



OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD

Date: Wednesday 18th March, 2026
Time: 4.30 pm
Venue: Mandela Room (Municipal Buildings)

AGENDA

1. Welcome and Fire Evacuation Procedure
2. Apologies for Absence
To receive any apologies for absence.
3. Declarations of Interest
To receive any Declarations of Interest.
4. Minutes - Overview and Scrutiny Board - 25 February 2026 3 - 6
To receive the minutes of the previous meeting.
5. Executive Forward Work Programme
To consider forthcoming Executive Decisions.
6. Scrutiny Chairs Update
To receive updates from Scrutiny Panel Chairs.
- 6.1 Forward Plan Actions Progress
To provide members of the overview and scrutiny board with an update on outstanding forward plan actions arising from the previous meeting.

- *Pest Control Services*
- *Bereavement Services*

7. Executive Member Update - Environment and Sustainability 7 - 14

The Executive Member for Environment and Sustainability will be in attendance to provide an update on his portfolio.

8. Final Report of Place Scrutiny Panel - Barriers to Regeneration 15 - 28

To receive the final report of the Place Scrutiny Panel.

9. Final Report of the Adult Social Care and Health Scrutiny Panel - Healthy Place Making 29 - 48

To receive the final report of the Adult Social Care and Health Scrutiny Panel.

10. 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 10 March 2026

MEMBERSHIP

Councillors L Young (Chair), J Ewan (Vice-Chair), D Branson, E Clynch, D Coupe, J Kabuye, L Lewis, T Mohan, I Morrish, J Platt, M Saunders, Z Uddin, G Wilson and J Young

Assistance in accessing information

Should you have any queries on accessing the Agenda and associated information please contact Scott Bonner/ Sue Lightwing, 01642 729708/ 01642 729712, scott_bonner@middlesbrough.gov.uk/ sue_lightwing@middlesbrough.gov.uk

This document was classified as: OFFICIAL

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD

A meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Board was held on Wednesday 25 February 2026.

PRESENT: Councillors L Young (Chair), J Ewan (Vice-Chair), D Branson, E Clynch, D Coupe, B Hubbard (Substitute) (Substitute for M Saunders), J Kabuye, L Lewis, I Morrish, J Platt, G Wilson and J Young

PRESENT BY INVITATION: Councillors T Furness

OFFICERS: C Benjamin, S Bonner, R Horniman and E Scollay

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Councillors T Mohan, M Saunders and Z Uddin

25/62 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

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

25/63 **MINUTES - OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD - 28 JANUARY 2026**

A Member stated they had identified several changes in the minutes and had spoken to the Democratic Services Officer about them.

With the Board's approval, the Democratic Services Officer agreed to implement the changes.

Notwithstanding the proposed changes, the minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Board meeting held on 28 January 2026 were submitted and approved as a correct record.

25/64 **SCRUTINY CHAIRS UPDATE**

The Chair of the Place Panel advised that at the last meeting of the Panel on 16 February updates were received around flood risk assessments and RIPA. The Panel also finalised the recommendations of its Barriers to Regeneration Report and discussed the town's bicentennial celebrations.

The Chair of the Children's Scrutiny Panel advised that the Panel's next meeting was to be on the 9 March where the updates would be received on its review into Out of Area Placement and a recent Ofsted inspection.

The Chair of the Adult Social Care and Health Scrutiny Panel advised that the Panel had last met on the 23 February where information had been received relating to its review into Violence Against Women and Girls. The Panel had also considered its final report into Healthy Placemaking and would be submitted to the next meeting of OSB. The Panel had also received updates relating to CQC updates.

25/65 **EXECUTIVE FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME**

The Chair presented the Executive Forward wWork programme and sought questions from the Board.

Members requested more information relating to the forward plan entries relating to Pest Control and Bereavement Services.

25/66 **FORWARD PLAN ACTIONS PROGRESS**

The Democratic Services Officer advised Members that an email had been circulated to the Board providing an update.

25/67 **EXECUTIVE MEMBER UPDATE - DEVELOPMENT**

The Chair welcomed the Executive Member for Development to the meeting and invited him to deliver his presentation.

- The Executive Member for Development delivered his presentation to the Board and made the following points.
- The Development portfolio contributed to the Mayor's priorities which included fair access to high quality homes, securing well paid jobs, strengthening the local economy and strengthening local transport links.
- Key staff within the Regeneration and Housing Directorate were provided to the Board.
- In terms of progress over the previous 12 months, all scheduled projects had begun which included construction of the Nunthorpe Community Centre, redevelopment of the Old Town Hall and Outwood Riverside Academy. It was clarified that, so far as was known, all school years would move into the new school together rather than on a phased basis.
- With regards to the Town Centre the Council had limited control over this other than creating a suitable environment for businesses to grow. Members discussed the status of several units in the town centre which included the provision for seating outside those units and that Stack had extended its lease.
- It was clarified that footfall within Captain Cook Square was excellent which, in turn, helped attract inward investment.
- It was clarified that Stack opened in approximately Christmas 2024.
- Members discussed the possibility of small-scale events in Captain Cook Square and how some seasonal events had already taken place.
- In terms of housing, there was a public examination of the Local Plan taking place during the following month which provided residents the opportunity to comment on the Local Plan.
- A Member queried the status of an access road on a housing development. It was clarified that the road was to be used for site access only and had no definitive opening date.
- Church House was also cited as an example of housing development as this was being brought back into use. However, it was unclear how much of the building had been occupied.
- The Chair queried if the same developer for Church House had plans for other properties they owned in the town. It was clarified that a report was scheduled for consideration by Executive regarding how the Council engages with partners in this regard.
- The status of the Gresham Development was queried and it was clarified this was a TVCA led development, but it was understood that the scheme was considering a mix housing types on the site.
- The Council was also working with strategic partners to improve bus routes in the town.
- Looking forward to the next 12 months several important developments were planned. These included Middlehaven which had seen a credible developer with access to investment opportunities, taking interest in the site to develop the area with the Old Town Hall as the centre piece. Members discussed the possibility that some of the land on the Middlehaven site was contaminated due to its industrial heritage. It was clarified that much of the land had been cleaned up but there was still work to do.
- More development was underway in the town centre which included BohoX and the employment hub.
- A discussion took place about what enforcement powers the Council had in terms of acquiring empty properties and redeveloping them. It was clarified the Council's position on such properties was limited. Following a question about the status of the former Junction Pub, it was confirmed there was no information about this.
- The Chair asked if there was a stakeholder strategy for development in the town and used Stockton Council's development of the riverside as an example of a strategy at play. It was commented that developments in Stockton were on a larger scale to those in Middlesbrough. It was also commented that the MDC had a role to play in certain developments in Middlesbrough over which the Council had little control.
- It was confirmed there was no further development to be undertaken in Centre Square. However, there was some redevelopment work around the lake area, but this was in keeping with the lake. It was also hoped that significant lettings would be made for Centre Square one and two, respectively.

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- The Chief Executive commented that work was being carried out to improve the way in which the Council engaged with external partners. This work was, in part, informed by the recent LGA peer challenge. It was important that all the elements of development in the town linked together, such as improved housing for younger people and for an improved nighttime economy.
- Following a query about incorporating a casino into such developments it was confirmed there were no plans for this.
- The Chief Executive and Executive Member commented that development plan needed to be managed rather than too tightly controlled as this may stifle effective development. It was also important that development plans move beyond political terms and had longer term outlooks such as investment in Family Hubs.
- Members discussed the possibility of using heritage assets to attract visitors to the town, with the Transporter Bridge used an example. However, it was acknowledged there was a lot of competition from other areas this regard.
- It was clarified that of the 3,500 houses proposed as part of the Middlehaven development, there would be a broad mix of housing to suit a variety of need and tastes, including flats and maisonettes. This would be delivered in three phases over 10 years.
- A discussion took place about the need to improve road networks alongside development opportunities to ensure business growth. It was acknowledged there was a need to balance effective road networks with development works and that Place Leaders Partnership would consider this.
- A Member commented that developments in the north of the town could potentially ease pressure on the south of the town where the majority of development was taking place.
- The Chair thanked the Executive Member for Development for his presentation.

AGREED that the information presented be noted.

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OSB REVIEW - POVERTY, ITS IMPACT, AND EFFORTS TO TACKLE IT

The Chair welcomed the Chief Executive to the meeting and invited him to provide his information.

The Council conducted a poverty sprint which brought key staff together to understand what the key issues were concerning poverty. Following this, an action plan was created with associated recommendations. An updated version of the action plan showed that good progress had been made against the actions, but that it was sometimes difficult for work to develop traction. This was not a lack of will from officers, it was more about confusion on how to proceed.

The current Council Plan, introduced in 2023, followed a standard format. At the time of the Plan's creation, it was discussed if the Council Plan should have been thematic or not. Leeds Council was used as an example whereby it was decided that all Council activity was undertaken with a view of improving the lives of Children and Young People. Adopting this approach gave the Council a clear lens to view their activity. Middlesbrough adopted a pillar approach to its Council Plan, which meant Council business was delivered according to themed pillars. While this meant business was undertaken in the correct manner, it led to a question of whether the Council should adopt a poverty strategy.

There was also a need to question how the Council framed poverty, namely should it be viewed via social value and childhood enrichment. Many actions arising from the Council Plan applied to all of these. Part of the confusion for officers was the number of policy lenses available, oftentimes these were viewed simultaneously.

There was a need to corral this issue in a language that was understandable. The example of the Blair governments was cited during which language was changed which showed poverty was not just about a lack of money. This included the concept of social exclusion which included if a family bread winner lost their job, money would still be available, but that family would experience more challenging times and could lead to a lack of social participation. Adopting this approach encompassed a range of other factors associated with poverty.

How was approach was articulated involved political choice. The Executive Forward Plan was not quite where the Chief Executive hoped it would be, and some systems did work in the way they should. As such, reports were scheduled for Executive consideration about refreshing the Council Plan and how to enhance the Council's performance framework, with the reintroduction

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of balanced score cards cited as an example. There would be regular performance clinics with individual departments and part of this would be contributions to thematic pieces of work. There was a question about how the Council simplified the number of lenses the Council looked through.

At this point in the meeting the Chief Executive invited questions from the Board.

A Member queried how integrating poverty into a thematic approach could be applied to all Council functions, using Planning and the current emphasis of building executive homes rather than social housing. The Chief Executive commented that while there may not always be perfect fit, there were areas it could work such as working in partnership with external stakeholders to secure empty properties and bringing them back into use.

It was commented that addressing poverty affected all aspects of Middlesbrough and queried how this could be embedded effectively. It was clarified that, regarding anchor institutions, they would always have their own approach to this issue, but that working in partnership with them was important. This also involved political direction and that a range of work was being undertaken to capture the impact of this work but there was no one solution.

A conversation took place about how communities were planned and how this could contribute to alleviating poverty, with Coulby Newham used as an example as this area was based on a mix of income levels.

Members discussed how the work of the Integrated Care Boards could support the poverty agenda. It was also commented that Integrated Care Boards were undergoing significant reorganisation and as such there was some uncertainty around them.

A Member queried if the Council was embedding a Poverty Strategy and had the Council spoken to key partners around this. The Chief Executive clarified that improved working with outside organisations was a key outcome of the corporate peer challenge. As such the Council was engaged with a consultancy about it can best engage with young people as this was a key component of the Council's work.

A Member queried if Council Planners were considering green spaces as part of the Poverty Sprint. It was clarified that the Poverty Sprint did not discuss green space specifically, but rather about housing capacity. It was commented that caution should be used when using the term "poverty", as some individuals may have met a definition of poverty but not identified as such.

A Member commented that it would be useful for the Board to have access to Leeds Council Plan.

ORDERED that

1. The Leeds Council Plan be circulated to Members.
2. The information presented be noted.

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

None.

OSB Update

Peter Gavigan Executive Member Environment and Sustainability.

Bereavement Services

- Work on the extension to Thorntree Cemetery will begin soon.
- As part of the extension, the existing drainage system is being assessed, any required works will be carried out.
- Burials at Thorntree will continue as normal. We will keep families and Councillors informed, working with the Communications team to ensure any updates are shared appropriately.
- We are continuing to explore long term options and locations for future burial provision.
- A feasibility study will soon be underway in Acklam Cemetery for the cremators and land use.

Waste Services

- Deliveries have started in Middlesbrough for Food waste bins and caddies and Paper & Cardboard Red lidded bin.
- The deliveries so far have been positively received by residents, with very few refusing to take the bins.
- The website reflects the estimated delivery timescale for households.
- Emails are being circulated to residents closer to the time of their deliveries to remind residents to look out for them.
- Bins are being tagged with a coming soon label, 2 weeks before delivery.
- Residents can sign up for reminders to be sent to them for confirmation of what bin to put out on the relevant day.

Alleys

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- Baiting in alleys is scheduled every 10 days.
- We are in the process of rolling out steel bait boxes in each alley.
- Alley Cleansing is scheduled fortnightly (working Tuesday – Friday) which includes removal all waste and sweeping the alley.
- Where issues of fly tipping occur, these are reported to the Enforcement team directly.
- Deep Cleans will occur on a quarterly basis which include tasks such as moss removal, detritus removal and weed spraying.

City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement (CRSTS)

CRSTS is a programme of Government funding allocation provided to Tees Valley Combined Authority to make improvements for Sustainable transport on a regional approach. In Middlesbrough, this covers the following projects:

- **Linthorpe Road cycleway removal –**
 - Anticipated completion April.
 - Design changes have been undertaken to improve/retain safety features (PUFFIN crossing at Garnet Street and retention of Southfield Lane closure. Cycleway will be removed, and 47 parking bays re-instated.
- **Newport Road Cycleway and Bus improvements**
 - Newport interchange to Gilkes Street; creating continuous cycleway and extended bus lanes.
 - Final designs on-going. Anticipating to commence works in 2026, lead/managed by TVCA.
- **Stainton Way/Dalby Way Bus/pedestrian and cycle improvements**
 - Signalisation of Dalby Way; creating ped/cycle accessibility and improvements at Kings Academy roundabout. Anticipating to commence works in 2026, lead/managed by TVCA.
- **Longlands Road Cycleway**
 - Marton Road to Middlesbrough boundary. Scheme extension (within Redcar) to connect to Tees Works/Redcar. Anticipating re-consulting on scheme on 2026.
- **Levick Crescent/Croft Ave/Green Lane/Emerson Avenue/Keith Road/Marton Burn Road Cycleway provision**
 - Detailed design to accommodate comments from consultation on-going. A report will be presented to Exec in 2026 for decision.
- **Marton Road cycleway/bus improvements**
 - Designs on-going. Consultation to commence in 2026. Lead/managed by TVCA
 - Cycleway provisions, Bus lane and linking to other local cycleway projects currently underway (**'Ladgate to Longlands'**).

Transporter Bridge

2024

Structural assessment completed.

Structural Health

Monitoring installed to understand how the bridge reacts to wind, temp and tidal activity.

2025

Proposed Allocation of £30m from TVCA and the DFT

Preliminary design of repair and strengthening commenced.

Special inspection of backstay cables and tower base steelwork.

Point cloud survey of the entire structure completed.

2026

Preliminary design to be completed.

Monitoring System to be upgraded

Installation of Peregrine nest box and camera

Early Contractor Involvement (ECI) Tender – issued March

Contractor to be appointed in Summer, for early contractor engagement to input into Preliminary Design.

2026/27

Detailed design

Stakeholder engagement to identify and ascertain additional (national) potential funding, e.g. DfT, MHCLG and Historic England.

2027-2032

Construction on site

Highways

- Delivery of Council Capital Programme
 - 17 footways schemes undertaken inclusive of accommodation works to footways to the rear of verge scheme.
 - 12 Verge schemes undertaken.
 - Obsolete Teesside Crossing kerbs removed where possible on these scheme.
 - Offer of a reduced cost to vehicle crossings while on site to reduce number of illegal vehicle crossing points which in turn reduces footpath damage.
 - Installation of dropped pedestrian crossing kerbs on both schemes where possible.
 - 5 standalone chicane and pedestrian crossing small schemes completed.
 - A174 Marton Road Overbridge commenced.
- Carriageway programme 2025/26
 - 31 locations on unclassified such as – Strait Lane, The Grove & Broughton Avenue.
 - 7 locations on classified with notable locations being - A66, Marton Road, Stokesley Road & Longlands Road
 - While undertaking the c/w schemes the lining is replaced and extended where possible to the extents of the closure points
 - Additional faded lining programme devised and commenced. Annual addition to the programme.
 - Off-peak working to minimise disruption to bus services and public.

Responsive Maintenance

- **Highways**

- Growth Fund has enabled additional investment and has secured an additional staff resource of up to 10.
- Significant benefits realised by increasing the volume of repairs being completed on time, across all aspects within the service, including; working with our insurers to assist in mitigating risk and overall insurance claims and faster turnaround in dealing with Councillor Gateway requests and completing works.

- **Pothole repairs**

- Responsive team have repaired 8,846 potholes , which is a significant increase on previous years.
- In addition, the Council **achieved a Green for its overall rating for highways maintenance.**

- **Drainage/Gully Cleansing**

- The introduction of the Gully Smart system has allowed the Council to target specific areas on cyclical cleansing frequency, rather than being reactive.
- Between August 2025 - Jan 2026, the Council has cleaned 12,000 drains, reducing the number of reactive callouts during significant rainfall.

- **Becks/Watercourses**

- Secured funding via the Growth Fund to recruitment is underway to create a dedicated becks team; resulting in a proactive service to target hot spot areas and ensure a cyclical cleansing programme is in place.

- **Training / Workforce Development**

- All Highways staff are being trained to a minimum of NVQ level 2 in Highways maintenance. 90% complete.

MIDDLESBROUGH COUNCIL

Final Report of the Place Scrutiny Panel

BARRIERS TO REGENERATION

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THE AIM OF THE SCRUTINY REVIEW

1. The aim of the review was to identify the barriers to regeneration in Middlesbrough and investigate how more businesses can be attracted to the town.

TERMS OF REFERENCE

2. The terms of reference, for the scrutiny panel's review, are as follows:
 - A) To establish what the Barriers to Regeneration are in Middlesbrough
 - B) To identify good practice from other local authorities in relation to attracting businesses to the area
 - C) To investigate what measures are in place to make people feel safer in our town centre and neighbourhoods
 - D) To gain an understanding of current legislation available to local authorities to tackle anti-social behaviour

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

3. The mainstay of UK high streets for much of the 20th century, retail is now in structural decline. The growth of e-commerce means councils and communities are now nursing an increasing number of vacant shops in town centres.
4. Around one in seven shops and one in five shopping centres units are now empty. Some town centres are now caught in a vicious cycle of boarded-up shops, declining attractiveness and falling footfall.
5. Already under pressure from online sales, the pandemic triggered a wave of retailer insolvencies in 2020. Some retailers like M&S and Next decided to relocate to out-of-town retail parks. Rents and service charges on retail parks are generally lower than in town centres. Internal store layouts are typically more efficient, while easy car parking and often longer opening hours add to the retail park appeal for shoppers. Higher energy costs and interest rates are squeezing households and businesses alike.
6. Although all towns across the UK have been affected by the decline in high street shopping, poorer towns have generally been hit harder than more prosperous towns. While there are exceptions to the rule, in general more deprived towns have a higher proportion of empty shops than relatively prosperous towns. One obvious explanation for this relationship is that people in more affluent towns have more disposable income.
7. An economic assessment on Middlesbrough had been carried out in 2017/18¹ it was recognised in the assessment that Middlesbrough needed to shift its focus away from a 'need based' retail model toward a 'want based' experience economy.
8. The assessment identified that Middlesbrough should prioritise; leisure, culture, events and unique offerings that cannot be replicated online.

¹ [Middlesbrough Town Centre Economic Assessment 2017/18 – Report to Middlesbrough Council](#)

9. Additional recommendations from the assessment included, increase use of transport links and improve signage, investment in public realm and safety and strategies to reduce vacancies through alternative uses.
10. A further economic assessment on Middlesbrough was carried out in 2025 which focused on Middlesbrough's current position including emerging trends and how Middlesbrough was responding to those.
11. Key points summarised from the initial findings of the latest assessment included:
12. **Commercial Change:** Total commercial premises in the town centre had decreased, primarily due to a substantial reduction in retail units. Retail now accounted for a smaller share of total space, reflecting diversification into hospitality, leisure, and office uses.
13. **Vacancy and Performance:** Vacancy rates had fallen to around 14.6%, slightly below the national town centre average (14%) and outperforming comparable centres in the Northeast (17%).
14. **Demographic and Residential Growth:** Middlesbrough's population had grown from 140,600 (2018) to 148,285 (2022), driven by increased student numbers, infrastructure investment, and inward migration. The population was more diverse, younger, and increasingly skilled, presenting opportunities to broaden the visitor and consumer base.
15. **Transport and Accessibility:** Public transport use had recovered strongly post-pandemic. Rail passenger numbers had risen above 2018 levels, supported by a £35m station redevelopment. Car parking use had declined, indicating a gradual modal shift toward sustainable transport, although bus travel in Middlesbrough was down by 56.6% in 2023 when compared with 2011 levels.² Middlesbrough needs a transport system that is up to date and fit for purpose. park & ride, improving bus service. (Roseberry parkway)
16. **Crime and Safety:** Crime and ASB had reduced significantly despite staying above national and regional averages, with total recorded crimes down nearly 7% in 2024/25 and ASB incidents halved since 2019. Collaborative policing and place-based initiatives had improved perceptions of safety and confidence.
17. **Spending and Economic Activity:** Transaction volumes were up despite lower average spend per transaction, suggesting broader engagement with a more varied town centre offer. Retail leakage remained high (44%), particularly to Teesside Park, underlining the need for continued place enhancement and loyalty retention.

SUMMARY OF EVIDENCE:

Term of Reference A - To establish what the Barriers to Regeneration are in Middlesbrough.

18. In relation to global economic conditions, the UK was currently in a difficult period and a lot of investment decisions are on hold. Middlesbrough was affected by the uncertainty due to a lot of companies and investments being based in other countries or London. During times of buoyant activity Middlesbrough benefited but was equally impacted when economic conditions were not so good.

² Friends of the Earth [Transport Map 2023-10](#) & data [bustrip-trends-by-authority_0.xlsx](#)

19. The market for office accommodation had not only been impacted by global economic conditions but also by the Covid-19 pandemic. The number of people hybrid-working had increased, and this had reduced the requirement for office space. Although this was changing again, and companies were now looking at bigger floorspace, they were not at the size required pre-Covid-19.
20. Retail is in decline and in the two years before the pandemic there was approximately 1 million square feet of floor space in Middlesbrough which needed to be reduced by one third. Post-pandemic, at least half of that space needed to be removed. Not all this retail space is owned by Middlesbrough Council, there are four shopping malls in the town centre. If all the current retail could be moved into one place, the town centre would be thriving.
21. In terms of the political arena, the Middlesbrough Development Corporation (MDC) is also operating within Middlesbrough and charged with achieving regeneration. Due to the change in Government in 2024 there has been some confusion around the MDC and how the proposed asset transfer from Middlesbrough Council would take place. Senior staff have now been appointed to the MDC and Middlesbrough Council staff will be working with them.
22. Middlesbrough has grown up into an area that has performed a city centre function for the wider Tees Valley. However, the city centre function has evolved due to the decline of its role as the primary hub for retail and office work, driven by changes in technology, consumer habits and post-pandemic working arrangements. The problem is getting more and more acute as time goes on. If Middlesbrough was to be built from scratch the town centre would need to be a third or a quarter of the size that it was currently.
23. The key issues for Middlesbrough are the perception of ASB and crime impacting on regeneration objectives and decreased footfall exacerbated by poor transport links.
24. The issue of ASB was identified frequently by potential investors in Middlesbrough, highlighting issues with how the town centre is perceived.
25. Due to the lack of natural footfall in the town centre ASB is more visible. Even though there are crime statistics to evidence that Middlesbrough is no less safe than other town, there are often day drinkers and drug users visible in Centre Square where the Council owns premium accommodation.
26. Middlesbrough Council carried out a consultation of 21 external local stakeholders³ between December 2024 and February 2025 whereby a simple questionnaire had been sent to stakeholders and partners asking them to highlight areas of critical importance to their organisation and how Middlesbrough could collectively work towards addressing those issues and boost Middlesbrough's economic prospects.
27. The five top challenges that were identified from the consultation⁴ were:
 - ASB and crime
 - Empty Properties in specific areas
 - Reduced funding from central government
 - Poor perception of the town

³ [Middlesbrough Council Regeneration Strategy Questionnaire](#)

⁴ [Middlesbrough Council Regeneration Strategy Consultation Responses February 2025](#)

- Footfall and working patterns

28. In addition, the Stakeholders identified that the following changes needed to be made to improve Middlesbrough:

- Safer environment – additional lighting, policing and street security
- Improve the physical environment
- High profile and consistent policing
- Animation and events are key to rejuvenating the town centre, people need a reason to come into town
- Diversity – repurpose vacant units and blight sites

29. Stakeholders felt that Middlesbrough need to collectively concentrate investment or apply for funding to:

- Make the town centre feel safe and increase police and security presence
- Focus attractions and events in the town centre
- Rebalance/diversify Middlesbrough's economy
- Improve the physical environment

Term of Reference B – To identify good practice from other local authorities in relation to attracting businesses to the area

30. Town centre decline is a national issue and local authorities across the country are undergoing regeneration projects to adapt to the changing face of retail and the pressures that town centres face.

31. Media⁵⁶ showing examples of successful regeneration in Grimsby and Barnsley had been shared with the Panel as they are both northern industrial towns, that shared some similarities with Middlesbrough.

32. Grimsby regeneration focused on safety and reducing ASB and crime in the town centre. Safer Streets 5 is an initiative run by North East Lincolnshire Council and its partners to reduce crime and ASB and Safer Streets Ambassadors had been implemented to assist the vulnerable and people in need of assistance. Crime had reduced by more than 10 percent over the last 12 months in Grimsby Town Centre.

33. A community-focused initiative dedicated to enhancing the local environment, fostering community engagement and addressing societal changes had also been implemented in Grimsby. Grimsby in Bloom had relandscaped Grimsby's Riverhead Square development after a refit and was currently leading the Victoria Street Project which aimed to introduce a variety of new planters filled with colourful flowers, shrubs, and greenery, creating a more welcoming and visually appealing environment for shoppers and visitors.

34. Barnsley's regeneration focused on their Glassworks redevelopment that connects retail, culture, leisure, learning and health. The development will include a state-of-the-art library,

⁵ [The transformation of Barnsley town centre](#) Youtube Video

⁶ [GRIMSBY TOWN CENTRE REGENERATION | The story so far...](#) Youtube Video

flagship NHS diagnostic centre and rolling programme of immersive free events embracing arts, crafts, sport, food and music.

35. Stockton Borough Council (SBC) is currently undertaking a large-scale initiative to regenerate Stockton town centre and surrounding areas. Much like Middlesbrough, SBC has identified that retail space in Stockton town centre was too vast and no longer sustainable in the modern landscape of online shopping and retail parks. The Council has created a more compact retail core with most shops now being located in Wellington Square and the northern part of the High Street.
36. The layout of the town centre is also no longer in keeping with SBC's vision and the river, once heavily industrial in the 1960s when the shopping centre was first built, has since been cleaned up. An urban riverside park is now being developed which will connect the waterfront and High Street.
37. A key focus for SBC is the organisation of events held in the town centre to drive footfall and SBC has installed anchor points and a power supply in the High Street to support this. The Globe Theatre, originally built in 1935, has been majorly refurbished and reopened as a live venue in 2021 maintaining its cultural heritage while adapting to modern times. An evolved version of Stockton market also continues to take place twice a week maintaining its role in local identity and community gathering.
38. Diversification is also important to SBC when transforming the town centre. A former two-storey retail unit has been transformed into repurposed retail units for smaller businesses on the ground floor and an employment training hub on the first floor which has supported 1750 people into work since it opened in 2021. An NHS Community Diagnostic Centre has been built on the High Street, bringing health provision back to the town centre and creating an accessible site for residents. The re-establishment of the residential market is also a priority for SBC with the contemporary trend of 'city centre living' becoming increasingly popular. These type of additions serve their own important purpose but also help to improve town centre footfall.
39. The Globe Theatre, originally built in 1935 is also key to drawing visitors to Stockton town centre. The theatre has been majorly refurbished and reopened as a live venue in 2021 maintaining its cultural heritage while adapting to modern times. The town also benefits from two smaller venues The Arc and Georgian Theatre. Middlesbrough's main entertainment venue is the Town Hall which could potentially be enhanced to offer a more user-friendly experience and serve as a dual-purpose space, functioning as a tourist information centre as it currently only opens three days a week plus show nights. Middlesbrough Theatre also provides a more intimate entertainment venue but is located slightly further outside the town centre.

Term of Reference C – To investigate what measures are in place to make people feel safer in our town centre and neighbourhoods

40. Middlesbrough Council has Neighbourhood Safety Teams based within each of its localities (North, East, South and West).

41. The Neighbourhood Safety Team works with other Council services, Police, other statutory organisations, the voluntary sector, community groups and individuals to prevent and reduce crime and ASB including:

- Vandalism, graffiti, and deliberate damage to property or vehicles
- Groups of teenagers hanging around on streets
- Fly tipping or littering
- Drug use and dealing
- Drunk or rowdy behaviour
- Chaotic families
- Begging/rough sleeping

42. The Neighbourhood Safety Teams approach to ASB includes both support and enforcement.

The support offered includes:

- Work with youth service providers and the Youth Justice Service to offer diversionary activities
- Outreach work with the Rough Sleeper Team
- Outreach work with Treatment Services
- Outreach in the Nighttime Economy

43. Enforcement that can be carried out by the Neighbourhood Safety Teams includes:

- Issue warnings
- Acceptable Behaviour Contracts (ABC's)
- Community Protection Warning and Notices
- Civil Injunctions
- Criminal Behaviour Orders (CBO)

44. Prior to the end of 2023, Middlesbrough Council had taken a Civil Injunction approach to ASB but were now using Community Protection Notices (CPN) to tackle it. Where an individual's behaviours were persistent and having a detrimental effect on the area, a warning could be issued. If individuals do not engage with the support offered this can be followed by a Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN). If behaviour did not improve a Criminal Behaviour Order could be issued which made the ASB an arrestable offence.

45. Requests for license reviews on commercial premises can also be requested by the Neighbourhood Safety Team if it is felt a business is operating inappropriately. – it would be great to have out of premises drinking areas where people can sit outside but this would need to be controlled.

46. The Neighbourhood Safety Team liaise with other local authorities to identify individuals causing ASB in particular begging who may move from one area to another. Whilst people begging in the town centre could be banned, they could then move elsewhere.

47. These individuals could be issued with a CBO within the CBO there would be an exclusion zone, where the begging was most prolific, and a second condition would be imposed that they could not beg in England and Wales. So, wherever that person chose to go and beg would qualify as a breach of the CBO and they could be arrested. Rather than push the

problem onto another area, the CBO would attempt to address the behaviour. A record of CBOs are held by the Police.

48. During the period June 2024 to April 2025 the following enforcement outcomes had taken place.

- 14 Criminal Behaviour Orders - active, Council led 9, Police led 5
- 22 Criminal Protection Notices – active
- 52 Community Protection Warnings (CPW) – active
- 5 First warnings to young people
- 3 Second warnings to young people
- 44 Acceptable Behaviour Contracts (ABCs) – The Council has taken a zero approach within the Town Centre
- 8 ABC breaches
- 1 Civil Injunction
- 1 Youth Criminal Behaviour Order
- 2 Licence Reviews on commercial premises

49. A vital part of the Neighbourhood Safety Team is the Neighbourhood Safety Wardens service. As of November 2025, Middlesbrough Council has 35 Street Wardens and 3 vacancies.

50. Neighbourhood Safety Wardens provide a reassuring presence to residents and help to build confidence in neighbourhoods.

51. The role of the Neighbourhood Safety Wardens is varied. They carry out a wide range of roles which can include:

- Responding to and reporting ASB incidents
- Reporting crime to the police
- Issuing FPN's for litter, graffitiing and dog fouling
- Supporting older and vulnerable people in the community
- Helping the homeless
- Getting involved in neighbourhood activities, visiting schools, attending community and resident meetings

52. Middlesbrough Council is implementing Safe Walking Routes to popular visitor attractions in the town centre. The routes will benefit from increased lighting, better signage, shrubbery removal and additional CCTV.

53. A Night-Time Economy Pilot Project is being funded by the Office of the Police & Crime Commissioners Cleveland Unit for Reducing Violence (CURV) until March 2026. This includes the introduction of Street Marshals that will provide an authoritative and trustworthy presence from 8pm until 4am on Fridays and Saturdays (increasing over the festive period and Bank Holidays). Night-time economy clinic pilot sessions are also beginning in January 2026 which will provide an outreach treatment service for the homeless and beggars located at the Depaul Centre.

54. Multiple other resources are in place as part of the Night-Time Economy Pilot Project:

- Safe Haven – mobile service & physical centre on Albert Road
- Boro Angels – a group of volunteers working in Middlesbrough Town Centre helping the vulnerable every Saturday night from 10pm until 2am
- CCTV
- Police
- Door staff

55. CURV also funded other invaluable initiatives:

- Bleed kits
- Apex Radios – for doorstaff
- NTE safety campaign
- Anti-spiking materials
- Promotion of Ask Angela
- eLearning platform for staff in licensed premises

56. The Creative Factory is also carrying out several placemaking projects in the town centre to transform public spaces. ‘Most Creative Train Station’ and ‘We Shall Be’ are not just about creating new artworks but also about taking action to improve how Middlesbrough looks and feels.

57. The Creative Factory’s first Community Action Day brought people together to refresh the Historic Quarter. Volunteers filled bags of rubbish, cleaned and weeded planters in Exchange Square, and worked alongside Middlesbrough Council, STACK and TransPennine Express, to clean and repaint public spaces. These collective efforts transformed how the area looked and reminded everyone that Middlesbrough is a place worth taking pride in.

58. Small, practical changes like these raise the standards of Middlesbrough’s public spaces and completely shift how people experience Middlesbrough as soon as they arrive. Although they do not directly enhance safety levels, they contribute to a more welcoming town centre environment and people may be less likely to vandalise or litter where an area is well kept.

Term of Reference D - To gain an understanding of current legislation available to local authorities to tackle anti-social behaviour

59. Anti-social behaviour (ASB) encompasses criminal and nuisance behaviour that causes distress to others. Typical examples include: noisy neighbours, vandalism, graffiti, public drunkenness, littering, fly tipping and street drug dealing.

60. Parts 1-4 of the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014⁷ sets out six anti-social behaviour enforcement powers. These powers (summarised in the table below) are a consolidation of nineteen that existed prior to the 2014 Act.

⁷ [Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014](#)

	Power	Effect	Relevant Authority	Sanction on Breach
People	ASB Civil Injunctions	Individuals aged 10 or over conducting ASB can be issued with an ASB Injunction which prohibits them from certain activities and/or requires them to attend rehabilitative activities	Police and Local Authorities	A 'contempt of court' punishable with up to 2 years in prison
	Criminal Behaviour Orders (CBO)	Individuals with a criminal conviction can have a CBO attached to their sentence if they have behaved anti-socially. CBOs can place prohibitions or requirements on an offender designed to address their anti-social behaviour	The courts (upon application from the prosecution)	Criminal offence punishable by up to five years in prison (if tried at a Crown Court)
	Community Protection Notices	Adults or businesses responsible for environmental issues which have diminished the 'quality of life of those in the locality' can be required to remedy the problem	Police and Local Authorities	Criminal offence punishable by Fixed Penalty Notice. Remedial action.
Place	Public Space Protection Orders	Specific activities can be prohibited in a designated area.	Local authorities (in consultation with the police)	Criminal offence punishable by Fixed Penalty Notice
	Dispersal Powers	Individuals (aged ten or older) conducting anti-social behaviour in a public space can be directed to leave that specified area for up to 48 hours. Their property can be confiscated if they are using it to conduct ASB	Police	Criminal offence punishable by up to 3 months in prison.

CONCLUSIONS

61. Trying to regenerate town centres by building more retail space is now a broken model. The solution must be to improve the mix of uses in town centres bringing footfall, life and vitality back. Empty shops, department stores and even shopping centres can be replaced with green spaces, medical centres, offices, workshops, colleges and housing to help create a pleasant and welcoming environment for visitors and residents.
62. Regeneration is a major challenge. With the right investment, town centres can be simultaneously reinvigorated and made more resilient over the long-term.
63. Antisocial Behaviour is one of the main reasons investors are reluctant to invest in the town, they want to be assured that their staff are safe coming to work. Residents of the town are also reluctant to venture into the town centre as they do not feel safe.

64. The key to tackling ASB is through prevention. When the town hosted bigger events, it was easier to make areas feel safe as they are flooded with people and Police.
65. The Council's priority is to reduce the visible impact of the problem in the first instance. Prevention is very important but the resources to do that are not always available.

RECOMMENDATIONS

66. Based on the findings of the scrutiny review, the Place Scrutiny Panel recommends to the Executive that the Council should:
- A. Carry out a survey of college and university students, to gain feedback to see if people who had come from different places across the country and now studied in Middlesbrough could suggest ways of improving Middlesbrough, from their own life experiences from where they were born.
 - B. Elected Members and Officers to actively promote and talk up the town - many positive things are happening in Middlesbrough but they are often overlooked and overshadowed by the negative. This could be achieved through a positive marketing campaign and press releases.
 - C. Support and deliver more town centre events with a strong emphasis on cultural activity to drive footfall and encourage people that live local and further afield to travel into the town centre.
 - D. Redevelop Linthorpe Road to create a more compact retail centre to naturally increase footfall. The increased activity could make the town centre feel more vibrant and safer.
 - E. Increase the number of Neighbourhood Safety Wardens to provide a reassuring presence and help to build confidence in the town centre.
 - F. Work in partnership with businesses to ensure compliance with street-drinking regulations and discourage related activity around their premises.
 - G. Increase green spaces and create a new attraction in the town centre, such as a winter garden, which could entice visitors to travel into the town centre and provide significant health (mental & physical), environmental (cleaner air, less heat, better drainage), social (community building, recreation), and economic (higher property values, tourism, jobs) benefits.
 - H. Work in collaboration with Tees Valley Combined Authority to improve transport links into the town centre and outer areas of Middlesbrough to ensure key points of interest are easily accessible. This could be achieved by introducing a park-and-ride facility and improving bus services.
 - I. Increase Middlesbrough Town Hall/Box Office opening times to improve accessibility and user satisfaction and potentially function as a dual-purpose information hub.
 - J. Strengthen our relationship with Middlesbrough Development Corporation (MDC) further and work together towards the common goal.

- K. Apply for an extension to funding from the Office of the Police & Crime Commissioners Cleveland Unit for Reducing Violence (CURV) or seek alternative funding for the Night-Time Economy Pilot Project, which is currently due to end in March 2026.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

67. The Place Scrutiny Panel would like to thank the following for their assistance with its work:

Richard Horniman	Director of Regeneration
Hugh McShane	Neighbourhood Officer
Stephen Wright	Neighbourhood Safety Officer
Sam Gilmore	Head of Growth
Michelle Shelton	Town Centre Manager
Matthew Gibbons	Development Manager – Locus
Lee Walker	Chief Executive Officer – Locus
Gaye Kirby	Head of Culture
Anna Byrne	Director – Creative Factory
Chris Renahan	Assistant Director – Inclusive Growth & Development – Stockton on Tees Borough Council
Judith Hedgley	Head of Public Protection
Adam Parkinson	Neighbourhood Manager
Fiona Helyer	Principal Public Protection Officer

ACRONYMS

68. A-Z listing of common acronyms used in the report:

ABC's	Acceptable Behaviour Contracts
ASB	Anti-social Behaviour
CBO	Criminal Behaviour Orders
CPN	Community Protection Notice
CURV	Cleveland Unit for Reducing Violence
FPN	Fixed Penalty Notice
MDC	Middlesbrough Development Corporation
PSPO	Public Space Protection Order
SBC	Stockton on Tees Borough Council

BACKGROUND PAPERS

69. The following sources were consulted or referred to in preparing this report:

- Reports/presentations to, and minutes of, the Place Scrutiny Panel meetings held on 29 April 2025, 30 June 2025, 29 September 2025, 27 October 2025, 6 November 2025, 22 December 2025.

**COUNCILLOR DAVID BRANSON
CHAIR OF THE PLACE SCRUTINY PANEL**

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MIDDLESBROUGH COUNCIL

Final Report of the Adult Social Care and Health Scrutiny Panel
HEALTHY PLACEMAKING WITH A FOCUS ON CHILDHOOD OBESITY

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THE AIMS OF THE SCRUTINY REVIEW

1. The aims of the review are to:
 - Understand the current issues and prevalence of childhood obesity in Middlesbrough, including local trends and variations.
 - Examine the role of healthy placemaking in creating environments that support healthier food choices, active lifestyles and overall wellbeing.
 - Identify evidence-based recommendations on how healthy placemaking and partnership working can be embedded more effectively into local policy, strategy and delivery.
2. The review also aims to assist the Local Authority in achieving the following priorities from the Council Plan 2024-2027:
 - **A Healthy Place** - Improve life chances of our residents by responding to health inequalities.
 - **A Healthy Place** - Promote inclusivity for all.

TERMS OF REFERENCE

3. The Terms of Reference for the Scrutiny Panel's review, are as follows:
 - A. Establish an understanding of childhood obesity in Middlesbrough, including current prevalence rates, trends over time, variation by ward or demographic group and links to deprivation, ethnicity, and other social determinants.
 - B. Identify the key aspects of healthy placemaking and assess current and planned activity within Middlesbrough, such as public health, planning, transport and environment matters.
 - C. Examine how partnership working contributes to the current reduction of childhood obesity and identify how this could be further developed by considering areas of best practice.
 - D. Explore how healthy placemaking can be embedded more effectively into local council policies and strategies.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

4. Childhood obesity remains one of the most significant public health challenges in England, contributing to preventable disease, reduced quality of life and widening health inequalities. National surveillance shows that excess weight in childhood has remained persistently high. The Health Survey for England 2022 reported that around one in seven children (15%) aged 2-15 were living with obesity (Health Survey for England 2022, Part 2 – NHS England). This national pattern is reflected locally. Middlesbrough consistently records prevalence rates above both the North East and England averages and obesity remains more concentrated in the town's more deprived wards.
5. According to the NHS, "the term obese describes a person who has excess body fat", which can lead to a range of health problems such as type 2 diabetes, asthma and high blood pressure (NHS, 2024). Children who are overweight or obese are more likely to remain so into adulthood, increasing their risk of developing long-term health conditions and experiencing poorer mental

wellbeing. The causes of obesity are complex and influenced not only by individual behaviours but also by wider social, economic and environmental factors. The financial impact is also significant: the NHS spends around £6.5 billion per year on treating obesity-related ill health across all age groups in England. In response, national bodies continue to introduce targeted services designed to support children, young people and families to achieve a healthier weight and improve their health.

6. Recognising the multifaceted nature of obesity, national guidance such as Public Health England's Whole Systems Approach to Obesity (2019) emphasises the need for a coordinated approach to achieving a healthy weight, one that brings together planning, transport, education, public health and community partners to support environments that enable and encourage healthier lifestyles. Central to this is the concept of healthy placemaking, described by the World Health Organisation as 'health setting'. When talking about healthy placemaking, the World Health Organisation describes the term as "the place or social context in which people engage in daily activities in which environmental, organisational and personal factors interact to affect health and wellbeing"
7. This review examines how healthy placemaking principles can be embedded more effectively across Middlesbrough's local policies, planning processes and partnership arrangements. Tackling childhood obesity requires a coordinated, system-wide approach that brings together the built environment, transport and infrastructure, public health programmes and engagement with schools and communities. Local Authorities play a crucial role in shaping the conditions that support healthy weight, for example through integrating health considerations into planning and regeneration schemes, designing neighbourhoods that encourage walking and cycling, promoting active travel routes to schools and influencing local food environments and through partnership working and policy. Middlesbrough Council already undertakes a range of initiatives in these areas, but there is an ongoing need to strengthen how these efforts connect and complement one another. This review therefore aims to identify opportunities to enhance integration and embed healthy placemaking principles across all aspects of local policy, helping to create environments where children can lead healthier, more active lives.

SUMMARY OF EVIDENCE:

Term of Reference A - Establish an understanding of childhood obesity in Middlesbrough, including current prevalence rates, trends over time, variation by ward or demographic group and links to deprivation, ethnicity, and other social determinants

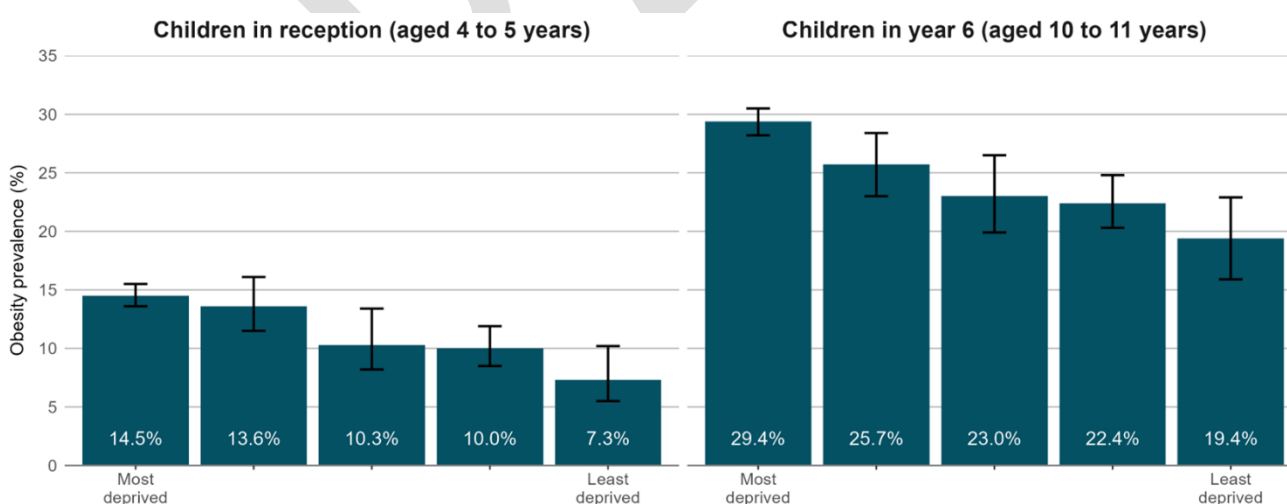
8. The National Child Measurement Programme (NCMP) records the height and weight of children in Reception (ages 4-5) and Year 6 (aged 10-11), in order to monitor patterns of overweight and obesity across England. Unlike adult measures, childhood Body Mass Index (BMI) classifications are based on age and sex specific growth references, which allow each child's measurement to be compared with expected population norms (A simple guide to classifying body mass index in Children, June 2011).
9. At the 8 September 2025 Panel meeting, Members received an overview of Middlesbrough's most recent NCMP data (2023/24). The figures show that 13.8% of Reception-age children in Middlesbrough were living with obesity or severe obesity, compared with 10.8% in the North East and 9.6% nationally. By Year 6, prevalence rose to 25.6%, slightly above the North East average of 24.5% and notably higher than the England rate of 22.1%.
10. Adult obesity levels in Middlesbrough remain significantly above national levels. In 2023/24, 71.4% of adults were overweight or obese, compared with 64.5% across England.

Indicator	Middlesbrough Value	North East Value	England Value	England Worst
Overweight (including obesity) prevalence in adults, (using adjusted self-reported height and weight) (18+ yrs)	71.4%	70.4%	64.5%	77.2%
Obesity prevalence in adults, (using adjusted self-reported height and weight) (18+ yrs)	35.3%	32.5%	26.5%	38.8%

Department of Health and Social Care – Public Health Profiles – Obesity, Health and Nutrition

Links to Deprivation

11. National data shows a strong socioeconomic gradient: obesity among Reception-aged children in the most deprived areas of England (12.9%) is more than double that in the least deprived areas (6.0%). Among Year 6 pupils, the gap widens further, 29.2% compared with 13.0% in the least deprived areas (NHS England, 2024)
12. The pattern in Middlesbrough mirrors this national trend.
 - Reception: 14.5% of children in the most deprived wards were classed as obese, compared with 7.3% in the least deprived wards.
 - Year 6: 29.4% in the most deprived wards, compared with 19.4% in the least deprived wards.



Ward Level Variation and Deprivation

13. To explore this inequality in more depth, Members received ward-level NCMP data (combined 2021/22-2023/24) presented at the 8 September 2025 Panel meeting. The data, which is illustrated in the bar charts below, shows obesity prevalence among Reception and Year 6 pupils across Middlesbrough's wards, alongside their respective deprivation quintiles.

14. The charts clearly demonstrate that the highest levels of childhood obesity are concentrated in wards within the most deprived quintile (quintile 1), while the lowest rates are consistently found in the least deprived areas (quintile 5).

Reception (Ages 4-5)

15. Obesity levels in Reception vary considerably by ward. Some of the highest rates are seen in the most deprived areas including, North Ormesby (35.3%), Berwick Hills and Pallister (31.5%) and Brambles and Thorntree (31.1%). In contrast, quintile 5 wards such as Nunthorpe (16.9%) and Marton West (20.4%) report far lower rates. This illustrates that inequalities in healthy weight are already evident by school entry age.

Year 6 (Ages 10-11)

16. By Year 6, the gap widens further. All quintile 1 wards record obesity levels above 40%, with the highest observed in Ayresome (48.4%), Brambles and Thorntree (47.6%) and Longlands and Beechwood (47.0%). The only exception within quintile 1 is North Ormesby (36.3%), identified by Members as an outlier.

17. Following further discussion with officers, members noted that North Ormesby's lower-than-expected Year 6 obesity prevalence, when compared with its Reception figures, may be influenced by changes in the ward's population composition rather than reflecting a true cohort trend. Officers highlighted that North Ormesby has a greater migrant population than neighbouring wards - 75.8% of residents are UK-born (compared with 95.4% in Brambles and Thorntree), despite both wards having almost identical proportions of children aged 5–9 (8.1% and 8.2% respectively). This suggests that the composition of the group measured at Year 6 is unlikely to be the same as the cohort measured at Reception.

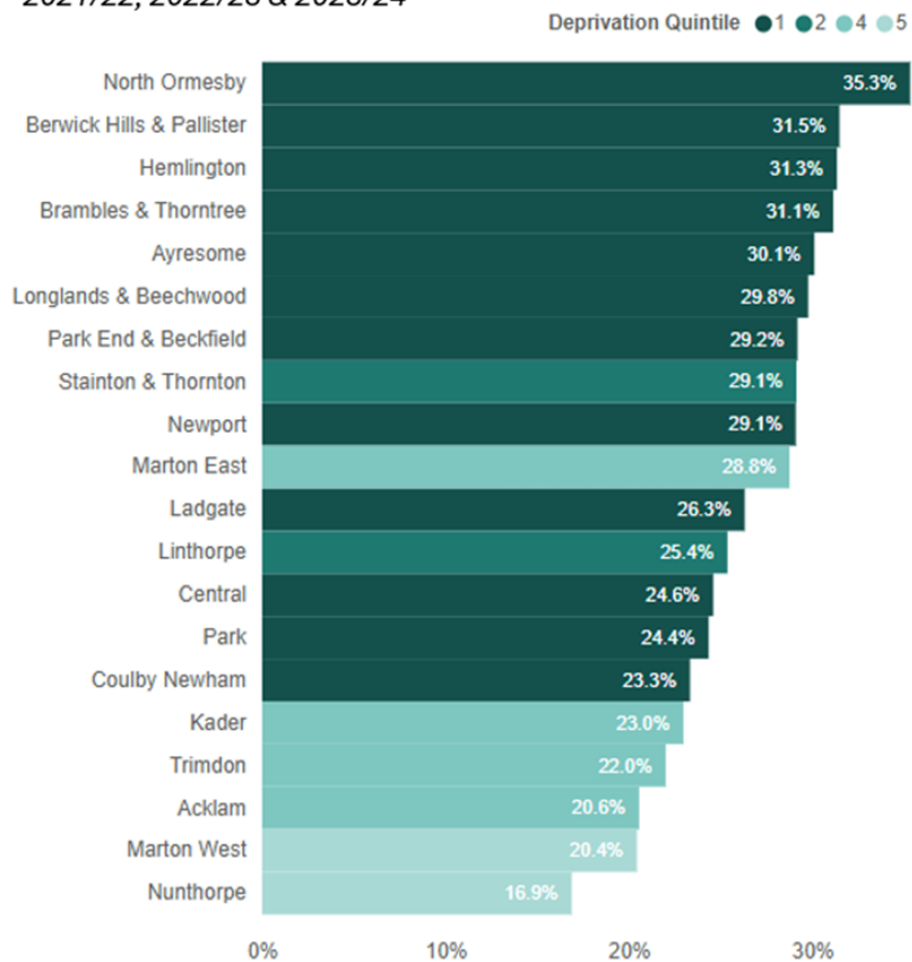
18. Members also recognised that part of the observed pattern may be an artefact of data collection processes, including coverage and participation differences at ward level. Overall, the discussion reinforced the importance of interpreting ward-level obesity data with an understanding of local demographic change, population churn and possible measurement effects.

19. At the opposite end of the scale, quintile 5 wards again show the lowest prevalence: Nunthorpe (25.9%) and Marton West (30.0%).

20. The ward-level data reinforces the strong relationship between deprivation and childhood obesity in Middlesbrough. The fact that differences are evident from Reception and become more pronounced by Year 6, indicates that inequalities accumulate through childhood. The accompanying bar charts provide a visual representation of these patterns and clearly demonstrate the extent of variation across Middlesbrough's communities.

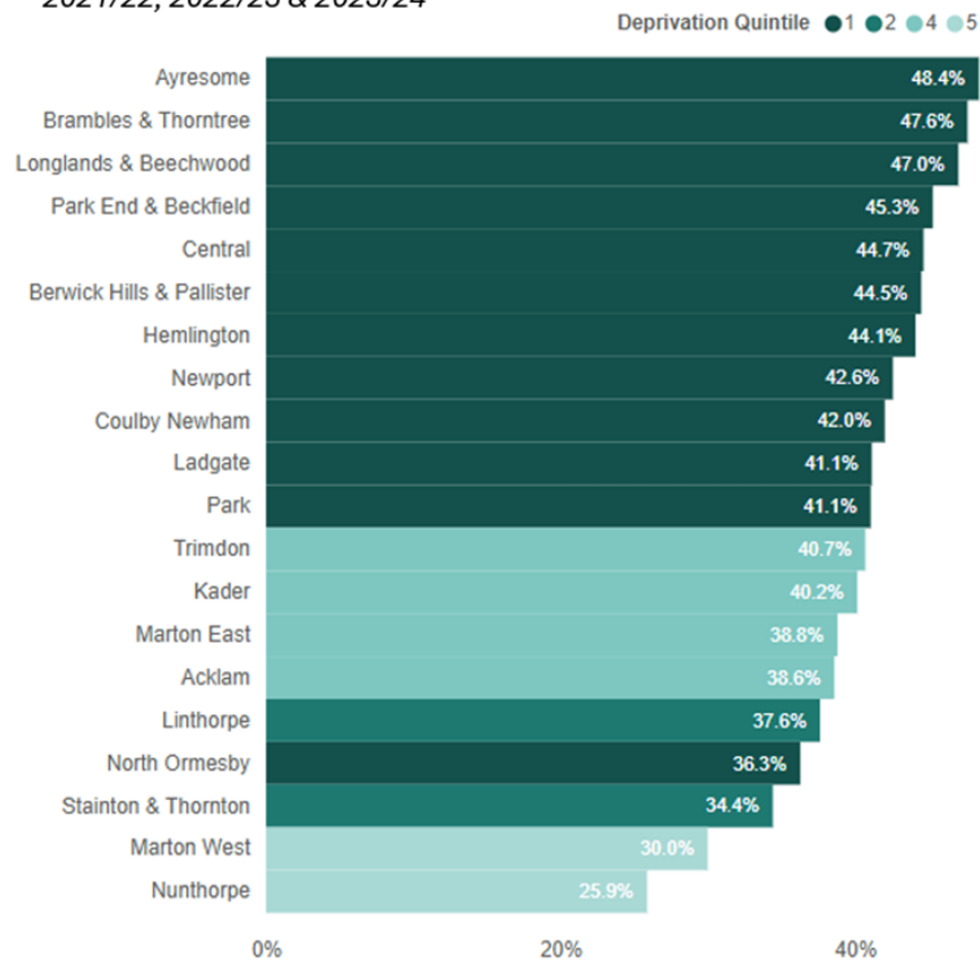
Reception - Overweight & Obese Pupils (%)

2021/22, 2022/23 & 2023/24



Year 6 - Overweight & Obese Pupils (%)

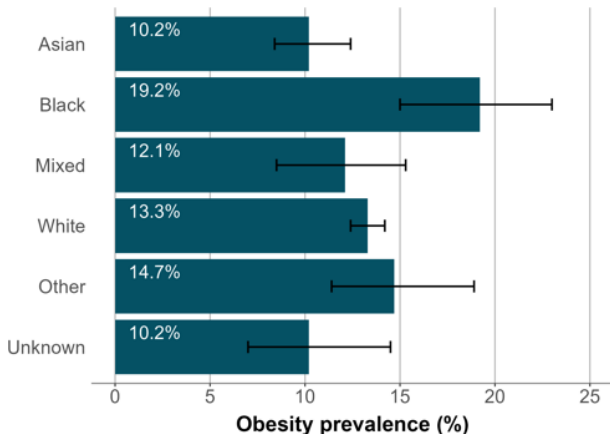
2021/22, 2022/23 & 2023/24



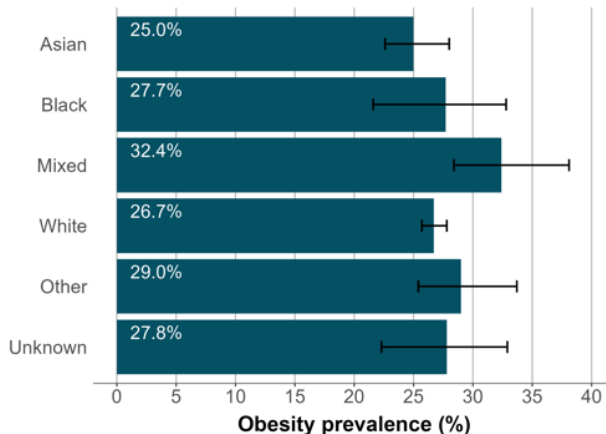
Obesity Prevalence by Ethnic Group in Middlesbrough

21. The National Child Measurement Programme data also highlights variation in obesity prevalence between different ethnic groups. The following charts illustrate the percentage of children living with obesity in Middlesbrough by ethnic group, for both Reception and Year 6.

Children in reception (aged 4 to 5 years)



Children in year 6 (aged 10 to 11 years)



NCMP 2024/25 Data

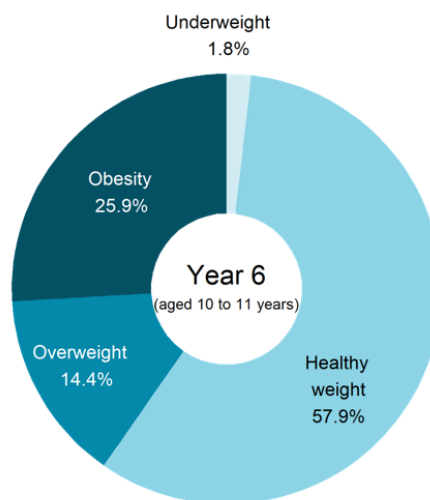
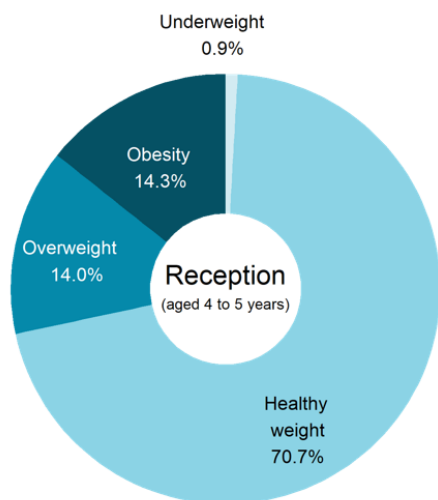
22. During the course of the review, the most recent NCMP results for 2024/25 were published on 4 November 2025. These figures show a slight increase in prevalence compared with the previous year. In Middlesbrough:

- 14.3% of Reception-age were classed as obese (up from 13.8% in 2023/24)
- 25.9% of Year 6 children classed as obese (up from 25.6% in 2023/24)

23. Although these changes are small, the overall pattern remains consistent with previous years and Middlesbrough is placed among the highest prevalence rates nationally.

BMI status of children by age in Middlesbrough

National Child Measurement Programme 2024 to 2025



Totals may not sum due to rounding

Table One – 2024/25 Obesity Prevalence

Indicator	Middlesbrough Value	England Value
	Single year prevalence data for children in reception, age 4 to 5 years 2024/25	
Reception prevalence of underweight	0.9%	1.1%
Reception prevalence of healthy weight	70.7%	75.4%
Reception prevalence of overweight	14.0%	13.0%
Reception prevalence of overweight (including obesity)	28.4%	23.5%
Reception prevalence of obesity (including severe obesity)	14.3%	10.5%
Reception prevalence of severe obesity	4.5%	2.9%
Single year prevalence data for children in year 6, age 10 to 11 years		
Year 6 prevalence of underweight	1.0%	1.6%
Year 6 prevalence of healthy weight	57.9%	62.2%
Year 6 prevalence of overweight	14.4%	13.9%
Year 6 prevalence of overweight (including obesity)	40.3%	36.2%
Year 6 prevalence of obesity (including severe obesity)	25.9%	22.2%
Year 6 prevalence of severe obesity	8.4%	5.6%
Five-year prevalence for local authority inequalities data 2020/21-2024/25		
Reception prevalence of obesity (including severe obesity), 5 years data combined	13.6%	9.8%
Year 6 prevalence of obesity (including severe obesity), 5 years data combined	27.2%	22.3%

Department of Health and Social Care – Public Health Profiles – Obesity, Health and Nutrition

[Obesity, physical activity and nutrition - Data | Fingertips | Department of Health and Social Care](#)

24. This evidence demonstrates that childhood obesity in Middlesbrough emerges early in life and is strongly associated with deprivation. This provides the context for the Panel’s subsequent consideration of healthy placemaking, partnership working and system-wide prevention approaches.

Term of Reference B – Identify the key aspects of healthy placemaking and assess current and planned activity within Middlesbrough, such as public health, planning, transport and environment matters.

25. Healthy placemaking brings together the physical environment, local policy and service delivery to create places that support and enable healthier behaviours as part of everyday life. It recognises that health outcomes are shaped not only by individual choice, but also by wider factors such as urban design, transport systems and food environments. As part of this review, the Panel considered how healthy placemaking principles are currently embedded across key

Council functions, including public health, planning and transport and infrastructure. Each of these areas are considered below.

Public Health

26. In February 2024, Middlesbrough Council adopted the Healthy Weight Declaration (HWD) in recognition of the scale and complexity of obesity and the need for a coordinated, long-term response. The Declaration represents a town-wide commitment to supporting residents to achieve and maintain a healthy weight, with Public Health providing strategic leadership and coordination across the Council and wider system, underpinned by collaboration across Council departments and with external partners.
27. Officers advised the Panel that the HWD contains sixteen core commitments, designed to embed healthy weight considerations across policy development, decision-making and service delivery. These commitments are grouped under four overarching themes: strategic and system leadership; commercial determinants; health-promoting environments and organisational and cultural change. Taken together, the commitments provide a practical framework through which Public Health can influence multiple Council functions and partner organisations, addressing the wider environmental, social and economic factors that influence diet, physical activity and health outcomes.
28. Members were advised that the HWD supports a whole-system approach, recognising that progress in reducing obesity rates is gradual and that sustained action is required over time. Public Health officers emphasised the importance of maintaining confidence in the direction of travel, even where measurable population-level change may not be immediately apparent, particularly given the strong association between obesity and deprivation.
29. In addition to the HWD, the Panel heard about a range of public health activity supporting healthy placemaking and influencing the local environment in which people live, work and learn. This included work to support the implementation of government advertising restrictions, collaboration with the Council's marketing and communications teams to ensure appropriate messaging across Council websites, and initiatives such as the Eat Well Awards, breastfeeding promotion campaigns and Holiday Activity and Food programmes (HAF). These activities were presented as complementary to policy and planning interventions, reinforcing healthier choices across the life course.

Planning

30. The Panel received evidence from the Strategic Policy Manager (Planning) and the Creating Active and Healthy Spaces Lead (Public Health South Tees) on the role of the planning system in shaping healthier environments.
31. At the outset of the discussion, Members were introduced to the role of the hybrid public health-planning post 'Creating Active and Healthy Spaces Lead', and its importance in delivering healthier places. Officers explained that the role acts as a bridge between public health and planning, supporting a shared understanding of how the built environment influences long-term health outcomes. Members were advised that national evidence recognises that while healthcare services are vital, the places in which people live, work and move can have a greater long-term impact on health, particularly in addressing inequalities.
32. Officers highlighted the value of hybrid roles is reflected in national policy, including the NHS 10-Year Plan and the revised National Planning Policy Framework, which emphasise the need to embed health considerations into decision-making about place. Hybrid posts support planners and public health professionals to work to a common language and shared objectives, improving the use of health evidence in Local Plans, planning applications and design reviews.

33. Members heard that, in practice, these hybrid roles help to strengthen the planning process by embedding health and equity considerations at the earliest stages of development, rather than treating them as a 'tick-box' requirement. The roles support more robust and consistent use of Health Impact Assessments, provide clearer health guidance to developers, and to improve engagement with communities and elected Members. This helps to ensure local priorities inform placemaking decisions and supports the delivery of greener, healthier and more equitable environments.
34. Members were provided with an overview of national policy legislation, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and associated design and practice guidance. Officers highlighted specific NPPF paragraphs (including paragraphs 96(c) 97, 103 and 109 (e) and (f) which place clear emphasis on creating healthy, safe, inclusive and accessible places.
35. Members were informed that Middlesbrough's Local Plan, which is presently under examination, integrates health considerations throughout its policies. This alignment supports the Council Plan priority of creating a healthy place and links closely with the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy and the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment, particularly in relation to promoting wellbeing and reducing health inequalities.

Health Impact Assessments (HIAs)

36. A key feature of Middlesbrough's approach is the use of Health Impact Assessments (HIAs) within the planning process. Officers advised that only around 30% of planning authorities nationally routinely use HIAs and that Middlesbrough's approach represents good practice.
37. HIAs are used as a practical tool to assess the potential health and wellbeing impacts of major developments, informing decisions on design, layout and access. Examples include encouraging the development of usable green space, supporting opportunities for food growing and ensuring proximity to key amenities such as supermarkets within an 800-metre walking distance.
38. To illustrate how healthy placemaking principles are applied in practice, Members were provided with an example of the newly developed Stainsby residential estate, which was highlighted as an example of good practice in creating a healthier community through design.
39. Members noted that the Stainsby development demonstrates how the built environment can actively support healthier behaviours, particularly through the provision of connected and accessible walking routes, green corridors and safe links between homes, open space and local amenities. The masterplanning approach prioritised permeability, legibility and active travel, helping to make walking a realistic and attractive option for everyday journeys.
40. The Panel also noted that health considerations had been embedded at the design stage, including access to open green space, opportunities for informal physical activity and food and nutrition considerations, as reflected through the use of Health Impact Assessment principles. Members welcomed this as an early example of how early collaboration between planning, public health and developers can result in environments that support long-term wellbeing and contribute to the creation of a sustainable, healthy place.

Hot Food Takeaway Policy

41. Members received further evidence on the Council's approach to managing the concentration and location of hot food takeaways.
42. Middlesbrough Council formally adopted the Interim Hot Food Takeaway (HFT) Policy in July 2019, with an amended version adopted in March 2020. The policy applies to hot food takeaways (A5 use class) and sets thresholds to limit over-concentration, protect primary

shopping frontages and restrict new takeaways within a 400-metre walking distance of secondary schools. Hot food takeaways are also not permitted outside of defined centres.

43. Members were advised that since the introduction of the policy, the number of applications has reduced and refusal rates have increased, suggesting a deterrent effect:
- August 2015 – July 2019: 26 applications, 5 refused (19%)
 - August 2019 – July 2023: 18 applications, 10 refused (55%)
44. Officers explained that while existing outlets remain, the policy provides a robust framework for resisting new proposals in sensitive locations and supports wider healthy placemaking objectives. Progress is monitored through planning performance data, benchmarking against national good practice and ongoing assessment of planning decisions.

Transport and Infrastructure

45. The Panel received a presentation from the Head of Transport and Infrastructure and the Principal Planning Transport Officer on how transport policy, infrastructure investment and education programmes contribute to healthy placemaking. This included data on travel modes, travel to school patterns, road safety and an overview of key strategies and investment programmes aimed at supporting active and sustainable travel.
46. Members noted that Middlesbrough experienced high levels of childhood obesity and physical inactivity, despite low levels of car ownership with 33.1% of households having no car or van and short averages distances between home and school. Officers advised that 46% of children currently walk to school, with this figure having declined in recent years. This prompted concern among Members, particularly given the role that walking to school plays in supporting physical daily activity and reducing congestion at school gates.
47. Following the meeting, Members requested further information on vehicle ownership, broken down by ward. Census 2021 data, presented in the table below, shows that car ownership levels do not directly correlate with obesity prevalence. In fact, wards with higher obesity levels generally recorded lower levels of vehicle ownership, reflecting wider patterns of deprivation rather than transport access alone.

Ward	% households without cars/vans
Marton West	9.7
Nunthorpe/Marton East	10.1
Trimdon	12.6
Kader	15.1
Linthorpe	21
Coulby	24
Stainton/Hemlington	26.7
Easterside	31.9
Linthorpe East	32.1
Newport	33.5
Park	36.6
Berwick Hills	43.8
Beechwood	45.2
Thorntree	47
North Ormesby and Brambles	55
Central	55.8
Ayresome	62.4

48. Members discussed that while lower car ownership may result in higher levels of walking for everyday journeys such as travel to school, higher levels of car ownership, often associated with greater household income, may also enable access to a wider range of opportunities that support more active lifestyles. This includes the ability to travel to organised sports, leisure centres, swimming pools and green spaces as well as the financial capacity to afford sports clubs, classes and gym memberships. Members noted that these factors are less accessible to families experiencing deprivation and that this further reinforced the complexity of the issue and the influence of broader social and economic determinants of health.
49. While recognising that patterns of travel are influenced by a range of wider factors, the Panel noted that the Council already delivers a comprehensive programme of education and infrastructure initiatives to encourage safer and more active travel to school. These included Balancability training (74 places), Bikeability provision for Year 3 (1057 places) and Year 5/6 pupils (1,529 places) alongside school assemblies, Dr Bike/Fix-It sessions, guided rides and the installation of secure cycle parking. Officers emphasised that achieving a sustained shift away from car use at the school gate would require behavioural change, supported by clear communication and increased parental confidence, particularly around addressing perceptions around journey distance and safety.
50. Members also discussed the role of cycling infrastructure, including dedicated cycling lanes, in supporting active travel. Officers acknowledged that high-quality, well-connected infrastructure is an important enabling factor for cycling but emphasised that infrastructure alone insufficient to drive sustained behaviour change. Evidence presented to the Panel highlighted that perceptions of safety, confidence, convenience and cultural norms all strongly influence whether residents choose to cycle. Members therefore noted that cycle infrastructure is most effective when delivered as part of a joined-up approach, alongside education, engagement and supportive local environments.
51. The Panel acknowledged that improving active travel uptake is a long-term endeavour and forms a key component of a whole-system approach to healthy placemaking.

Term of Reference C – Examine how partnership working contributes to the current reduction of childhood obesity and identify how this could be further developed by considering areas of best practice.

52. Reducing childhood obesity was consistently described to the Panel as a complex, long-term challenge that cannot be addressed by any single organisation or service in isolation. Evidence presented throughout the review highlighted the importance of partnership working at local, regional and national levels to influence the wider determinants of health, including physical activity, food environments and education.

Cross-Council Partnership Working

53. Public Health officers explained that partnership working is embedded not only through collaboration with external organisations, but also through influencing decision-making across Middlesbrough Council. Public health expertise is integrated within core Council functions through Service Level Agreements (SLAs), enabling health considerations to be incorporated at the earliest stages of policy development, service planning and delivery.
54. This includes close collaboration with Planning, Transport and Infrastructure, Children's Services and Education, supporting a joined-up approach to healthy placemaking, active travel, food environments and school-based initiatives. Members heard that this internal partnership working is particularly important where decisions taken in one service area may have significant downstream impacts on health outcomes.

55. Strengthening cross-departmental working was identified as central to embedding a whole-system approach, ensuring that responsibility for reducing childhood obesity is shared and that health considerations are consistently reflected in Council decision-making.

Unhealthy Commodity Industries (UCIs)

56. The Panel was informed about Unhealthy Commodity Industries (UCIs), defined as profit-driven commercial sectors whose products are associated with significant adverse health outcomes. Examples discussed included tobacco, alcohol, gambling, certain food and beverage products and fossil fuels.
57. Officers explained that the products and practices of these industries are linked to a range of non-communicable diseases, including cancer, cardiovascular disease, stroke, poor mental health and overweight and obesity. Members were advised that non-communicable diseases account for a significant proportion of deaths and ill-health nationally and contribute to widening health inequalities.
58. Members heard that UCIs often influence behaviour through targeted advertising, marketing strategies and approaches that shift responsibility onto individuals rather than addressing wider commercial and environmental drivers of health. Examples relevant to local government were highlighted, including industry-funded training opportunities, sponsorship arrangements and grants to voluntary and community organisations.
59. Officers emphasised that addressing these influences requires coordinated partnership working across Council departments, supported by clear governance arrangements. This was considered important to ensure a consistent, transparent approach to engagement with UCIs and to support decision-making that aligns with public health priorities and the Healthy Weight Declaration.

External Partnerships and Programme Delivery

60. The Panel's meetings considered a range of external partnerships that support healthy behaviours among children and young people.

You've Got This (Sport England)

61. At the meeting on 8 September 2025, Members heard from a representative of You've Got This (Sport England), who outlined the purpose, scope and delivery of the programme. You've Got This is a Sport England-supported Local Delivery Pilot, one of a small number of place-based partnerships across England designed to explore innovative ways of increasing physical activity levels at a population scale and making "active lives a way of life". The programme was established in 2018 and focusses on addressing physical inactivity not simply as an individual behaviour change issue, but as a systemic challenge requiring insight-led, whole systems action across partners and communities. Locally it operates through wide partnership involving public health, local authorities, community organisations and sport providers to create activities, gather insight and support residents to become and stay more active.
62. Members were advised that the programme has a particular emphasis on insight and learning, identifying barriers to activity and testing approaches that work in a local context. Evidence highlighted the value of national partners working alongside local services and schools to deliver consistent messaging and accessible opportunities for participation.

Bring It On Boro – Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) Programme

63. Members also received detailed evidence on Bring It On Boro, Middlesbrough's Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) programme, delivered during 2024/25 for children and young people eligible for benefit-related free school meals and other vulnerable groups. Members reviewed the annual report 2024/2025 which outlined the scale and structure of delivery across the three

main holiday periods (Easter, Summer and Christmas) and demonstrated strong partnership working between Council, voluntary and community organisations and external providers.

64. The HAF programme aims to provide free, accessible activities alongside healthy food, promoting positive holiday experiences while addressing food insecurity, inactivity and social isolation. Its objectives include encouraging children to eat healthily, be physically active, take part in engaging and enriching activities, improve knowledge of health and nutrition, and enhance resilience, wellbeing and social connections.
65. Evidence presented to the Panel highlighted key outcomes from 2024/25, including:
- The equivalent of six weeks of face-to-face provision across Easter, Summer and Christmas holidays.
 - Activities delivered during the programme that combine healthy meals with sport, creative experiences and opportunities for social engagement, reinforcing both physical and emotional wellbeing.
66. Members noted that delivery was aligned with national HAF standards which require provision to include a combination of healthy food, physical activity and enriching experiences, supporting children to maintain positive routines and connections outside of the school environment.
67. Members acknowledged that the HAF programme contributes to broader healthy placemaking by:
- Providing structured opportunities for physical activity during school holidays, reinforcing daily activity habits.
 - Supporting social inclusion and wellbeing, particularly for families facing socioeconomic barriers.
 - Strengthening local partnerships, as delivery relies on community organisations, schools and voluntary groups working together to reach eligible children.
68. The programme was recognised as an example of how partnership working, blending national funding streams with local delivery expertise and community networks, can provide meaningful health-related outcomes in the short term while contributing to longer-term ambitions to reduce inequalities and foster healthier lifestyles.

Schools and Early Years Partnerships

69. Members discussed the importance of schools and early years settings as key partners in addressing childhood obesity. Evidence was provided on initiatives including the Eat Well Schools Award, which is available to all primary, secondary and special schools, both maintained and academies.
70. The Eat Well Schools Award is available to all schools in Middlesbrough. To achieve the award, schools are expected to serve healthy food and teach children about healthy and sustainable food. Achieving the award evidences that schools:
- provide meals which meet the government's school food standards (which is a legal requirement for schools)
 - teach children about the importance of healthy eating
 - support children to make healthy choices
 - support and promote breastfeeding
 - contribute to the changes needed to promote healthy weight and prevent obesity in the area
71. Members expressed interest in the role of schools in shaping food environments and healthy behaviours and noted the importance of continued engagement between Public Health,

education services and school leadership to promote consistent standards and share good practice.

72. The Panel also heard about wider initiatives such as Creating Active Schools, a programme piloted in Bradford, which supports schools to embed physical activity across the whole school day, including within lessons, playtimes, travel to and from school and wider school culture. The programme focuses on long-term behaviour change, supporting schools to create environments where being active becomes a normal and inclusive part of everyday life rather than an additional activity. Members noted the relevance of this approach for Middlesbrough, particularly in areas of higher deprivation where opportunities for physical activity outside of school may be more limited and recognised the potential value of learning from this best practice to inform future local delivery.

Behaviour Change and Cultural Factors

73. Throughout the review, Members emphasised that improving childhood obesity outcomes requires more than infrastructure and programme delivery alone. Officers highlighted the importance of addressing behavioural, cultural, social and environmental factors that influence everyday choices.
74. Members heard examples of long-term, system-wide approaches, including the London Borough of Waltham Forest, where sustained investment in active travel infrastructure combined with strong community engagement had successfully increased walking and cycling levels. Officers advised that such change takes time, persistence and confidence that interventions are having an impact, even where results may not be immediately visible.
75. The Panel recognised that partnership working is essential to tackling childhood obesity and that there are no quick or simple solutions. Members acknowledged that progress requires long-term commitment, shared responsibility and alignment across organisations, sectors and communities.
76. The evidence reinforced the importance of coordinated governance, whole-system thinking and sustained collaboration to support meaningful and lasting change

Term of Reference D – Explore how healthy placemaking can be embedded more effectively into local council policies and strategies

77. Throughout the review, the Panel consistently heard that tackling childhood obesity through healthy placemaking requires sustained leadership, clear governance and a whole-system approach embedded across Council policy, strategy and decision-making. Members recognised that there are no quick wins, and that meaningful change will take time, particularly in a context of high deprivation and widening health inequalities.
78. The Panel noted positively that Public Health is already embedded within core Council functions through Service Level Agreements (SLAs), enabling health considerations to inform policy development, commissioning and operational decision-making at an early stage. This approach was viewed as a strong foundation for embedding healthy placemaking more consistently across the organisation. Members agreed that further strengthening and formalising these arrangements would support a shared responsibility for health outcomes across departments, including Planning, Transport and Infrastructure, Education and Children's Services.
79. Evidence presented to the Panel highlighted the added value of specialist hybrid roles, such as the Creating Active and Healthy Spaces Lead, in bridging public health and planning functions. Members were particularly impressed by how this role supports the integration of

health evidence into spatial planning, the use of Health Impact Assessments and the consistent application of healthy placemaking principles. The Panel recognised the importance of maintaining and future-proofing this role, with clear links to wider Council teams, to ensure continuity, influence and accountability over the long term.

80. The Panel also considered how the Healthy Weight Declaration (HWD) provides a clear, evidence-based framework to support embedding healthy placemaking across Council activity. Members welcomed the HWD as a mechanism for driving leadership, aligning policies and influencing organisational culture, and noted the importance of using it as a living framework rather than a standalone commitment. The Panel agreed that ongoing senior leadership ownership and regular monitoring of progress against the Declaration's commitments would be essential to sustaining momentum and delivering long-term impact.
81. In exploring how healthy placemaking could be strengthened further, Members discussed the influence of Unhealthy Commodity Industries (UCIs) and the importance of a coordinated, transparent approach to engagement with commercial partners. Building on existing cross-Council working and SLAs, the Panel identified an opportunity to use these established governance structures to support a consistent approach to UCIs, ensuring that decisions relating to procurement, sponsorship, grants and partnerships align with public health priorities and the Council's wider commitment to reducing health inequalities.
82. Members were clear that healthy placemaking should not be interpreted solely as the delivery of physical infrastructure, such as cycle routes or highways schemes. While the built environment plays a critical role, evidence presented to the Panel demonstrated that health outcomes are also shaped by behavioural, social, cultural and economic factors, including parental confidence, perceptions of safety, food environments and, critically, levels of deprivation. The Panel noted that Middlesbrough's high levels of childhood obesity cannot be separated from the wider context of poverty and inequality, and that healthy placemaking must therefore address both place-based and socio-economic influences.
83. The Panel recognised that the Council does not have direct control over all factors affecting healthy weight, including national policy decisions, commercial behaviours and wider funding constraints facing local government. Members were clear that the focus of this review, and the recommendations arising from it, relate to areas within the Council's influence, including policy alignment, planning decisions, commissioning, partnership working and the effective use of existing resources. In this context, healthy placemaking was viewed as a long-term, cumulative endeavour, requiring sustained commitment and organisational alignment rather than short-term or isolated interventions.

CONCLUSIONS

84. Based on the evidence provided throughout the investigation, the Adult Social Care and Health Scrutiny Panel concluded that:
 - Childhood obesity remains a significant public health challenge in Middlesbrough, with 2024/25 NCMP data showing that 14.3% of Reception children and 25.9% of Year 6 children are living with obesity.
 - There is a strong and persistent relationship between childhood obesity and deprivation in Middlesbrough, with the highest prevalence rates overwhelmingly concentrated in wards within the most deprived quintiles. The Panel agreed that, without addressing the wider determinants of health and adopting a whole-system approach, progress is likely to remain uneven.
 - Healthy placemaking has an important role to play in tackling childhood obesity, particularly through shaping the built environment, food environments and opportunities for physical activity. The Panel noted positively that health considerations are increasingly being embedded into planning, transport and policy decision-making.

- Officers demonstrated strong commitment to this agenda, and the Panel was particularly encouraged by the development of the Creating Active and Healthy Spaces Lead role, recognising it as a promising model for sustained cross-departmental collaboration and leadership.

85. The Panel acknowledged that there are no ‘quick wins’ in addressing childhood obesity; meaningful change will require sustained leadership, partnership working and a long-term commitment before measurable improvements are seen. However, the Panel agreed that laying the foundations now—through coordinated, place-based action—will support long-term progress and help create the conditions for healthier futures for Middlesbrough’s children and families.

RECOMMENDATIONS

86. The Adult Social Care and Health Scrutiny Panel recommends to the Executive that:

- A. The Council should strengthen visible leadership on healthy weight by ensuring LMT members sponsor and champion Healthy Weight Declaration commitments. A written progress update should be provided to the ASC and Health Scrutiny Panel within 12 months.
- B. The Council should build on the existing Public Health Service Level Agreements to formalise shared responsibility across all departments, ensuring health and equity considerations are applied in all decision making. A progress update should be provided to the ASC and Health Scrutiny Panel within 6 months.
- C. A review of the implementation of the Council’s Advertising Policy should be undertaken to ensure it aligns with the emerging national restrictions on the promotion of unhealthy products, a progress update should be provided to the ASC and Health Scrutiny Panel within 12 months.
- D. A cross-departmental Steering Group should be established, supported by the Leadership Management Team, to review how the Council currently interacts with Unhealthy Commodity Industries (UCIs) through contracts, grants, sponsorships etc. The Steering Group should undertake a 12-month audit and provide guidance to ensure consistent decision-making aligns with public health aims. Progress should be reported back to the ASC and Health Scrutiny Panel by April 2027.
- E. Public Health and Children’s Services should work jointly to increase the number of Middlesbrough schools participating in the Eat Well Schools Award, with a particular focus on schools located in the wards with the highest childhood obesity prevalence. A progress update should be reported back to the ASC and Health Scrutiny Panel by April 2027.
- F. The Council should continue to invest in safe, well-connected walking and cycling infrastructure, with a focus on improving access, safety and connectivity between homes, schools, green spaces and local amenities, particularly in more deprived areas. Progress should be aligned with existing transport programmes and reported to the ASC and Health Scrutiny Panel within 12 months.
- G. Transport and Infrastructure should support school-led development of Active Travel to School Action Plans, identifying a small number of priority schools using relevant indicators (e.g. obesity prevalence, school gate congestion and existing active travel rates). As part of this work, the service should engage directly with all parts of the school community including pupils, parents/carers, staff and governors, to understand the key barriers to walking and cycling. The findings should then be used to shape tailored interventions for

each school and progress reported back to the ASC and Health Scrutiny Panel within 12 months.

- H. Opportunities should be sought to extend the Creating Active Schools model to enable more schools in Middlesbrough to develop their own whole school programmes to increasing physical activity, working alongside the Eat well Schools programme to improve food quality and choices, particularly around schools with high levels of obesity and deprivation. Relevant indicators should be used to measure progress, such as activity monitors, and the findings reported back to the ASC and Health Scrutiny Panel in 12 months.
- I. The Council should maintain and, for as long as necessary, future-proof the strategic Creating Active and Healthy Spaces Lead role and the companion operational role of Healthy Placemaking Officer. It should also pilot the use of Health Impact Assessments (HIAs) ahead of adoption of the Local Plan. The Local Plan will require that HIAs are prepared for all residential developments of 100 or more dwellings, with other major developments screened on a case-by-case basis to determine whether an HIA is required. Going forward, outcomes should be monitored annually through KPIs, with the first summary report, produced during this transitional period, presented within 12 months to the ASC and Health Scrutiny Panel.
- J. Regular assurance should be provided to the ASC and Health Scrutiny Panel by reporting on a six-monthly basis, the number and location of hot food takeaways in the town. This should include new applications, refusals, closures, retrospective planning applications and related enforcement.
- K. The Council should continue to advocate to Government, for increased support to reduce child poverty in Middlesbrough, recognising its significant impact on childhood obesity and wider health inequalities.

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Dr Mark Fishpool, Programme Manager, You've Got This – Sport England
Laura More, Health Improvement Specialist, Middlesbrough Council
Chris Orr, Principal Transport Planning Officer, Middlesbrough Council
Dr David McAleavey, Creating Active and Healthy Spaces Lead, Middlesbrough Council

ACRONYMS

88. A-Z listing of common acronyms used in the report:

BMI	Body Mass Index
FSM	Free School Meals
HAF	Holiday Activities and Food
HIA	Health Impact Assessment
HFT	Hot Food Takeaway
HWD	Healthy Weight Declaration

NCMP	National Child Measurement Programme
NHS	National Health Service
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework
SLA	Service Level Agreement
UCI	Unhealthy Commodity Industry

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Adult Social Care and Health Scrutiny Panel - reports/presentations to, and minutes of, meetings held on 8 September 2025, 20 October 2025 and 1 December 2025

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**COUNCILLOR JOHN KABUYE
CHAIR OF THE ADULT SOCIAL CARE AND HEALTH SCRUTINY PANEL**

Adult Social Care and Health Scrutiny Panel Membership: Councillors J Kabuye (Chair), D Coupe (Vice-Chair), J Banks, D Branson, D Jackson T Mohan, S Platt and Z Uddin.

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