE

TERTIARY PREVENTION

CORE PRINCIPLES

- Utilise lived experience
- Life-course approach
- Collaboration and co-production
- Health inequalities - priority populations
- Equity-focused

THE WHY

Many people are discharged from hospital medically stable but still lack the mobility, confidence, or independence needed to return home safely. Without additional support, this can lead to avoidable readmissions or long-term loss of independence. The Meadowgate Intermediate Care Centre is a 40 bed integrated residential facility designed to support adults who need short term, therapy led recovery and reablement following a hospital stay or a crisis in the community.

THE WHAT

At Meadowgate, individuals receive a structured programme of therapy led, supportive and enabling care, tailored to their personal goals. The centre prevents unnecessary hospital admissions, enables timely discharge from acute settings, and delivers focused rehabilitation aimed at helping each person achieve and maintain the highest possible level of mobility, health, and practical daily living skills.

Meadowgate helps people get back on their feet, return home safely, and move forward with improved wellbeing and a renewed sense of control over their lives.



THE OUTCOME

Meadowgate consistently delivers strong outcomes for adults who are recovering from illness or crisis. Feedback from those who have stayed highlights exceptional care, emotional support, encouragement, and sense of dignity they experience. Many describe improvements in both physical and mental health, increased confidence, and a renewed ability to live independently - often crediting the compassionate and dedicated staff for transforming a difficult period into a positive turning point.

Ethel's story shows exactly how this support and care can make a huge difference and have a positive outcome.

After two weeks in hospital following a mechanical fall, 103 year old Ethel was discharged to Meadowgate. Before her admission, she lived independently and visited her local shops three times a week. Her goal was simple but powerful: to return to her sheltered accommodation and regain her independence.

Through tailored therapy sessions focused on mobility and personal care, Ethel worked hard to rebuild her confidence. She also embraced life at Meadowgate, joining the weekly baking group and making biscuits, scones, and even a cake for the Christmas party.

Ethel met all her therapy goals and headed home just in time for Christmas to spend time with her wider family. She enjoyed her time at Meadowgate and will miss everyone but was excited to reunite with friends for dominoes and bingo.

The Pathways to Independence Lead and Manager of the Integrated Therapies Team, shared:

"It has been a pleasure to meet Ethel, who has made a big impression on the therapy team and wider reablement service. Helping people to return home to their own communities is a great feeling - and exactly what we strive for every day."

Ethel also shared memories of serving in the Second World War, examining cartridges for the British Army. When asked the secret to a long life, she replied:

"Hard work, I worked all my life."

That same determination has helped her regain her independence at Meadowgate - she is truly an inspiration.



6.2 CREATING HEALTHY PLACES

The built and natural environments play a crucial role in determining health outcomes and influencing health inequalities. Many preventable health conditions such as those linked to physical inactivity, poor diet, and social isolation are shaped by how we plan and design our communities. The environments people live in are deeply influenced by planning decisions, which in turn affect their ability to live healthy, fulfilling lives.

Planning and environmental decisions are critical to creating places that reduce risk and enable healthier choices. We work closely and have agreements with our planning, health protection and wider environment colleagues to:

- **Embed public health insight into planning policy and local plans - ensuring decisions are shaped by evidence on health inequalities.**
- **Design active safe/accessible spaces - including green spaces, safe neighbourhoods and active travel routes that support physical activity and wellbeing.**
- **Shape a healthier local food offer and advertising agenda - through guidance on takeaways and approaches that support healthier choices.**
- **Improve housing and environmental quality - working to monitor and improve air and water quality, environmental safety and initiatives to support improved living standards.**
- **Support health-promoting public spaces - including breastfeeding welcome venues, dementia friendly places and other inclusive initiatives.**

These decisions are a key lever in shaping broader determinants of health, including employment opportunities, access to green spaces, housing quality, transport options, and air quality. All these factors contribute to peoples' overall health and wellbeing.



CASE STUDY:

CREATING ACTIVE AND HEALTHY PLACES: EMBEDDING PHYSICAL ACTIVITY INTO PLANNING POLICY ACROSS SOUTH TEES



PRIMARY PREVENTION

CORE PRINCIPLES

- Place-based
- Health inequalities - priority populations
- Collaboration and co-production
- Evidence-based
- Shared practice, learning and evaluation

THE WHY

Research demonstrates that built and natural environments significantly influence health outcomes and inequalities. Planning is a critical lever affecting employment, green spaces, housing quality, transport, and air quality - all fundamental to health and wellbeing.

In South Tees, despite both local planning authorities recommending Health Impact Assessments (HIAs) for developments, none had ever been submitted. Previous attempts by Public Health South Tees (PHST) to engage Planning Departments had limited success due to mutual misunderstandings, time pressures, and heavy workloads. There was a clear need to embed health considerations into Local Plan policy and to influence the built environment to drive population-level improvements in physical activity.

THE WHAT

You've Got This (YGT) takes a systems approach to tackling physical inactivity at a population level in South Tees. This involves recognising that individual behaviour is impacted by many factors including organisational responses to physical activity, the physical environment, policy, and wider determinants. There is a strong emphasis on insight and learning, and the learning has wider applicability in understanding our responses to other complex issues in our place around health.

The YGT programme is funded externally by Sport England, with the work and the core team integrated within Public Health South Tees.

You've Got This (YGT) took a relationship-first approach, investing time to understand planners lived experiences, workloads, and challenges. Through facilitated meetings and workshops involving Planning, Transport Planning, and Public Health, they uncovered limited mutual understanding but also a shared passion for healthier environments.

**YOU'VE
GOT
THIS.**



The collaborative process revealed that dedicated resources were needed to bridge departments. This led to an innovative recruitment approach through Public Practice, a not-for-profit organisation that embeds diverse built environment professionals into public sector roles. In Spring 2023, they successfully recruited a Creating Active and Healthy Places Lead - a professional with expertise in architectural practice and behavioural science.

Initially funded by YGT for two years, employed through Middlesbrough Council (MC), and line-managed by PHST, the role focuses on fostering Public Health Spatial Planning collaboration and exploring opportunities across councils and networks. It will look to embed physical activity into Local Plan policy, whilst providing capacity to apply a health and wellbeing lens to all policies, strengthening and exploring opportunities across the councils and current networks.

THE OUTCOME

Now in its third year, the role has delivered significant results:

Policy Integration:

- Completed Health in All Policies assessment of Middlesbrough Council's emerging Local Plan
- Subject to the adoption of the emerging local plan, the postholder has secured requirement for HIAs on all residential developments over 100 dwellings (MC)
- Developed an award-level HIA screening process based on health, IMD, and open space deprivation (MC)

Capacity Building:

- Co-designed Middlesbrough Council's first HIA planning toolkit
- Designed and delivered Health in Spatial Planning Workshops for planners and members

This programme of work demonstrates that sustainable change requires understanding planners' constraints, dedicated bridging resources, long-term relationship building, innovative recruitment, and integration of health into core planning frameworks.

Next steps include further embedding health into policy across Redcar & Cleveland, sharing learning regionally and nationally, and building momentum for healthy, active, equitable places.

7. WORKING WITH COMMUNITIES

We know that to prevent ill health in our most vulnerable communities, it is essential that we develop and maintain strong connections with those communities. We therefore adopt a community resilience approach by creating links within the communities where people live, work, and socialise. Understanding local needs, lived experiences, and the barriers people face is essential to designing effective interventions.

Our Health and Wellbeing Strategy stresses our commitment to working with a wide range of community partners to explore local issues and challenges, agree priorities to respond collaboratively, and use collective resources.

'Communities' can be defined in a number of ways; if we are to effectively empower communities, we need to be clear about how; where and why they exist. We achieve this by creating connections, working with trusted local voices and by working closely with our VCSO partners.

Recent initiatives that strengthen prevention in communities include:

- **The South Tees Health Champions Network**
- **Collaborative community events and engagement**
- **Training for Community Champions in the 5 clinical conditions related to Core20Plus5 to provide information and education on these conditions to the community**
- **Engaging our ethnic minority communities through working with trusted voices and faith settings**

By working in genuine partnership with communities, we can co-create solutions that are relevant, accessible, and sustainable. This approach builds trust, empowers individuals, and ensures that prevention is not something done to communities, but with them. This can then lead to innovative and creative initiatives and projects that can have a real impact on ill health prevention. An example of a secondary prevention approach in partnership with local communities is the community blood pressure initiative.



CASE STUDY:

BLOOD PRESSURE (BP) TESTING IN COMMUNITIES

SECONDARY PREVENTION

CORE PRINCIPLES

- Collaboration and coproduction
- Health inequalities - priority populations
- Utilise lived experience
- Evidence based
- Equity-focused



THE WHY

High blood pressure is often called the silent killer because it has no warning signs, yet it is a leading preventable cause of heart attacks, strokes and kidney disease.

THE WHAT

Public Health South Tees has proactively worked with community partners to encourage high Blood Pressure (BP) case finding in community settings during 2024 and 2025. Staff worked with local community organisations to bring blood pressure checks directly into the community, providing mobile blood pressure kiosks and monitors and providing training to local community members so they are able to take readings, interpret the results and advise participants on the next steps and lifestyle.

The work focused on reaching target groups who may be at risk, dispelling myths, providing education and raising awareness, while identifying individuals with high blood pressure and referring them to their GP for treatment and ongoing management. Checks have been provided in a range of community organisations, hubs, faith centres and events, with hundreds of checks being completed.

THE OUTCOME

One recent visit to Al Madina Mosque in Middlesbrough highlights why these checks are so important. During Friday Prayers, Mohammad Altaf Hussain was approached by staff and encouraged to have his blood pressure checked, despite feeling healthy. His readings were elevated, and after using a home monitoring kit and visiting his GP he was prescribed medication and has since made lifestyle changes to his diet and improved physical activity.

“I am really grateful that the mobile kiosk was brought to the Mosque and other community venues. I’ve not had my blood pressure checked in recent years, and if it weren’t for this opportunity, my high blood pressure could have gone unnoticed and caused serious harm to my health.”

- Mohammad Altaf Hussain.



8. RESEARCH-LED PREVENTION

Research in the prevention space spans behavioural, environmental, social, and structural determinants of health, and increasingly draws on whole system and place-based approaches. It can illuminate how everyday factors - such as housing quality, employment conditions, food environments, social connectedness, and access to green spaces - shape long term health trajectories. By generating evidence about these determinants, prevention research supports policy, service redesign, and investment decisions that prioritise upstream action rather than downstream treatment.

The Health Determinants Research Collaborative (HDRC) South Tees in collaboration with Teesside University have been funded by the National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR) with the aim of becoming a beacon for research in prevention and tackling health inequalities. The programme is funded by NIHR to enable local authorities to become more research active, embedding a culture of evidenced based decision making.

Table 5 and 6 outline some of the research ideas the HDRC is supporting under two goals, from the South Tees Health and Wellbeing Strategy, pertinent to prevention.

Food, nutrition and weight	
Child pestering for unhealthy food and drinks: A mixed-method exploration of environmental triggers, parent and child experience, and impact on purchasing.	Being developed
Understanding food provision and eating environments in English special schools.	Funded
Addressing the importance of physical fitness to reduce health inequalities for children and young people.	Being developed
Healthcare and disadvantaged groups	
Barriers and facilitators to ethnic minoritised groups accessing smoking cessation/ tobacco harm reduction services in South Tees.	Being developed

Table 5: Reduce the prevalence of the leading risk factors for ill health and premature mortality

Healthcare and disadvantaged groups	
Reducing skin cancer risk from sunbeds: evidence to inform public health regulation.	Being developed
EQUITY in Black Adult health (EQUITA)- a randomised feasibility trial of a co-produced and faith-placed intervention to increase uptake of breast, cervical, bowel, and AAA screening in the North East of England, Leeds and Scotland.	Funded

Table 6: Find more diseases and ill health earlier and promote clinical prevention and pathways across the system

Together, these projects span early life environments, behavioural risk factors, equitable access to prevention services, and community driven approaches to earlier diagnosis.

Investing in and expanding research in ill health prevention, can better anticipate future needs, tackle inequalities at their root, and create environments that enable people to live healthier, longer lives.



Figure 16: Research to reduce leading risk factors and detect ill health earlier

9. CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATIONS

CONCLUSION

This report makes the case for prevention across our local health and care system, to help South Tees realise its ambitions to be a place where everyone starts well, lives well, and ages well.

It cannot be emphasised enough the role that strong and effective local partnerships play in delivering prevention at all levels.

Our case studies highlight areas of good practice, while our recommendations set out how we can continue to deliver and strengthen projects and programmes that implement preventative approaches to improve the health and wellbeing of our communities.

We will achieve this by continuing to work in line with our key prevention principles, such as being evidence-based and data-led, as well as ensuring that our work is place-based, strives to reduce inequalities, while embedding collaboration and community engagement throughout.

RECOMMENDATIONS

SMOKING

- To achieve the 5% smoking prevalence ambition by 2030, continued investment in the South Tees system wide smoking cessation infrastructure is essential. Strengthening and sustaining our partnership pathways will be critical to ensuring effective identification and targeted support for priority groups across our communities.

ALCOHOL

- To improve the early identification of harmful drinking and develop a targeted prevention and harm-reduction campaign for South Tees.

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

- To embed and broaden physical activity offers in care homes and schools, whilst sustaining the collaborative, system-wide physical activity principles established through the You've Got This programme.

OBESITY

- Embed the Healthy Weight Declaration into core South Tees policy and governance so that creating healthier environments becomes a shared, system-wide responsibility across all departments and partners.

HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE

- Strengthen joint working between Public Health and Adult Social Care by improving connections across teams and sharing public health intelligence to support joint approaches for identifying emerging needs.
- Embed a population health, prevention, and health equity lens across clinical pathways with the aim of reducing health inequalities in access, experience, and outcomes.
- Poverty-proofing our public services by ensuring that services are fully accessible and responsive to the needs of low-income households.

WIDER DETERMINANTS

- Strengthen a 'Health in All Policies' approach across the council by identifying priority policies for review, and work with wider stakeholders to embed preventative and inequalities-focused approaches into work programmes and plans, aligning with the Marmot principles and our socio-economic duties.
- Lived experience - working with our communities and building on existing insights to understand poverty in South Tees, and to design and co-deliver interventions that ensure policies are effective and meaningful.

COMMUNITIES

- Build community capacity for prevention and embed prevention approaches within key communities to address health inequalities.

SYSTEM WIDE

- In our role as anchor organisations, we will work to address the drivers of poverty within South Tees by targeting employment opportunities towards residents in our most deprived wards and ensuring the delivery of social value across all our contracts.
- Develop and implement a Prevention Framework for South Tees to support system partners to embed prevention within their organisations and services, through a shared understanding of prevention, an agreed set of principles, and the use of evidenced based tools.

HDRC

- Partners to pledge to progress and support prevention focused research to improve outcomes for residents in South Tees.



10. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

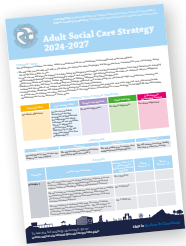
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Louise Robinson	Service Manager - Prevention and Partnerships (Adult Social Care), Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council

11. FURTHER READING



South Tees Health and Wellbeing Strategy (2024-30)

<https://www.middlesbrough.gov.uk/media/sa5pgthb/health-wellbeing-strategy-2024-2030.pdf>



Redcar and Cleveland Adult Social Care Strategy (2024-27)

<https://www.redcar-cleveland.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2024-12/Adult%20Social%20Care%20Strategy%202024-2027.pdf>



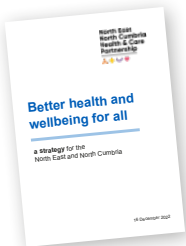
Middlesbrough Council Adult Social Care Strategy (2025-35)

<https://moderngov.middlesbrough.gov.uk/documents/s38054/Appendix%20-%20Adult%20Social%20Care%20Strategy.pdf>



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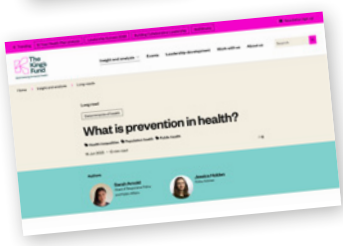
NHS North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Strategy

<https://northeastnorthcumbria.nhs.uk/media/ifgjdjfx/integrated-care-strategy-better-health-and-wellbeing.pdf>



Fit for the Future – NHS 10 Year Plan

<https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/6888a0b1a11f859994409147/fit-for-the-future-10-year-health-plan-for-england.pdf>



What is Prevention in Health? – The King's Fund

<https://www.kingsfund.org.uk/insight-and-analysis/long-reads/what-is-prevention-in-health>

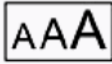
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