

EXECUTIVE

Date: Wednesday 5th March, 2025 Time: 5.00 pm Venue: Mandela Room
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AGENDA

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2. Declarations of Interest
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DEPUTY MAYOR AND EXECUTIVE MEMBER - EDUCATION AND CULTURE

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EXECUTIVE MEMBER - ADULT SOCIAL CARE AND PUBLIC HEALTH

6. Auto-enrolment of Free School Meals and maximising Pupil Premium Funding Pilot across Middlesbrough 29 - 40

EXECUTIVE MEMBER - DEVELOPMENT

7. Review of the Statement of Community Involvement 41 - 80

EXECUTIVE MEMBER - FINANCE

8. Welfare Support Policy 81 - 102
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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 25 February 2025

MEMBERSHIP

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

Assistance in accessing information

**Should you have any queries on accessing the Agenda and associated information
please contact Scott Bonner / Chris Lunn, 01642 729708 / 01642 729742,
scott_bonner@middlesbrough.gov.uk / chris_lunn@middlesbrough.gov.uk**

EXECUTIVE

A meeting of the Executive was held on Wednesday 5 February 2025.

PRESENT: Mayor C Cooke (Chair) and Councillors P Gavigan, L Henman, J Ryles, P Storey, J Thompson and N Walker

PRESENT BY INVITATION: Councillor I Blades

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Councillor D Coupe, D Hodgson (Local Democracy Reporter)

OFFICERS: S Bonner, B Carr, A Davis, A Hoy, C Cannon, G Field, L Grabham, R Horniman, A Humble, D Ingoldsby, J Savage, E Scollay, J Tynan and A Wilson

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Councillor T Furness

24/70 **WELCOME AND FIRE EVACUATION PROCEDURE**

24/71 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

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

24/72 **MINUTES - EXECUTIVE - 8 JANUARY 2025**

The minutes of the Executive meeting held on 8 January 2025 were submitted and approved as a correct record.

24/73 **CORPORATE PERFORMANCE Q3 2024/25**

The Mayor submitted a report for Executive's consideration.

The purpose of the report was to advise Executive of corporate performance at the end of Quarter Three 2024/2025, and where appropriate sought approval of any changes, where those were within the authority of the Executive.

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

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

The projected financial outturn at Quarter three 2024/2025, was presented separately at the meeting of the Executive and was not repeated here. There were plans in development to integrate performance, risk and financial reporting for future financial years.

As part of continuous improvement in performance and risk management, the Council's Leadership Management Team (LMT) had implemented monthly reviews of corporate performance utilising a Directorate Performance dashboard, drawing data from a range of performance feeder systems.

The output from these sessions was reflected through quarterly updates to the Executive and covering in addition, progress in delivering actions agreed by Executive, key Directorate performance issues and other performance-related matters.

The Mayor stated the Council had completed its actions following the Section 24 notice and was focussing on the objectives contained in the Council Plan. It was also stated that when

the results of the Peer Review were known any actions arising from this would be integrated into this process.

OPTIONS

The council was required to operate a performance management framework to ensure delivery of its best value duty; to not do so would have placed the council at risk of failing in its statutory responsibility in this regard.

ORDERED that Executive approve the proposed changes to the Executive actions, detailed at Appendix one of the report.

AGREED that Executive:

- 1. Note the progress and position of the corporate performance disciplines, including the Transformation Portfolio.**
- 2. Note delivery status of the Council Plan 2024-27 supporting workplan at Quarter three, detailed at Appendix two of the report**
- 3. Note the Strategic Risk Register, at Appendix three of the report.**

REASONS

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

24/74

LINTHORPE ROAD CYCLEWAY

The Executive Member for Environment and Sustainability submitted a report for Executive consideration.

The purpose of the report sought Executive direction following the acceptance of the design submitted and approved on the current Linthorpe Road cycle lane in December 2024.

The cycleway was completed and became operational in September 2022. The project was funded by Department for Transport (DfT) and delivered locally by Middlesbrough Council and Tees Valley Combined Authority (TVCA).

The project was part of a wider, regional delivery programme of sustainable transport Projects and was delivered under the 'Local Walking and Cycling Implementation Plan' (LCWIP) which was introduced at a national level by the Department for Transport and supported by Active Travel England (ATE).

The project was approved by the Executive in January 2021, with a consultation exercise led by TVCA. The consultation highlighted concerns from some businesses and the scheme was amended to accommodate those views and concerns which were integrated into the final approval. This resulted in retention of car parking spaces on the carriageway, and the creation of additional spaces on Woodlands Road.

Post-implementation, concerns were highlighted regarding safety of pedestrians crossing at non-designated crossing points. As a result, further adaptations to the scheme were implemented to address safety concerns and implemented after agreement with the Council's insurer.

Since the installation of the cycle lane, travel data collected showed a 48% increase in cycling and a 9% reduction in cycling related accidents.

Removal of the cycle lane was identified as a political priority for the Town Centre in early 2023 and again in 2024, due to concerns from local businesses.

A proposal (with a majority support from public consultation) to remove the cycle lane and reinstate to its previous alignment was submitted by TVCA. The Council approved the submitted plan in December 2024.

A Member commented that, during initial consultation, some local businesses had objected to the installation of the scheme and voiced their concerns.

The Mayor commented that he had been dealing with this issue since he was a ward Councillor and that the scheme had remained half finished and there was a need to look at potential schemes in other areas.

OPTIONS

There were two options submitted as part of the report:

Retain the scheme

Based on data collected by VivaCity traffic count cameras post-implementation of the cycle lane, removal of the cycle lane may have resulted in increased accidents and injuries witnessed.

The usage data indicated the cycle lane had contributed to not only reducing the number of accidents, but significantly increased the number of cyclists simultaneously.

The cycle lane had led to an increase in the number of all highway users, which could lead to natural surveillance; assisting in reduction of actual/perceived crime and anti-social behaviour.

The significant increase in cycling along the corridor had not correlated with an increase in accidents.

The proposed area for phase two of Linthorpe Road had witnessed a significant decline in all modes of transport and the area had seen the percentage share of all accidents involving cyclists rise from 0% to 11%.

Maintaining positive relationship with Active Travel England (ATE), which demonstrated regional commitment to City Regional Sustainable Transport Settlement (CRSTS) programme, which was to see over £300m spent up to 2027.

The cycle lane assisted in supporting sustainable transport choices, which was assisting the Council's green strategy. It further supported social mobility, which was a key component for increasing economic activity for the surrounding area, which had typically low car ownership per capita.

Remove the scheme

Following public consultation by TVCA, with the majority of responses in favour of removal and reinstate previous alignment; the Executive approved a TVCA proposed design for the reinstatement of Linthorpe Road.

TVCA commissioned a Road Safety Audit (RSA) into their approved design, which stated that the proposed return to original alignment did not pose safety issues.

TVCA submitted a business case and associated funding agreement to remove the scheme, at no cost to the Council.

ORDERED

That Executive approve removal the scheme.

REASONS

The reasons for the decision were outlined in the options section of the report.

The report discharged the responsibilities of the Executive to manage and control the revenue budget, capital programme and overall balance sheet position of the Council.

The Council's Scheme of Delegation gave Executive collective responsibility for corporate strategic performance and financial management, monitoring and control. Standing Orders and Financial Procedures required Executive's approval for major virements between revenue budgets, and in-year changes to the Council's Capital Programme within approved Council resources within the approved policy framework.

The report enabled Executive to discharge its financial management responsibilities by setting out the Council's position at Quarter three.

Financial Procedure Rule 18.38.3 of the Council's constitution required Executive's approval of revenue and capital programme budget virements over £250,000.

Section 25 of the Local Government Act 2003 required the Chief Finance officer to report on the robustness of the budget estimates and the adequacy of the financial reserves to Council in agreeing its annual budget and precept for the forthcoming financial year. The Chief Finance Officer was defined in S151 of the Local Government Act 1972 and was fulfilled by the Director of Finance.

The previous Director of Finance (S151 Officer) issued her Section 25 Report to Council Members, presenting the 2024/25 Revenue Budget, Medium Term Financial Plan, and Council Tax setting report approved by Council on 8 March 2024. The report set out the basis upon which the revenue budget was considered to be robust and the basis upon which reserves were considered adequate, being dependent upon the approval of Exceptional Financial Support (EFS) by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) (formerly DLUHC) which were summarised in the table at appendix 4.5 of the report.

Based on the current forecast outturn position, only up to £4.700m of this will be required in 2024/25 relating to the element required to balance the 2024/25 budget.

The Council's financial position remained fragile. Its ability to control expenditure within the approved 2024/25 budget, whilst developing further savings and income generating opportunities through the Recover, Reset, Deliver Transformation Portfolio in order to balance the MTFP will be crucial to stabilising the Council's financial position and rebuilding its financial resilience. This required the delivery of all approved £13.9m of 2024/25 savings plans in full.

The Council had achieved significant improvement in its financial position from that which existed at the start of the 2023/24 financial year. However, it continued to spend above its available annual income sources in 2024/25, as whilst there was a forecast year end underspend of (£0.006m) for 2024/25, this was after using £4.7m of EFS to balance the budget which meant it was spending £4.7m above annual revenue income streams in 2024/25.

In terms of Capital Programme Forecast, on 8 March 2024 Council approved a capital programme for 2024/25 of £88.549m (the original 2024/25 capital budget). This was revised to £97.215m as approved by Executive within the 2023/24 Revenue and Capital Outturn and Development of MTFP report of 26 June 2024 to take account of 2023/24 programme slippage and some new externally funded schemes. The budget was revised at Quarter One by the addition of a total of £8.973m in 2024/25 and by a further £0.523m in Quarter Two in order to add new externally funded schemes / additional external funding to existing schemes.

The budget had been further revised at Quarter three by the addition of a total of £0.430m in 2024/25 in order to add new externally funded schemes / additional external funding to existing schemes (detailed in Appendix eight of the report).

Following Executive approval of incorporating these within the Capital Programme, the revised budget for 2024/25 was £107.141m as summarised in table nine of the report.

The Executive Member for Finance reminded Executive that the forecast in the report was as at quarter three and was an improvement on the position at quarter two. and the final budget outturn position would be available in June.

The Mayor and Executive Member for Finance thanked all those involved for helping bring the Council's financial position back on track.

OPTIONS

There were no other options put forward as part of the report.

ORDERED that Executive approve:

1. The proposed revenue budget virements over £250,000 as detailed in Appendix three of the report.
2. The inclusion of additional expenditure budgets to the Capital Programme totalling £0.430m for 2024/25 which were externally funded as detailed in Appendix eight of the report). This will increase the approved 2024/25 Capital Programme budget to £107.141m.
3. The proposed virements over £250,000 between schemes in the 2024/25 Capital Programme approved by Council in March 2024 which are funded from within existing Council resources which were detailed in Appendix eight of the report.

AGREED that Executive note:

1. The forecast 2024/25 revenue outturn as at Quarter three of £143.184m against an approved budget of £143.190m. This was an underspend of £6,000 (£0.006m) (0.00%) as summarised below and detailed in Table one of the report. This was an improvement of (£1.388m) from the £1.382m forecast year-end overspend reported at Quarter Two.
2. The progress on savings delivery set out in Tables three and four of the report and Appendix four.
3. The Council was dependent upon Exceptional Financial Support (EFS) in setting the budget for 2024/25 approved, in principle, by the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government (MHCLG) of up to £13.4m of one-off borrowing, the costs which were factored into the MTFP. Of this sum £4.7m had been utilised to achieve a balanced budget in 2024/25. The forecast use of EFS had been reduced to up to £4.7m, which related only to the element used to balance the budget detailed in paragraph 4.5 of the report.
4. It was essential that all available measures were taken by management to maintain revenue expenditure within the approved budget, given the marginal Quarter three forecast underspend. If an overspend occurred in the remainder of 2024/25 this would require further use of EFS or reserves. Both EFS and reserves could only be used once, and the financial pressure would remain in 2025/26 to be addressed.
5. Based upon the Quarter three forecast outturn, the forecast revenue balances at 31 March 2025 would be £21.369m which was in line with that recommended in the approved Reserves Policy:
 - General Fund Reserve of £11.100m (minimum recommended)
 - Council's unrestricted usable earmarked reserves of £10.269m
6. The 2024/25 Capital Programme forecast year-end outturn of £65.158m at Quarter three was a reduction of £41.983m (39.18%) from the revised Quarter three budget of £107.141m comprising:
 - An underspend on projects of £12.303m
 - Slippage on projects of £29.680m into 2025/26 and 2026/27
7. The current forecast deficit of £6.400m for 2024/25 related to the High Needs Block with the Dedicated Schools Grant which increased the forecast cumulative deficit to £20.693m at 31 March 2025. If the statutory override was removed by Government on 31 March 2026 without a national funding solution

in place for High Needs, then this presented a critical risk to the Council's financial viability, given that it would significantly deplete the Council's general fund reserves. The DSG recovery actions and risks to the Council's financial resilience were set out in paragraph 4.38 and Appendix six of the report.

8. The level of Middlesbrough's share of Collection Fund and General Fund Debtors on 31 December 2024 was detailed in paragraphs 4.63 to 4.65 and Table 11 of the report.

REASONS

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

24/76

2025/26 REVENUE BUDGET, MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN, AND COUNCIL TAX SETTING

The Mayor and Executive Member for Finance submitted a report for Executive consideration. The Executive Member for Finance emphasised the report was not for decision and was to be recommended to Council.

The report proposed a 2025/26 net revenue budget of £143.362m, and a Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP) for the period 2025/26 to 2028/29 following the issuing of the Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement (LGFS) and set out the financial planning assumptions applicable to the budget based upon the best information available at the time.

A Council Tax increase for 2025/26 of 4.99% was proposed, comprising 2% Adult Social Care Precept and 2.99% Core Council Tax which was within the referendum limits set by Government.

The report proposed a Capital Programme of £74.798m for 2025/26 and totalling £170.290m over the period from 2025/26 to 2028/29 together with a financing statement comprising a combination of external funding and council resources. In addition, the proposed capital strategy set out the Council's approach to capital investment and financing, including the forecast levels of borrowing. The Prudential Indicators and Treasury Management Strategy 2025/26m which was discussed at another point in the meeting, translated the Council's revenue income and expenditure plans and capital investment plans for the purpose of the Council's cash flow management together with setting the framework within which the Council's investment and borrowing activity was governed. It included the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Policy which governed how the Council accounted for debt repayment in accordance with statutory regulations.

A summary of the Schools' Budget and allocation of the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) as determined under the Department for Education's (DfE's) National Funding Formula, together with an overview of the financial pressures on the DSG High Needs Block and forecast deficit which was being addressed under the Delivering Better Value (DBV) Programme.

The s151 Officer's recommended Reserves Policy for 2025/26 set out the plan for replenishing and maintaining unrestricted usable revenue reserves over the period of the MTFP in order to achieve financial recovery and re-establish the Council's financial resilience.

The s151 Officer's recommended Fees and Charges Policy sets out the proposed framework within which discretionary charges for services will be reviewed and fees and charges set in the future to ensure financial viability of discretionary services.

The report was underpinned by the Section 151 Officer's report in accordance with s25 of the Local Government Act 2003 which assessed the robustness of budget estimates and the adequacy of financial reserves in the context of the known financial risks that existed in the Council's operating environment. The report set out the responsibilities of all officers and members to work collaboratively together to enable the Council to successfully achieve financial sustainability over the medium term. Under s31A of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, the Council was required to have regard to this report when making decisions on agreeing the budget and setting the Council Tax.

The Executive Member for Finance stated the previous 12 months had been difficult and that

the road to financial recovery was tough. While there was still work to do, it was due to some difficult decisions that there were now opportunities to provide investment in frontline services. Executive was advised that since 2010 the Council budget had been reduced by approximately 43% and that the recent Local Government Settlement had helped to ease the Council's financial situation.

It was clarified that further information about the creation of a priorities fund would be included in a future report to Executive.

The Mayor and Executive Member for Finance expressed their sincere thanks to the Director of Finance and Transformation and his team for their efforts in the budget process.

OPTIONS

No other options were put forward as part of the report.

AGREED that Executive note the contents of the report and submit the following to Council for approval:

- 1. Budget proposals for savings and income generation of £7.036m in 2025/26 rising to £8.686m in 2028/29, as set out in Appendix two (Annex one and two) of the report.**
- 2. Budget growth of £2.521m in 2025/26 rising to £2.918m in 2026/27 for re-investment in services aligned to the Recover, Reset, and Deliver plan as set in Appendix two (Annex four) of the report.**
- 3. Budget provision of £0.311m in 2025/26 and a further £0.100m in 2026/27 to address the removal of previously approved savings in line with the priorities outlined in the Council Plan and after listening to residents' views as set out in Appendix two (Annex three) of the report.**
- 4. An increase in Council Tax of 4.99% resulting in a Council Tax level (Band D) of £2,074.35 excluding parish, Fire, and Police precepts in line with both the Government's referendum limits and the s151 Officer's advice (paragraphs 4.29 to 4.32 and detailed in Appendix seven of the report).**
- 5. The proposed General Fund revenue budget for 2025/26 with a net budget requirement of £143.362m**
- 6. The Financial Reserves Policy for 2025/26 (Appendix four of the report) including the proposed contributions to reserves to strengthen the Council's financial resilience, and which proposes:**
 - a minimum General Fund Balance of least 7% of the Net Revenue budget over the MTFP period to 2028/29. In the 2025/26 proposed budget the level is 7.75% equivalent to £11.1m.**
 - the building up of the Financial Resilience Reserve to at least £10m in 2025/26 and £20m by the end of 2028/29 to strengthen the Council's financial resilience**
- 7. The proposed Fees & Charges Policy for 2025/26, and the schedule of fees and charges arising from the application of the approved policy for 2025/26 (Appendix five of the report).**
- 8. The Capital Strategy 2025/26 and the proposed 2025/26 to 2028/29 Capital Programme totalling £170.290m which included the addition of new Council funded schemes, and the associated financing statement (Appendix six of the report).**

AGREED that Executive note:

- 1. The statutory s25 report of the Council's Section 151 Officer in respect of the robustness of the estimates within the budget and the adequacy of reserves (Appendix one).**
- 2. The updated financial planning assumptions in the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan following the publication of the Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement (Appendix two), and that these will be updated further following publication of the Final Local Government Finance Settlement in early February 2025, with any changes being reported to the Council on 19 February 2025 as part of the budget setting report.**
- 3. The creation of a Delivery Risk Budget of £2m on a one-off basis in 2025/26 only**

- to protect against unplanned use of reserves (Appendix two).
4. The transfer of the estimated surplus on the Collection Fund for 2024/25 of £3.135m to a new Savings Delivery Risk Reserve to help provide against the risk of non-delivery or delay of savings and to rebuild reserves (Appendix two).
 5. The creation of a Middlesbrough Priorities Fund totalling £4.367m for 2025/26 only, along with the process for use and governance of the Fund (Appendix two).
 6. Whilst the budget was balanced for 2025/26 and 2026/27 there would still be a budget gap of £2.726m in 2027/28 rising to £5.170m by 2028/29. Further savings proposals arising from the Transformation Programme would be required as a minimum to meet those budget gaps (Appendix two).
 7. The feedback of the budget consultation exercise (paragraphs 4.8 to 4.16 and Appendix three).
 8. The estimated balances on unrestricted usable revenue reserves as at 1 April 2025 of:
 - General Fund balance - £11.100m
 - Usable Earmarked reserves – unrestricted £10.269m
 9. The inclusion of transformation and redundancy expenditure which could be capitalised under the Flexible Use of Capital Receipts strategy (FUoCR) of £7.500m in 2025/26 (as part of planned £26.700m Transformation Programme from 2024/25 to 2028/29), and that the annual Flexible Use of Capital Receipts (FUoCR) Strategy would be presented to Council for consideration and approval in April 2025.
 10. The Council's estimated revenue cost of borrowing for 2025/26 was £12.060m which was equivalent to 8.4% of the Net Revenue Budget and was approaching the maximum affordable level (currently set at 10% over the MTFP period), therefore future capital investment would need to rely more heavily on external funding and capital receipts in order to maintain borrowing at affordable levels.
 11. Details of the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) Grant for 2025/26 and the allocation to schools (detailed in Appendix eight)
 12. The forecast total cumulative DSG deficit of £20.693m on 31 March 2025, including £21.281m relating to the High Needs Block (Appendix eight).
 13. That a statutory override was in place which prevented the DSG deficit from being met from General Fund resources and the Government's plan to deliver a funding solution was awaited. This presented a potential significant medium term financial risk to the Council in the event that the statutory override was removed without a suitable funding solution (Appendix eight).

REASONS

All Council members had a legal obligation to agree a balanced budget and set the Council Tax by 11 March 2025. In addition, the Council had a Best Value duty to demonstrate financial sustainability through the delivery of a balanced Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) over a period of at least three years. The setting of the budget was part of the budget and policy framework and therefore required Full Council approval.

The recommendations enabled the Council to progress towards meeting its statutory responsibility to set a balanced revenue budget in 2025/26 and the requirement to secure financial sustainability of the period of the MTFP.

The Council was required to take a systematic, coherent, and controlled approach to addressing its ongoing financial challenges over the medium-term, while enabling the delivery of the Mayor's vision and priorities for Middlesbrough through delivery of the wider Council Plan.

24/77

PRUDENTIAL INDICATORS AND TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY - 2025/26

The Executive Member for Finance submitted a report for Executive consideration.

The report outlined the Council's prudential indicators for the financial years 2025/26 – 2028/29 and set the framework and approved the limits within which the treasury management operations for this period would work. It fulfilled key legislative and guidance requirements as follows:

- The setting of the prudential indicators which set out the expected capital activities and treasury management prudential indicators (included as treasury indicators) in line with the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) Treasury Management Code of Practice.
- The Treasury Management Strategy statement which set out how the Council's treasury function would support capital decisions taken above, day to day treasury management activities on service delivery and any limitations on these, via the treasury prudential indicators.
- The approval of the Council's Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Policy, which set out how the Council would pay for historic capital debt for the financial year.

The Authorised Limit for External Debt for the financial year. This was the maximum amount of borrowing that the Council could enter into, with any amount above this limit being deemed illegal.

The Annual Investment Strategy which set out the Council's criteria for choosing the investment counterparties and limiting exposures to the risk of loss.

The information contained in the report regarding the Council's capital expenditure plans, treasury management and prudential borrowing activities, indicated that they were:

- Within the statutory framework and consistent with the relevant codes of practice.
- Prudent, affordable, and sustainable from the perspective of the S151 Officer.
- An integral part of the Council's Revenue and Capital Medium Term Financial Plans.

Thanks were expressed to the Head of Finance and Investment and his team for their efforts in producing the report.

OPTIONS

As it was a statutory requirement to approve the annual treasury management strategy and set of prudential indicators no other options were put forward as part of the report.

AGREED that Executive note the contents of the report and submit the following to Council for approval:

- 1. The Prudential Indicators and Limits for 2025/26 to 2028/29 relating to capital expenditure and treasury management activity set out in tables 1 to 10 of Appendix 1 of the report.**
- 2. The Treasury Management Strategy for 2025/26, which included the Annual Investment Strategy for that financial year.**
- 3. The Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Policy for the 2025/26 financial year.**
- 4. An Authorised Limit for External Debt of £331 million for the 2025/26 financial year.**

REASONS

- a) To comply with the Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities and the Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities (DLUHC) guidance on investments.**
- b) To comply with the Treasury Management Code of Practice for Local Authorities.**
- c) To comply with the requirements of the Local Government Act 2003 Part 1.**
- d) To approve a financial governance framework within which officers will operate when making both borrowing and investment decisions and entering financial transactions.**

The Executive Member for Finance submitted a report for Executive consideration the purpose of which was for Executive to note the proposed Council Tax Reduction (CTR) scheme for 2025/26.

In 2022/23, the Council moved to an income-banded scheme. By doing so, it moved away from the previous complex means tested schemes to simplify the claiming process, reduce the administrative burden and cost of multiple in year changes and associated recalculation of council tax instalments, and to support its achievement of greater collection rates.

The scheme implemented a 90% maximum discount, with lower discount bands of 72%, 36% and 23%, aligned to the level of net weekly income and composition of each household (providing for up to 2 dependent children).

The CTR scheme was a means tested scheme, based on the household size and income, this differed from discounts and exemptions which were not means tested. Where a 100% exemption was granted, such as a student exemption, CTR would not apply as there was nothing to pay. If, on the other hand, a resident was in receipt of a single person discount or other discount, CTR may have still been awarded based on the income and household composition.

The 2024/25 scheme maintained the current income-banded scheme, but also included support for Care Leavers, who were able to apply for CTR as opposed to receiving a local council tax discount. This was a technical adjustment and made no difference to the level of support available to Care Leavers, which remained unchanged.

For 2025/26, it was proposed that the current income-banded scheme be retained subject to the proposed amendments, including that the scheme income ranges were increased in line with inflation. A number of Local Authorities had already implemented an income banded scheme with many more Local Authorities also opting for similar schemes. The main reason for doing so was that a banded scheme was far easier to administer, removed the need for residents to report certain changes, opportunity for 'take up' was made simpler as residents could determine entitlement far easier than the previous scheme. Removing the level of complexities meant that applying for support with Council Tax payments was far easier.

On 30 October 2024, the Chancellor announced in the Autumn Statement that state benefits, including Universal Credit and other working age benefits, would increase in line with inflation at 1.7% from April 2025.

The increase in income from state benefits due to the inflation uplift could have resulted in a lower discount rate band being applied in some cases, based on the existing CTR income ranges set. This would have resulted in a reduction in the level of support which, for some households would add in excess of £300.00 per year to their bill.

The CTR scheme provided for income band ranges to be increased "by the appropriate level of inflation decided by the Council". It is therefore proposed to adjust the income band ranges for 2025/26 to reflect the inflation increase applied to state benefits and thereby maintain the level of support as far as possible for applicants.

It was clarified that there was approximately £120million in unclaimed benefits that there was a significant amount of work being undertaken in this area.

OPTIONS

The Council could reduce the level of support offered to working age residents in receipt of CTR. However, the Council recognised the financial challenges placed on residents and was therefore proposing that the current level of support was maintained which incorporated the proposal to increase the income bandings in line with inflation.

In addition, the Council was not in a financial position to consider awarding additional support through higher discounts or different income ranges without affecting other Council services due to the current budgetary pressures. If the Council chose to increase the maximum award for working age residents to 95%, this would incur an additional cost of circa £0.65m. Similarly, if the maximum award was increased to a 100% maximum award, this would result in additional costs of circa £1.3m. If this were to be considered, a full consultation exercise would also need to be carried out which had not taken place during the current financial year.

AGREED that Executive note the contents of the report and submit the proposed CTR

scheme for 2025/26 to Council for approval.

REASONS

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

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

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

24/79

CUSTOMER STRATEGY

The Executive Member for Finance submitted a report for Executive consideration.

The purpose of the report was to consider the Customer Strategy that supported the Mayors vision, as set out in the Council Plan 2024-27 and was an integral part of the Council's wider Target Operating Model.

A recent review highlighted that the Council significantly lagged behind a number of Local Authorities. The Strategy would shift the Council from the current 'As Is' position, advancing to a Majority Local Authority and progressing over time to a Mature Authority as detailed in the report.

In 2023/24 over 125,000 calls were made to the Council's Customer Centre. There were over 4,700 in-person visits and the website attracted over 2.9 million visitors. This was only a small proportion of the Council's interactions with customers. There were many more interactions that occurred directly with service departments and were managed outside of the Customer Centre telephony system; however, this data was limited.

Work was currently underway to explore the possibility of extending the existing telephony solution corporately to ensure all calls were managed through a single solution, where appropriate. This would further assist with the monitoring of call volumes, understanding the call purpose, identifying alternative channels, better call signposting and reducing unnecessary calls.

Further features could also be introduced within the telephony solution which would immediately support services such as automatic call distribution, call routing and interactive voice responses were amongst some of the potential improvements.

Executive welcomed the strategy and it was recognised the strategy highlighted the need to invest in frontline services in order to ensure customer experience was right first time.

OPTIONS

The strategy provided a clear vision of how the Council could provide and deliver improved customer service benefits whilst realising savings through the intended approach.

If the strategy was not implemented e.g. do nothing or scaled back, the Council would not be able to implement the change necessary to transform customer services and may have only been able to achieve partial benefits and savings.

ORDERED that Executive approve:

- 1. The new Customer Strategy 2024-27.**
- 2. The commitment of the estimated customer programme budget of £1.975m for inclusion within the 2025/26 to 2028/29 capital programme and Flexible Use of Capital Receipts strategy that would be incorporated into the 2025/26 Budget**

and MTFP report to be considered by Council on 19 February 2025.

REASONS

The Customer Strategy was one of six transformation programmes, it had an approved business case (programme delivery document) and sought Executive approval. It offered a brand-new approach which aimed to fundamentally review, redesign, and reshape all of the Council's customer-facing and business process solutions that complemented the Neighbourhood Model.

The approach met the requirements of the Council's transformation portfolio and forecast expenditure as outlined and agreed in the Budget and Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP), the Transformation Report and the Transformation Governance Arrangements, as outlined in the Executive Summary of the report.

The strategy was a key decision that would incur expenditure/savings of over £250,000 and impacted all wards and as such required Executive approval.

The strategy supported the desire to move towards neighbourhood working and was part of the proposed new Target Operating Model. The customer approach would ensure early resolve and thus reduced/avoided more complex matters from forming and escalating into services or the Neighbourhood model which would be both timely and costly.

Delivering excellent customer services required significantly changing the Council's operating model. With a shift in the town's demographic and a growing diverse and relatively young population, the opportunity to meet the expectations of customers and modern-day requirements demanded a new approach.

The Council needed to provide efficient, timely, personalised, proactive, connected and affordable services. The strategy sought to redesign and streamline business processes to provide a more efficient service for customers and ensure staff received quality training and an increased knowledge base to be able to provide early resolve and intervention at any point of contact.

The strategy would align the multiple 'front doors' that could lead to an inconsistent customer experience. To achieve this, some employee reporting lines and structures may change. Any changes would be subject to appropriate Human Resources (HR) policies and procedures and relevant Trade Union consultation when necessary.

The approach was intended to reduce duplication and minimise handovers between services to provide a steady shift to early resolution of customer enquiries. To achieve this the approach sought to make best use of modern technologies and automation where appropriate whilst providing a route for customers to transact with the Council in a clear and concise way.

The strategy was supported through the better use of data to help predict demand trends and inform delivery solutions which provided an ideal opportunity for the Council to shape the customer journey. Over time, the Council intended to progress to a 'single view of the customer' which would, in turn, provide a more advanced approach to responding to and planning for the needs of customers.

Utilising the principles of the new customer tiered operating model would enable processes to be organised around the customer, help gain a deeper understanding of the root cause of issues and provided end to end solutions that would significantly improve the customer experience. Consequently, this was intended to reduce costs and provide a more affordable long-term approach than the Council's current arrangements.

24/80

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

None.

All decisions will come into force after five working days following the day the decision(s) was published unless the decision becomes subject to the call in procedures.

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EXECUTIVE SUB-COMMITTEE FOR PROPERTY

A meeting of the Executive Sub-Committee for Property was held on Wednesday 5 February 2025.

PRESENT: Mayor C Cooke (Chair) and Councillors T Furness, P Gavigan, L Henman, J Ryles, P Storey, J Thompson and N Walker

PRESENT BY INVITATION: Councillors D Coupe

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: D Hodgson (Local Democracy Reporter)

OFFICERS: S Bonner, R Horniman, A Humble, E Scollay and A Wilson

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: None.

24/5 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

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

24/6 **THE DISPOSAL OF LAND AT HEMLINGTON GRANGE SOUTH - PART A**

The Executive Member for Development and Executive Member for Finance submitted a report for Executive consideration.

The report sought Executive's consideration of the bids received by the Council and to approve the disposal of the site to the preferred bidder to conclude the process and remove the designation of associated land as Public Open Space.

The report was considered by the Executive Sub Committee for Property as per the Council's Scheme of Delegation, namely that the Executive Sub-Committee for Property is delegated the power to consider and determine the acquisition and disposal of assets (including land and buildings), other than equipment, plant and machinery for resale, in accordance with the requirements of Financial Regulations and Contract Standing Orders.

In July 2022, Executive approved the marketing and disposal of Hemlington Grange South site, for the purpose of enabling housing development.

Located towards the southern fringe of Middlesbrough, the site was a vacant, 7.05-hectare (ha) Council-owned site and was allocated within the adopted Housing Local Plan (2014). Development Guidance was drafted for the site, and this was subsequently adopted in October 2020 following public consultation. The development guidance provided design principles and expectations with regards to how the scheme should come forward in the future. The Development Guidance was provided to bidders as part of the tender pack when marketing the site; so that any bids would be truly reflective of the standard expected on the site.

The site constituted the southeastern most section of the wider Hemlington Grange site, which was also allocated in the adopted Middlesbrough Housing Local Plan as a strategic urban extension comprising 1,230 dwellings. To date, detailed planning permission has been granted for 846 dwellings on the Hemlington Grange site, of which 699 had been completed and occupied. The Council was aware that the site was an extremely popular and successful development.

The site was ideally situated to enjoy the surrounding coastline and countryside with Saltburn by the Sea located around 14 miles to the east and the North York Moors National Park a relatively short drive to the south.

The site benefits from outline planning approval, which was granted in April 2024, prior to site

marketing. The site was estimated to be able to deliver up to a total of 150 units, subject to Planning, creating a high-quality development.

The Ward Member for Stainton and Thornton was invited to speak on the matter and requested that any development taking place on the site needed to be respectful of existing residents. It was clarified that such considerations would be examined as part of the Planning process.

The Mayor suggested that a package be compiled for future developers that encouraged consideration of existing residents be taken into account when building on the site.

AGREED that Executive:

1. **Note the information contained in Part A of the report.**
2. **Take the decision once all the exempt information contained within Part B of the report had been considered.**

OPTIONS

The Council had the option not to dispose of the land, however the absence of new development on this site would result in forgoing critical income via capital receipts, council tax yields and potential New Home Bonus for Middlesbrough Council.

The site had been allocated for housing in Middlesbrough's Local Plan which was subject to extensive consultation. The disposal of the site would facilitate housing growth and support Middlesbrough's aspirations as a place where people wanted to live and ensuring that high quality housing was available to all.

REASONS

The capital receipts arising from the disposal of the site would assist with meeting the targets set out within the Medium-Term Financial Plan.

The site would be subject to the planning process and was targeted to provide quality family housing, ensuring there was an adequate housing supply, to stem outward migration and attract new residents into Middlesbrough. In addition, the development of the site would add to the Council Tax base and subject to central Government's spending review, had the potential to attract the New Homes Bonus development incentive.

24/7 **ANY OTHER URGENT ITEMS WHICH IN THE OPINION OF THE CHAIR, MAY BE CONSIDERED.**

None.

24/8 **EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

ORDERED that the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items on the grounds that, if present, there would be disclosure to them of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 and that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighed the public interest in disclosing the information.

24/9 **EXEMPT - THE DISPOSAL OF LAND AT HEMLINGTON GRANGE SOUTH - PART B**

The Executive Member for Development submitted a report for Executive's consideration.

ORDERED

That the recommendations of the report be approved.

REASONS

The decision was supported by the following reason:

For reasons outlined in the report.

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MIDDLESBROUGH COUNCIL	
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Report of:	Executive Director of Children's Services
Relevant Executive Member:	Deputy Mayor and Executive Member for Education and Culture
Submitted to:	Executive
Date:	5 March 2025
Title:	SHiFT Programme Progress Update
Report for:	Information
Status:	Public
Council Plan priority:	Safe and resilient communities
Key decision:	No
Why:	Report is for information only
Subject to call in?:	No
Why:	Report is for information only

Executive summary

The report provides details of partnership work to date between SHiFT and Middlesbrough Council. SHiFT is a national charity that aims to shift practice to improve outcomes for children and young people who are involved in, or at risk of, involvement in crime. This report sets out the progress to date with children and young people invited for SHiFT support, along with evidence of positive impact of the Programme so far.

The report requests Executive notes the progress made in relation to our partnership working with SHiFT, acknowledging positive impacts for children and young people to date. SHiFT Executive Report on 20th December 2023 committed to provide an update to Executive on the following actions:

- SHiFT Practice created with recruitment and induction of new staff team.
- SHiFT Practice launched in line with Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government grant funding deadlines.
- 27 young people identified and invited to work with the SHiFT Practice, with work to develop trusting relationships with their SHiFT Guide and emerging positive impacts on their safety and wellbeing.
- Local SHiFT Board created to support effective partnership governance.

1. Purpose

- 1.1 To update Executive on the three-year partnership with SHiFT, a national systems change charity working alongside Children's Services within the Council. SHiFT Middlesbrough has started work across the first of two, 18-month Programmes with children and young people caught up in, or at risk of, cycles of crime and exploitation.
- 1.2 The costs of the partnership are supported by the sum of £600,000 which SHiFT secured from the Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government, alongside match funding of £600,000 from the Council, invested over three financial years.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That the Executive notes progress to date on the following:
- 2.2 A SHiFT Programme has been established in Middlesbrough, with a new staff team successfully recruited, trained and working with children and families.
- 2.3 SHiFT Middlesbrough launched in line with Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government grant funding deadlines. A formal launch event was held in September 2024 and Middlesbrough's Elected Mayor attended as a key speaker alongside Keith Fraser, Chair of the Youth Justice Board.
- 2.4 27 children and young people were identified and invited for SHiFT support. Children and young people have been building trusting relationships with their SHiFT Guide and there is good evidence of emerging positive impacts on their safety and wellbeing as a result of this work.
- 2.5 A Local SHiFT Board has been created and is meeting regularly to provide effective partnership governance with Joe Tynan, Executive Director for Children's Services, as its Chair.

3. Rationale for the recommended decision(s)

- 3.1 While this report is for information only, it is important that Executive are kept updated on the work of SHiFT. SHiFT is an innovative organisation, founded in 2019, with a track record for delivering exceptional outcomes that break the destructive cycle of children and young people caught up in, or at risk of, crime.
- 3.2 SHiFT Middlesbrough provides 1-1 intensive support for 27 of the most vulnerable children and young people in Middlesbrough. Children and young people identified for SHiFT are those for whom, despite the efforts of other professionals, 'business as usual' responses have not been able to make the difference needed and where concern about their wellbeing is high and escalating. For over a quarter of the children SHiFT Middlesbrough is working with, their vulnerabilities and professional responses to their management to date, mean that they were, at the start of SHiFT's work, accommodated in high-cost placements, often a long way from home and not making the difference desired to improve the child's situation. For all children there are concerns about

increasing risk, vulnerability, and the negative impacts this can have on their living arrangements.

3.3 The total cost of the partnership to Middlesbrough Council is approximately £11k per child for an 18-month Programme of intensive individual support, which includes working with everyone important to a child's world. This represents good value for money given the highly complex needs of this vulnerable group and the intensity and expertise of the work SHiFT is delivering. Within the SHiFT cohort there are eight looked after young people whose weekly placement cost range between £3k to £23k as of the end of period nine (December 2024). SHiFT Guides work alongside existing professionals, including Social Workers, providing a level of intensity that Social Workers are not resourced to be able to deliver. SHiFT has an evidenced track record for delivering exceptional outcomes and in year cost savings and cost avoidance through, for example, reducing reliance on high-cost placements, avoiding children being remanded in custody, and supporting children to return to mainstream education from alternative provision.

4. Background and relevant information

4.1 SHiFT – National picture

4.2 SHiFT has a strong and growing track record of exceptional practice that is breaking cycles of crime with and for the most vulnerable children. Headlines from SHiFT's national evidence of impact to date, for children with a SHiFT Guide 12-18 months include:

- 41% reduction in proven offences.
- 58% reduction in reported missing episodes.
- 51% reduction in arrests

4.3 Economic analysis of SHiFT's work conducted in 2022 that for each child considered, costs avoided in the next five years by breaking cycles of crime now ranged from £1.8m to £164k. For every £1 spent on SHiFT £8 is saved over 5 years.

4.4 SHiFT Middlesbrough

4.5 Within the council plan under Safe and Resilient communities the SHiFT programme spans both the promotion of new ideas and community initiatives and also reducing crime and anti-social behaviour.

4.6 SHiFT Middlesbrough has been working with children and young people since July 2024. The Practice is already making evidenced positive impacts with and alongside these children and young people, including as of September 2024 for the three months prior:

- 17 (out of 27) children had no arrests, 22 children had not committed any proven offences and 21 children had not been missing.
- Children's Social Care involvement had reduced for four children and four children had now moved back to Middlesbrough, two of whom were previously in custody and two were living in placements out of area.
- Guide's ratings of mental health had improved for six (out of 27) children and Guides assessed that the negative consequences of substance use had reduced for eight (out of 27) children.

- Guides had supported children to access education, training and employment by arranging for children to attend open days, assisting with their applications, and taking them to interviews.

4.7 Annual Evaluation

4.8 There will be an annual partnership review presented to the Local SHiFT Board in June 2025. The review consists of three section which include:

- Practice activity review – summary of key themes and trends from throughout the year that relate to the SHiFT Commitments on People, Practice, Progress and Partnership.
- Child, family, and professional feedback – thematic analysis feedback from children, families and professionals about their experiences with SHiFT gathered through interviews and focus groups.
- Data analysis – analysis of local monthly survey data providing insight into progress for children against baseline data.

4.9 The annual partnership review findings will be reported back to Executive in September 2025.

4.10 A selection of child stories have been provided as Appendix One to this paper to give greater insight into how SHiFT Middlesbrough is working with children, young people, and families and making a positive difference in their lives. Personally identifiable information has been changed to protect children's identities.

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

5.1 There are no alternative recommendations in this update report.

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

Topic	Impact
Financial (including procurement and Social Value)	Specific targets for cost savings have been established and are monitored as part of the Preventing Care Starts and Placement Sufficiency project monthly at the Children's Thematic Transformation Board, alongside broader impact data, on a quarterly basis through Middlesbrough's Local SHiFT Board.
Legal	No new legal considerations
Risk	<p>In relation to risk that practice does not deliver benefits as intended, the Partnership Agreement provides for termination of the partnership on notice or without notice in exceptional circumstances.</p> <p>Key mitigations in relation to operational risk to children/families and associated reputational risks include regular oversight through the Local SHiFT Board chaired by the Executive Director of Children's Services to ensure the</p>

	<p>Programme is delivered as intended and any emerging issues are swiftly addressed.</p> <p>SHiFT meets all Charity Commission governance requirements, with a Board of Trustees (who meet quarterly) and specialist sub-Committees. SHiFT has a clear, regularly reviewed and communicated safeguarding policy and Critical Incident Notification Process.</p>
Human Rights, Public Sector Equality Duty and Community Cohesion	There are no human rights, equality or data protection issues arising as a result of the recommendations in this report.
Climate Change / Environmental	There are no climate change / environmental issues arising as a result of the recommendations in this report.
Children and Young People Cared for by the Authority and Care Leavers	SHiFT is working with looked after children and young people and care leavers to improve their outcomes and mitigate risk factors.
Data Protection	A Data Protection Information Agreement is in place to ensure a compliant framework for sharing Council data with SHiFT.

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

Action	Responsible Officer	Deadline
Further update required on progress	Executive Director of Children' Services	September 2025

Appendices

1	Appendix One: Children Case Study
2	
3	

Background papers

Body	Report title	Date
SHiFT Initial Executive report	SHiFT Executive Report	20th December 2023

Contact: Kay Dargue, Head of Partnerships and Operational Lead for SHiFT Middlesbrough.

Email: Kay_Dargue@middlesbrough.gov.uk

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Appendix One: Child Stories

Meet Luke

Luke is a 17-year-old White British teenager, one of seven siblings, with a strong passion for motorbikes and close friendships. Children's Services became involved due to concerns about his care, which led to him moving in with his grandad in 2023 after being unable to stay with his parents. Unfortunately, that arrangement broke down, and Luke is now living with his girlfriend and her mother while fostering options are being explored.

There have been ongoing concerns about Luke's emotional well-being, challenges in family relationships, and worries about the influence of negative peers in Luke's community. Since starting work with SHiFT, Luke is no longer being discussed as part of the Vulnerable, Exploited, Missing and Trafficked (VEMT) Group, but concerns remain about his cannabis use and vulnerability to negative influences. Luke was recently arrested for motor vehicle theft and, despite efforts from Children's Services and the Virtual School, he hasn't been in education, training, or employment since leaving school.

Luke met his SHiFT Guide in July 2024, and they've built a strong relationship. Following his recent arrest, Luke reached out to his Guide from police custody. During their conversation, his Guide encouraged Luke to reflect on his actions and consider his future, reminding him that he's nearing adulthood. Luke expressed frustration with his current lifestyle, saying, "I'm sick of living like this, please find me a job or something to sort my life out", signalling his readiness for change.

Since then, Luke's Guide has helped him to set realistic goals, reach out to learning providers, and has arranged an interview at an education and training centre. The centre offers an employment pathway and includes functional skills in Maths and English. Luke enjoyed the interview, attended an induction day, and is now attending the course.

Luke has also agreed to seek help for his cannabis use, marking a powerful step toward taking control of his future. With his Guide's continued support, Luke is gaining the tools and confidence to make positive choices, build essential skills, and navigate challenges with purpose. By helping him access education and tackle personal issues, his SHiFT Guide is empowering Luke to advocate for himself, ensuring his voice is heard as he works toward a brighter, more purposeful future.

Meet Adam

Adam is a 16-year-old White British boy and one of two brothers who live in Middlesbrough. Children's Services have known Adam from an early age due to concerns about his parent's ability to care for him, which resulted in him going to live with a relative on a Special Guardianship Order. Earlier this year the relative experienced significant health issues that meant Adam had to go and live with other family members. Sadly, this did not work out, but Adam's girlfriend's mother agreed that he could go and live with them, something that Children's Services supported. Adam had just gone to live with them when he started to work with his SHiFT Guide, who recognised how important it was for Adam to feel safe and establish a sense of belonging in his new living arrangements.

Not long after he moved, Adam was arrested and his girlfriend's mother was extremely supportive of him, attending the police station and acting as Appropriate Adult. Unfortunately, due to the allegations made about Adam, the housing provider threatened

to seek an injunction preventing him from accessing the estate. This caused immense stress for Adam, his girlfriend and her mother, who was told that her tenancy would be at risk if Adam continued to stay there. The SHiFT Guide provided additional support during this time and, alongside Children's Services, successfully advocated for Adam to remain in the home, highlighting how important it was for him to have stability and feel safe and cared for.

Recently, Adam's girlfriend and her mother went away on holiday. Despite the efforts of both his SHiFT Guide and Children's Services to have him join, unfortunately Adam could not go. A temporary arrangement was made for him while they were away, and, to help him stay connected with them, his SHiFT Guide provided him with a phone.

A breakthrough came during this period when Adam called his SHiFT Guide after learning that the police were looking for him in relation to a robbery. Adam asked his SHiFT Guide to accompany him to the police station for a voluntary interview and act as his Appropriate Adult. The outcome for Adam was No Further Action, but this has proved to be a turning point for him.

Afterwards, Adam spoke with his SHiFT Guide about his parents, growing up, his girlfriend, friends, and his hopes for the future - to have a home with his girlfriend. Adam has not talked openly to professionals in this way before, an indication that he has started to trust and believe in his SHiFT Guide. With the support of his Guide Adam recognised that if he wanted to have a home with his girlfriend, he would need to work and have an income. His increased feelings of safety and stability mean that he now feels able to take up the offer from his SHiFT Guide to support him to secure an apprenticeship.

MIDDLESBROUGH COUNCIL	
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Report of:	Joint Director of Public Health Director of Finance and Transformation
Relevant Executive Member:	The Mayor Executive Member for Adult Social Care and Public Health Executive Member for Finance
Submitted to:	Executive
Date:	5 March 2025
Title:	Auto Enrolment of Free School Meals and Maximising Pupil Premium Funding Pilot across Middlesbrough
Report for:	Decision
Status:	Public
Council Plan priority:	A healthy place
Key decision:	Yes
Why:	Decision(s) will have a significant impact in two or more wards
Subject to call in?:	Yes
Why:	Non-Urgent decision

Executive summary
<p>In early 2024, Resident and Business Support and Public Health embarked on a joint pilot which was designed to maximise Free School Meal entitlement for households who met the qualifying criteria but had not opted in for Free School Meals. On average this would provide a saving of around £400 per household (per pupil) once entitlement was confirmed. In parallel by increasing take up, this would provide a direct financial benefit to schools through the Pupil Premium funding arrangements.</p> <p>The findings have been significant with 546 more children now qualifying for Free School Meals and a further £765k identified pupil premium funding. All of the schools in Middlesbrough participated in the pilot initiative with all schools benefiting from pupils being identified as entitled.</p> <p>Consultation took place with Middlesbrough schools in December 2024 to provide an update on the pilot initiative and present the options for future delivery. Following discussions with the schools, the proposal for future delivery is as follows: -</p>

1. Where Free School Meals are administered by the Local Authority, the auto enrolment will form part of the process of administering Free School Meals and included in the cost of administration.
2. Where Free School Meals are not administered by the Local Authority an administration fee of 10% will be applied for each pupil premium identified. This will be a one-off fee charged for any new case identified.
 - Following conversations with a number of schools this was the preferred approach as the 10% will be applied to the additional funding which the school will receive. As this is a one off, any ongoing Pupil Premium support the school receives for the relevant child(ren) the school will benefit from 100% of the premium.
 - Should the school decide for the Local Authority to administer their Free School Meals, there will be no administrative fee applied as this work will be charged and form part of the Free School Meal administrative fee.

Further advantages of the auto enrolment have also had a positive impact on more pupils having access to the Holiday and Activities Food Programme (HAF) in Middlesbrough. Early indication suggests that the HAF will continue for another 12 months with any additional take up of Free School Meals also benefitting from this programme.

Middlesbrough Council has received national press recognition for being a leading Local Authority on the auto enrolment of Free School Meals and are pleased to have shared best practice with a vast number of other Local Authorities across England via conferences and meetings. Middlesbrough are extremely proud to be able to support other Local Authorities with their 'take up' campaigns.

1. Purpose

- 1.1 To seek approval for the Council to undertake the Free School Meal and Pupil Premium initiative on a longer-term basis.
- 1.2 The Council has engaged with Middlesbrough schools in a meeting held on 13 December 2024, seeking thoughts/appetite on whether schools would wish for this work to continue on a longer-term basis. The schools were advised that the Council will write to schools ahead of extending the Free School Meal and Pupil Premium initiative to inform them that the schools who already have their Free School Meals administered by the Local Authority, will receive the auto enrolment service as part of the existing administration fee.
- 1.3 For Schools who are not in receipt of the Free School Meal service administered by Middlesbrough Council, the opinion of the Schools was sought, the Schools preference, was an administration fee of 10% be applied to any new pupil premium identified. In advance, the Council would write to all schools seeking approval to progress with the auto enrolment approach, at this time the School will confirm if it would wish to 'opt in/opt out'. The administration fee will apply to any new Pupil Premium funding secured through the auto enrolment initiative and this would be a one-off fee to cover the cost of the administrative effort by the Local Authority.

- 1.4 The purpose of the initiative is to ensure that schools are receiving the maximum benefit of Pupil Premium funding as well as contribute towards the Council's Plan to reduce poverty and create a healthy place by enabling children who are entitled to Free School Meals to access them.

2. Recommendations

2.1 That the Executive

1. Approve the continuation of the Free School Meals auto enrolment programme for Schools who 'opt in'. A 10% fee will be applied for any new pupil premium identified. The fee is intended to cover the Councils costs in administering the auto enrolment business process. The Council will write to Schools each year seeking approval from the School to participate in the auto enrolment initiative.

3 Rationale for the recommended decision(s)

- a. The continuation with the auto enrolment on to Free School Meals (including agreement from the Schools) means that those children who are eligible, do not miss out on a healthy nutritious meal at school.
- b. In addition to ensuring children are not missing out, the continuation of this initiative will also result in Schools receiving the maximum amount of funding from Central Government through the Pupil Premium grant which will allow a number of initiatives, defined by the individual School to be funded.
- c. Some children are automatically receiving Free School Meals through the Universal Infant Free School Meals (if they are in Reception, Year 1, and Year 2), and as such may not have registered formerly for Free School Meals, which means the School would be missing out on Pupil Premium. The auto enrolment take up would ensure that the Schools are maximising Pupil Premium and not missing out.
- d. The data captured from the pilot is included (see Appendix 1).
- e. The pilot initiative has supported families across Middlesbrough and will contribute towards reducing poverty, as children will have access to a Free School Meal, which may have been funded by the parent/carer at a cost of c£400 per pupil. The outcome will likely save Middlesbrough Households a combined saving of approximately £218,400 per year.
- f. The initiative has also directly benefitted from The Holiday and Activities Food Programme (HAF). The increased number of children in receipt of Free School Meals means more children have access to this programme. Following more recent announcements it would suggest that the Holiday and Activities Food Fund (HAF) will continue for a further 12 months.

- g. In December 2024, Middlesbrough Council united with 100 other organisations in an open letter to Government calling for pupils who meet the eligibility criteria but are not yet signed up to Free School Meals, to be automatically enrolled. Middlesbrough Council was one of 24 local authorities to add their signature to the letter, which implores Government to use the upcoming Children's Wellbeing Bill to enable all children who are entitled to a Free School Meal to be automatically enrolled.

4. Background and relevant information

- 4.1 An initial report was presented to the Executive on the 26th June seeking approval to progress with a pilot initiative to implement the auto enrolment of Free School Meals, with the aim of increasing the number of children registered for Free School Meals and Pupil Premium funding, subject to the agreement of Middlesbrough Schools.
- 4.2 The initial report provides further background information and relevant information on the initial pilot initiative. The report can be found [here](#).

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

- 5.1 **Do nothing:** To continue with the current application process whereby the responsibility rests with households to apply for Free School Meals. Whilst this is still an option for parents, the proposed approach by the Council will ensure applications are maximised as is the Pupil Premium for Schools. The results from the pilot would suggest 'doing nothing' should be avoided.

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

Topic	Impact
Financial (including procurement and Social Value)	The Council will undertake the auto enrolment of Free School Meals for those Schools who have agreed for the Council to undertake their administration of the Free School Meal process. This will be at an agreed cost (currently £4.22 per child for 2024/25) for those who have signed up to the Free School Meal administration, which will be reviewed annually. For the Schools who sign up for the auto enrolment of Free School Meals only, they will be charged a 10% administrative fee. This fee is 10% of the Pupil Premium funding generated only through this initiative.
Legal	Under Sections 512 and 512ZB of the Education Act 1996 the Local Authority, through Schools, or alternatively academies, are required to provide Free School Meals if a child is eligible and a request for Free School Meals has been made by or on behalf of that person to the Authority. The Local Authority has the "general power of competence" under Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011 which may include automatically enrolling children eligible for Free School Meals. In addition, Section 111 of the Local Government Act 1972 states a Local Authority shall have the power to do anything

	<p>(subject to any contrary provisions in the Education Act) which is calculated to facilitate, or is conducive or incidental to, the discharge of any of their functions.</p> <p>Central Government recognises the benefits of providing a healthy school meal to the most disadvantaged pupils. The Education Act 1996 requires maintained Schools and academies (including free schools) to provide Free School Meals to disadvantaged pupils who are aged between 5 and 16 years old. The legislation the guidance refers to is: The Education Act 1996; The Welfare Reform Act 2012; Children and Families Act 2014.</p>
Risk	<p>The initiative supports the delivery of the Council's strategic priority 'A Healthy Place' to reduce poverty as set out in the Council Plan 2024-2027.</p> <p>The initiative will assist low income and vulnerable residents to meet day to day living expenses and provide additional funding to Schools to support the attainment gap and educational needs to improve the lives of local residents.</p> <p>The implementation of the initiative enables the service to deliver organisational priorities (Risk 08-054) and by reviewing the scheme periodically the Council continues to effectively review and amend the scheme to comply with any legislative changes (Risk 08-055).</p>
Human Rights, Public Sector Equality Duty and Community Cohesion	<p>There are no disproportionate adverse impacts on any group or individuals with characteristics protected in UK equity law. An impact assessment has been carried out and is attached.</p>
Climate Change / Environmental	<p>There are no disproportionate adverse impacts on the aspirations of the Council to achieve net zero, net carbon neutral or be the lead authority on environmental issues</p>
Children and Young People Cared for by the Authority and Care Leavers	<p>The initiative does not differentiate based on applicant background and therefore has no adverse impact on children and young people cared for by the Authority and Care Leavers.</p>
Data Protection	<p>A privacy notice has been published for the purposes of automatic enrolment, along with a service level agreement with Schools to include the provisions for the protection of data shared. A Data Protection Screening and Impact Assessment Form has been completed.</p> <p>Personal data will be processed for the purposes of the opt out automatic enrolment scheme. There must be a lawful basis to process personal data. The lawful basis would</p>

	therefore be the UK General Data Protection Regulation Article 6(1)(e) the processing of personal data for a Public Task supported by Sections 512 and 512ZB of the Education Act 1996 and Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011 and Section 111 of the Local Government Act 1972.
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Actions to be taken to implement the recommended decision(s)

Action	Responsible Officer	Deadline
Implementation of the auto enrolment of free school meal initiative on a longer-term basis	Janette Savage	30 September 2025

Appendices

1	Data collection from the auto enrolment of Free School Meals and maximising Pupil Premium funding pilot
2	Impact assessment

Background papers

Body	Report title	Date
N/A		

Contact: Janette Savage – Head of Resident and Business Support
Email: Janette_Savage@middlesbrough.gov.uk

Appendix 1: Data Collection from the Auto-enrolment of Free School Meals and Maximising Pupil Premium Funding Pilot

Table 1: Overview of the data collected through the FSM pilot

Pupils identified as potentially eligible	Eligibility Checking System pass	Data sent to schools	Pupils on the School Census	Pupils not on the School Census
799	630	599	546	53

Table 2: The number of pupils on the school census and the overall Pupil Premium Funding generated

Number of pupils on the School Census		
	Number of pupils	Pupil Premium Funding
Primary	441	£654,885
Secondary	105	£110,250
Total	546	£765,135

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Impact Assessment Level 1: Initial screening assessment

Subject of assessment:	Auto Enrolment Free School Meals			
Coverage:				
This is a decision relating to:	<input type="checkbox"/> Strategy	<input type="checkbox"/> Policy	<input type="checkbox"/> Service	<input type="checkbox"/> Function
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Process/procedure	<input type="checkbox"/> Programme	<input type="checkbox"/> Project	<input type="checkbox"/> Review
	<input type="checkbox"/> Organisational change	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (please state)		
It is a:	New approach:	<input type="checkbox"/>	Revision of an existing approach:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
It is driven by:	Legislation:	<input type="checkbox"/>	Local or corporate requirements:	<input type="checkbox"/>

<p>Description:</p>	<p>Key aims, objectives and activities To assess the impact of proceeding with an auto enrolment process relating to Free School Meals (FSM) applications.</p> <p>Statutory drivers Under Sections 512 and 512ZB of the Education Act 1996 the Council is required to provide free school meals if a child is eligible and a request for free school meals has been made by or on behalf of that person to the authority. The local authority has the “general power of competence” under Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011 which may include automatically enrolling children eligible for Free School Meals. In addition, Section 111 of the Local Government Act 1972 states a local authority shall have the power to do anything (subject to any contrary provisions in the Education Act) which is calculated to facilitate, or is conducive or incidental to, the discharge of any of their functions.</p> <p>The Government recognises the benefits of providing a healthy school meal to the most disadvantaged pupils. The Education Act 1996 requires maintained schools and academies (including free schools) to provide free school meals to disadvantaged pupils who are aged between 5 and 16 years old. The legislation the guidance refers to is: The Education Act 1996; The Welfare Reform Act 2012; Children and Families Act 2014. The DfE has provided non-statutory advice.</p> <p>Differences from any previous approach Previous application processes will remain i.e., families applying themselves directly with schools, however, the aim is that auto-enrolment will reduce some of the barriers associated with applying for FSM. The Exec report highlights these barriers as low-level reading ages, navigating the benefits system, stigma etc which may prevent applications coming forward.</p> <p>Following a review of the process, the approach will transition from application based submissions only for free school meals to the inclusion of auto enrolment. There will be an option for families to opt out. By including auto enrolment this will ensure that eligible children are captured more effectively, increase pupil premiums for schools and in turn increase funding available for schools for educational improvements. The changes to the process will improve services and support for vulnerable households and low income families.</p> <p>Key stakeholders and intended beneficiaries (internal and external as appropriate) Key stakeholders: the Council; Service Users; Schools</p> <p>Intended outcomes. To seek approvals of an auto enrolment process</p>
<p>Live date:</p>	<p>04 December 2024</p>
<p>Lifespan:</p>	<p>Until further notice</p>
<p>Date of next review:</p>	<p>Review after year one, then 3 yearly</p>

Screening questions	Response			Evidence
	No	Yes	Uncertain	
Human Rights Could the decision impact negatively on individual Human Rights as enshrined in UK legislation?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	No evidence to suggest that the policy will have an adverse impact on individuals in terms of human rights.
Equality Could the decision result in adverse differential impacts on groups or individuals with characteristics protected in UK equality law? Could the decision impact differently on other commonly disadvantaged groups?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	No evidence to suggest that the policy will have an adverse impact on individuals in terms of equality.
Community cohesion Could the decision impact negatively on relationships between different groups, communities of interest or neighbourhoods within the town?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	No evidence to suggest that the policy will have an adverse impact on relationships between different groups, communities of interest or neighbourhoods within the town.
Next steps: ➡ If the answer to all of the above screening questions is No then the process is completed. ➡ If the answer of any of the questions is Yes or Uncertain, then a Level 2 Full Impact Assessment must be completed.				
Assessment completed by:	Anne Rose		Head of Service:	Janette Savage
Date:	01.10.2024		Date:	

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

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MIDDLESBROUGH COUNCIL	
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Report of:	Director of Regeneration
Relevant Executive Member:	Executive Member for Development
Submitted to:	Executive
Date:	5 March 2025
Title:	Review of the Statement of Community Involvement
Report for:	Decision
Status:	Public
Council Plan priority:	A successful and ambitious town
Key decision:	Yes
Why:	Decision(s) will have a significant impact in two or more wards
Subject to call in?:	Yes
Why:	Non-Urgent Decision

Executive summary
<p>This report seeks approval for a revised Statement of Community Involvement (SCI).</p> <p>The Council is required to prepare an SCI, to explain how it will involve the community in the preparation of local development documents (such as the Local Plan), the preparation of neighbourhood plans, and on planning applications.</p> <p>The Council adopted its SCI in March 2020. The legislation requires that SCIs are reviewed every 5 years and, where appropriate, updated.</p> <p>Following a review of the SCI, a small number of amendments are proposed to reflect the most up to date National Planning Policy Framework and changes to the way the Planning Services operates.</p> <p>The implications of the recommendations have been considered by the appropriate officers of the Council and are set out in the main body of the report.</p>

1. Purpose

- 1.1 To seek approval for a revised Statement of Community Involvement.

2. Recommendations

2.1 That the Executive

- Approves the revised Statement of Community Involvement.
- Delegates authority to the Director of Regeneration, in consultation with the Executive Member for Development, to make changes to the Statement of Community Involvement as a result of future reviews.

3. Rationale for the recommended decision(s)

- 3.1 The Council has a statutory duty to prepare an SCI, to explain how it will involve the community in the preparation of its Local Plan, the preparation of neighbourhood plans, and on planning applications. The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 require that SCIs are reviewed every 5 years.
- 3.2 The Council's current SCI was adopted in March 2020. In order to comply with the legislation a review must be completed by 17th March 2025.

4. Background and relevant information

- 4.1 Under the provisions of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, the Council is required to prepare an SCI, to explain how it will involve the community in the preparation of local development documents (such as the Local Plan), the preparation of neighbourhood plans, and on planning applications. They should set out how the Council will meet the legislative requirements in undertaking its planning activities, as well as any additional engagement it may do beyond what is legally required. The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 also require the Council to review the SCI at least every 5 years.
- 4.2 The Council's current SCI was adopted in March 2020. Since then, there have been a number of changes to national planning policy and legislation, and also the way the Council delivers its planning service, meaning that there are some aspects of the SCI that are out-of-date. It is important that the SCI remains up-to-date as it helps to ensure compliance with statutory duties. This will be particularly important as the new Local Plan is finalised this year.
- 4.3 Officers have completed a review of the SCI and are recommending a small number of changes:

Change	Reason
Update the wording regarding the 'Tests of Soundness' that are relevant in preparing Local Plans.	To align with the wording in the most up-to-date National Planning Policy Framework.
Update text regarding the delivery of a free pre-application advice service.	The Council has introduced charges for pre-application advice to help ensure sufficient resources to deliver a high-quality service.
Update the font, text size and colours throughout the document.	To comply with accessibility requirements.
Update contact details.	New contact details.

4.4 There is no statutory requirement to undertake public consultation on the SCI.

4.5 Following approval of the revised SCI, the Council's website will be updated to replace the previous SCI with the new version. The SCI will be used as appropriate by the Council's Planning Service.

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

5.1 **Not to update the SCI.** This will mean that we would not comply with the legislation regarding reviewing the SCI every 5 years. There would be potential compliance issues, particularly with preparing the Local Plan.

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

Topic	Impact
Financial (including procurement and Social Value)	The costs associated with reviewing and updating the SCI are limited and met entirely through approved in-year revenue budgets.
Legal	<p>There is a statutory duty to prepare an SCI in accordance with the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.</p> <p>The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 require that SCIs are reviewed every 5 years. A review of the Middlesbrough SCI must be complete by 17th March 2025.</p>
Risk	<p>O8-055 - If the Council doesn't respond effectively and efficiently to legislative changes it could be in breach of statutory duties in relation to service delivery and fail to make the most of opportunities.</p> <p>The SCI has been reviewed in accordance the legislation and latest Government guidance. This will provide the opportunity to best ensure legislative requirements will be satisfied, so this will have a positive impact on this risk.</p>
Human Rights, Public Sector Equality Duty	An impact assessment has been completed on the Review of the SCI and is attached to this report at Appendix 1. This

and Community Cohesion	concluded that there will not be an adverse impact on individual human rights.
Climate Change / Environmental	The Review of the SCI does not impact on Climate Change or the Environment.
Children and Young People Cared for by the Authority and Care Leavers	The Review of the SCI does not impact on Children and Young People Cared for by the Authority and Care Leavers.
Data Protection	There are no Data Protection or GDPR issues regarding the Review of the SCI. The public engagement associated with the delivery of the Council's planning functions will involve the collection and processing of personal data in accordance with statutory requirements. Given this statutory basis, there are no concerns that the implementation of the SCI could impact adversely on data protection or GDPR.

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

Action	Responsible Officer	Deadline
Update the Council's website to replace the old SCI with the new SCI	Alex Conti	17 th March 2025

Appendices

1	Initial Impact Assessment	
2	Statement of Community Involvement 2025	

Background papers

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

Contact: Alex Conti, Strategic Policy Manager

Email: alex_conti@middlesbrough.gov.uk

Appendix 1 – Initial Impact Assessment of the Review of the Statement of Community Involvement

Impact Assessment Level 1: Initial screening assessment

Subject of assessment:	Review of the Statement of Community Involvement			
Coverage:	Crosscutting			
This is a decision relating to:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Strategy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Policy	<input type="checkbox"/> Service	<input type="checkbox"/> Function
	<input type="checkbox"/> Process/procedure	<input type="checkbox"/> Programme	<input type="checkbox"/> Project	<input type="checkbox"/> Review
	<input type="checkbox"/> Organisational change	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (please state)		
It is a:	New approach:	<input type="checkbox"/>	Revision of an existing approach:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
It is driven by:	Legislation:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Local or corporate requirements:	<input type="checkbox"/>
Description:	<p>Key aims, objectives and activities</p> <p>The Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) has been revised to ensure it: remains up-to-date with national policy and legislation; is appropriate in ensuring the Council fulfils its statutory duties with regards to planning activities; and is accessible for a wide audience.</p> <p>Statutory drivers</p> <p>There is a statutory duty to prepare an SCI in accordance with the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.</p> <p>The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 require that SCIs are reviewed every 5 years. A review of the Middlesbrough SCI must be complete by 17th March 2025.</p> <p>Differences from any previous approach</p> <p>Approach updated in line with legislation, and the way Planning Services now operates. Style amended to make it more accessible to a wider audience.</p> <p>Key stakeholders and intended beneficiaries (internal and external as appropriate)</p> <p>The key stakeholders are: The Council, Middlesbrough Development Corporation, developers, businesses, investors and the local community.</p> <p>Intended outcomes.</p> <p>To set out the Council's approach to involving the community in its planning activities, in line with national policy and legislation.</p>			
Live date:	Upon approval.			

Lifespan:	Until revised, should be reviewed at least every 5 years.			
Date of next review:	By March 2030			
Screening questions	Response			Evidence
	No	Yes	Uncertain	
Human Rights Could the decision impact negatively on individual Human Rights as enshrined in UK legislation?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The SCI sets out how the Council will fulfil its statutory duties to involve the community in undertaking its planning activities, and will be applied consistently once approved. In light of the above, it is not considered that the guidance will have an adverse impact on individual human rights.
Equality Could the decision result in adverse differential impacts on groups or individuals with characteristics protected in UK equality law? Could the decision impact differently on other commonly disadvantaged groups?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The SCI sets out how the Council will fulfil its statutory duties to involve the community in undertaking its planning activities, and will be applied consistently once approved. In light of the above, it is not considered that the guidance will have an adverse impact on different groups or individuals in terms of equality.
Community cohesion Could the decision impact negatively on relationships between different groups, communities of interest or neighbourhoods within the town?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The SCI sets out how the Council will fulfil its statutory duties to involve the community in undertaking its planning activities, and will be applied consistently once approved. In light of the above, it is not considered that the guidance will impact negatively on relationships between different groups, communities of interest or neighbourhoods within the town.
Next steps: ➡ If the answer to all of the above screening questions is No then the process is completed. ➡ If the answer of any of the questions is Yes or Uncertain, then a Level 2 Full Impact Assessment must be completed.				
Assessment completed by:	Alex Conti		Head of Service:	Paul Clarke
Date:	06/01/2025		Date:	06/01/2025



Middlesbrough Council

Statement of Community Involvement

March 2025



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1. INTRODUCTION

1. INTRODUCTION

WHAT IS A STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT?

- 1.1 All local planning authorities are required to produce a Statement of Community Involvement (SCI). SCIs set down the degree of involvement that the community and other stakeholders can expect when decisions on development proposals and future planning strategy are made. In making these decisions, the Council does so in accordance with national legislation and its own local planning policies.
- 1.2 Consultation is an integral part of involving the local community in the planning process. Since the adoption of the first SCI in 2005, there have been regular reviews to take account of new legislation and different ways of engaging with the public. This review of the SCI takes account of recent changes in national policy including the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).
- 1.3 There is also now a requirement for local planning authorities to review their SCIs every five years.
- 1.4 This document explains:
- how we will consult on planning documents and planning applications;
 - how local communities, groups, and other bodies can be involved in the planning process in a timely and accessible manner;
 - how we can assist in the preparation of Neighbourhood Plans; and
 - how the results of community engagement are to be fed into the planning process.



GETTING INVOLVED IN PLANNING

- 1.5 There are two main ways to get involved in local planning matters:
- a) having your say during public consultation periods on **local development documents**. These are more commonly known as Local Plan and

1. INTRODUCTION

Supplementary Planning Documents and they set the policy framework against which development proposals will be assessed; and

- b) making comments on **planning applications** – most types of development from new houses to changes of use require a planning application to be submitted and approved.

- 1.6 In some areas of the town, it is also possible to get involved in neighbourhood planning matters, particularly during the preparation process of a Neighbourhood Plan. Further information can be found at:
<https://www.middlesbrough.gov.uk/planning-and-housing/planning/planning-policy/neighbourhood-planning>
- 1.7 Decisions on planning applications are made in line with the Local Plan, Neighbourhood Plan, or Supplementary Planning Documents, so getting involved in the production of these type of document at early stage is essential.
- 1.8 If you wish to be contacted about future public consultation periods regarding **local development documents**, and be added to the Local Plan consultation database, please contact us at: planningpolicy@middlesbrough.gov.uk along with your contact details. For **planning applications** please contact us at: developmentcontrol@middlesbrough.gov.uk
- 1.9 There are also a number of organisations who provide independent advice and information on the planning system and how to get more involved. A list of useful contacts is set out in Appendix 4.



MAKING COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT EFFECTIVE

- 1.10 For planning to be seen as positive, all sections of the community must have confidence that the process is legitimate, operates in a timely manner and produces outcomes that are in the public interest. The process should be simple to follow and delivered in a fair, transparent and efficient manner. Effective community involvement requires processes for:

- notifying and informing communities about policies and proposals in good time;

1. INTRODUCTION

- enabling communities to participate in developing proposals and options, rather than simply comment once these are fixed;
- consultation on formal proposals; and
- feedback.

1.11 While the aim of community and stakeholder involvement in planning is to build consensus, this is a markedly different outcome to reaching agreement. Just as communities are not made up of identical citizens, then the views that a community holds are likely to be varied. It should, however, be recognised that never-ending consultation exercises cannot be used as an excuse to avoid decisions being taken or lead to situations where the community's input becomes out-of-date and therefore less relevant.



DUTY TO CO-OPERATE AND STATEMENT OF COMMON GROUND

- 1.12** As well as engaging with local communities, we have a legal duty to consult and work closely with other local authorities within and adjoining the Tees Valley, including relevant statutory bodies such as National Highways, the Environment Agency and Historic England to progress effective strategic planning issues of the area.
- 1.13** Statements of Common Ground are prepared throughout the plan-making process and are expected to document the activities undertaken in the process of addressing strategic cross-boundary issues. They are commonly used to identify matters upon which there is agreement and any outstanding matters that will need to be addressed when preparing a Local Plan.
- 1.14** The Statement of Common Ground should be published alongside the Local Plan in order to show how collaborative working has been undertaken and kept up-to-date.

1. INTRODUCTION

ROLE OF ELECTED MEMBERS, PARISH AND COMMUNITY COUNCILS

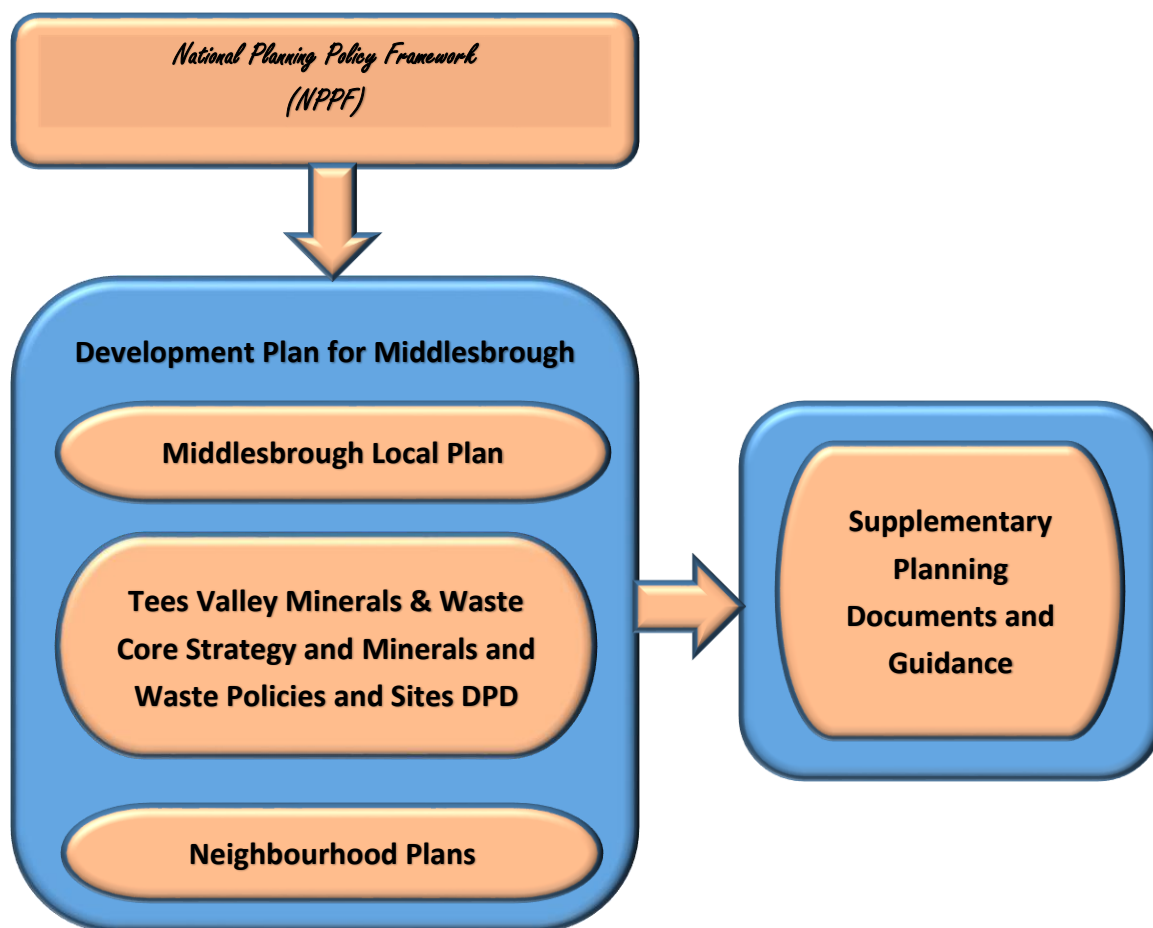
- 1.15** The role that the elected Mayor, elected Members, Parish and Community Councils play in the engagement process is crucial in providing the link between the local community and the Council. They are well placed to relay local community concerns and views on planning decisions or other planning proposals.
- 1.16** These representatives also have the capacity to secure the involvement of under-represented groups in this process. The Council will seek to utilise this expertise and local knowledge by involving, where appropriate, the elected Mayor, Ward Councillors, Parish and Community Councils at an early stage in the engagement process.

2. LOCAL PLAN

2. LOCAL PLAN

- 2.1** The Local Plan is the key planning document produced by the Council which sets out the long term development strategy for Middlesbrough and planning policies against which proposals for new development will be assessed. Having local planning policies in place is important to ensure that development in Middlesbrough takes place in a way that is agreed with the local community.
- 2.2** The Local Plan includes a mix of high level strategic policies, more detailed topic specific development management policies that apply to certain types of developments, and allocations that identify land for development and other designations to manage development in specific areas.

The hierarchy of planning policy can be seen in the diagram below:



- 2.3** Collectively, the adopted Local Plan, the Tees Valley Minerals and Waste Core Strategy and DPD, and Neighbourhood Plans form the Development Plan for Middlesbrough. Planning law requires that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

2. LOCAL PLAN

- 2.4** Information on the programme for preparing or revising the Local Plan is contained in the Local Development Scheme (LDS) which can be viewed on the Council's website.

OUR PRINCIPLES FOR COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

- 2.5** In making planning decisions in accordance with our planning policies it is often necessary to balance differing views and make judgements in the interests of all our communities. Getting local opinions will help us make decisions in the most informed way possible.
- 2.6** To achieve this, we will apply some general principles to our planning consultations and community involvement.

WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT FROM US:

CLEAR AND NON-TECHNICAL INFORMATION

We will ensure that consultations have a clear purpose and that information will be written in plain English as far as possible, and if technical words have to be used, their meaning will be explained.

EARLY ENGAGEMENT

We will seek views from the local community, stakeholders and other affected parties as early as possible and throughout the process.

INCLUSION

To ensure that community involvement is inclusive we will give the local community the opportunity to express their views, and take into consideration all views submitted.

FLEXIBILITY

We will aim to arrange engagement events at a range of times and places, to make it convenient for as many people as possible to attend these events.

VARIETY OF METHODS

We will use a variety of engagement methods, as appropriate that relate to the stage of the planning process, issues being discussed, communities involved, resources available and time constraints. Additionally, we will make use of electronic and modern media techniques to make consultation easier, quicker and more cost effective.

CO-ORDINATION

Through effective internal co-ordination and greater collaborative working with our partners, we will aim to combine consultation activities and improve information sharing to avoid duplication, deliver better value for money, and avoid the risk of consultation fatigue.

2. LOCAL PLAN

OPENNESS

We will keep accurate records of responses to consultations, and prepare a Consultation Statement after each consultation event. The Consultation Statement will summarise the process and feedback, and will explain how the responses received have fed into our decision-making regarding our planning documents. The Statement will be made available on the Council's website.

MONITORING

We will monitor and review the effectiveness of all consultation activities, including seeking feedback from participants to help ensure effective consultation.

PRIVACY

We will treat all data submitted as part of our activities in line with the Data Protection Act 2018 to ensure your personal information is protected. The Council has provided a Privacy Notice in respect of the Local Plan, which can be viewed on the Council's website. We will only collect information we need to carry out an effective and successful engagement process.

WHAT WE EXPECT FROM YOU:

2.7 In order to ensure that your involvement is effective you will be expected to:

- **provide comments in a clear and concise format related to the issues being considered;**
- **submit comments within the published time period;**
- **be aware that comments will be made publicly available;**
- **be courteous and respectful of other people's views; and**
- **if you are replying on behalf of a group or organisation, ensure comments are representative of the group as a whole.**

2. LOCAL PLAN

HOW CAN I GET INVOLVED IN LOCAL PLAN CONSULTATIONS?

- 2.8** The preparation of a Local Plan is governed by legislation that requires a number of stages and types of evidence to be produced. This also involves multiple stages of consulting, engaging or informing the local community. That is why it is important that you are involved in the preparation of the Local Plan as early as possible so that your views can help shape the policies and proposals from the beginning of the plan-making process.
- 2.9** At all stages of the plan-making process, there is a legal requirement to make information available to interested residents and organisations, as well as a legal duty to consult the specific and other consultation bodies (these are listed in Appendix 1).
- 2.10** When preparing a new Local Plan, we will comply with the minimum consultation requirements set down by legislation. This will include making consultation material available at Middlesbrough House located on Corporation Road and on our website.
- 2.11** In addition, we will normally also make consultation material available in community hubs and local libraries. A press release will be prepared, placed on our website, and other social media platforms, informing the local community about the consultation, (e.g. period of consultation, where documents can be viewed or downloaded, whether representations are sought, where to send any representations, and our contact details.
- 2.12** In addition to this, we will prepare a bespoke consultation and communication plan. This will determine the consultation techniques that will be used, which will depend on the plan-making stage and the purpose of the engagement.



- 2.13** Techniques will also vary in the level of engagement to be undertaken. Some, such as a poster or leaflet, may aim primarily to inform the community that a consultation is

2. LOCAL PLAN

taking place, the topic of that consultation, and that their views would be welcome. Other techniques, such as public exhibitions or presentations, may provide opportunities for the community to engage more directly with Council staff, to ask questions and expand their understanding of the proposals before submitting their responses.

ENGAGEMENT TECHNIQUES

2.14 Depending on the scale, scope and type of public engagement to be undertaken, techniques may include:

- Documents being made available for inspection at Middlesbrough House
- Documents available in community hubs and libraries
- Press releases
- Sending letters/emails to statutory bodies
- Placing information on our website, and the online Consultation Portal
- Providing information on our social media platforms
- Posters, leaflets and site notices
- Letter/email notifications to those on the consultation database
- Public exhibitions and drop-in sessions
- Presentations at meetings
- Questionnaires/surveys and/or workshops.
- One-to-one meetings with relevant stakeholders
- Displays or stalls at local Council held events
- Engaging with Parish and Community Councils and relevant community groups



2.15 When preparing a new Local Plan, there are a number of stages that we need to follow before the Local Plan can be adopted. These stages are identified in the Regulations, as follows:

2. LOCAL PLAN

STAGE	OPPORTUNITIES TO GET INVOLVED	OUR COMMITMENT
Stage 1 Scoping or Issues & Options Report Regulation 18	<p>This is a statutory stage, we must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • notify relevant bodies/people on the start of the Local Plan process and the topics and geographical areas the Local Plan is proposed to include. 	<p>A key stage to be involved. We will consult widely for a minimum of six weeks, and publish a Consultation Statement afterwards setting out who was involved in the consultation, the main issues raised, and how we have responded to these issues.</p>
Stage 2 Informal Consultation Draft Local Plan (optional)	<p>In preparing a Local Plan, we will also undertake informal consultation to help inform the consideration of policy options and shape the document with input from the community and other stakeholders. The scale and type of consultation that will be undertaken will depend on the specific topics and issues to be addressed in each document. However, the process will typically involve:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • using evidence and consultations with stakeholders and the community to identify the key issues; • undertaking initial consultations with stakeholders and the community on the issues and potential options; • using the responses from the initial consultation along with other evidence to develop 'preferred options' (i.e. those which the Council considers to be the most appropriate); and, • consulting on the preferred approach through a 'Draft Local Plan'. 	<p>A key stage to be involved. We will consult widely for a minimum of six weeks, and publish a Consultation Statement afterwards setting out who was involved in the consultation, the main issues raised, and how we have responded to these issues.</p>
Stage 3 Publication of a Local Plan Regulation 19	<p>In this stage, a more complete draft of the Local Plan is published for further comment from stakeholders. At this stage, comments must focus on legal compliance and soundness of the proposed plan defined as one that is positive, justified, effective, and consistent with national policy (see Appendix 2 for definitions). When responding to this stage of consultation, you should make clear if you want to participate in Stage 5, the public examination of the Plan.</p>	<p>A key stage to be involved. We will publish and invite formal representations for six weeks, and publish a Consultation Statement after the consultation finishes.</p>

2. LOCAL PLAN

STAGE	OPPORTUNITIES TO GET INVOLVED	OUR COMMITMENT
Stage 4 Submission Regulation 22	At this Stage, the Plan is submitted to the Secretary of State for independent examination.	There is no consultation on this Stage, but we will notify all those who made comments at Stage 3.
Stage 5 Examination Regulation 24	At this Stage, an independent planning inspector will be appointed by the Secretary of State to examine the draft Local Plan, and make recommendations for any modifications that are needed to make the Plan legally compliant and sound. A series of public hearings will be held on the topics contained in the Plan. If you wish to take part in these hearings, you should make clear in your response to Stage 3. The hearing will be open to the public to watch.	A key stage to be involved. We will advertise the dates, times, and locations of the hearings at least six weeks before they take place.
Stage 6 Adoption Regulation 26	After the public hearings are complete, the Inspector may make a number of recommendations before the Plan can be adopted. If so, these will be consulted on in the same manner as Stage 3.	If the modifications are accepted the Plan can be adopted, and we will produce an Adoption Statement and make it and the new Local Plan available to view.

3. SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENTS

3. SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENTS (SPDs)

- 3.1** The purpose of an SPD is to provide more detailed advice or guidance on policies contained within the Local Plan. The main types of SPD can be categorised as:
- a) **site specific** – detailing how we wish to see a site developed, detailing matters such as access, siting, design and landscaping;
 - b) **development type specific** – providing detail on the standards it wishes development to achieve (e.g. shop front design); and
 - c) **policy guidance** – providing information on the interpretation and application of specific policies, for example the financial detail on how developer contributions (Section 106) would work, or explaining how to limit the concentration of a particular use within designated retail areas.
- 3.2** The engagement process will be tailored according to the type of SPD proposed. In respect of site specific SPDs, we will engage with residents, Ward councillors, Parish and Community Councils, and businesses within the vicinity of the site, and other identifiable groups that use the site.
- 3.3** When preparing an SPD, there are three main stages that we need to follow before the SPD can be adopted:

STAGE	OUR COMMITMENT
Preparation Regulations 12&13	A key stage to be involved. At this stage, we will publish on our website the intention to produce an SPD, and ask for comments from interested parties or organisations. Depending on the scope and type of SPD we may also arrange other events or workshops to discuss the content of the SPD. A Consultation Statement will be prepared, setting out who was involved in this Stage, the comments they made, and how these comments were addressed.
Consultation Regulations 12&13	A key stage to be involved. A completed draft of the SPD will be published for formal consultation. We will make available copies of all consultation material (including the Consultation Statement) in Middlesbrough House, located on Corporation Road, on our website, and at local community hubs and libraries, as well as contacting main and (where appropriate) other stakeholders (as set out in Appendix 1). We will consult for at least four weeks, and a further Consultation Statement will be prepared after the consultation is finished.
Adoption Regulation 14	Upon adopting the SPD, we will prepare an Adoption Statement and make it, the SPD, and the Consultation Statement available at Middlesbrough House, located on Corporation Road, on our website and at our local community hubs and libraries.

4. NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANS

4. NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANS

- 4.1** The neighbourhood planning process allows for local communities within a designated Neighbourhood Area to create planning policies for their own areas through Neighbourhood Plans and Neighbourhood Development Orders. These plans and orders are usually prepared by local designated groups known as Neighbourhood Forums or Parish Council's.
- 4.2** Adopted Neighbourhood Plans sit alongside our Local Plan as part of the Development Plan for Middlesbrough, and can determine where new homes and shops should go, or what places should look like. They focus on guiding development rather than preventing it. They cannot, however, promote less development than is set out in the adopted Local Plan.
- 4.3** The bodies preparing Neighbourhood Plans are responsible for undertaking engagement with the community and relevant stakeholders. Only once the draft Neighbourhood Plan, and associated documentation are formally submitted to the Council, can we get involved in consultation to carry out our statutory consultation requirements.
- 4.4** As part of the process of preparing a Neighbourhood Plan, the relevant designated Forum or Parish Council is responsible for carrying out a wide range of tasks, including pre-submission consultation and publicity, before submitting their Plan. Once submitted, we will publicise the draft Plan for a period of six weeks, and seek representations, before an independent examination takes place into the policies contained in the draft Plan. The neighbourhood planning process is outlined below:

NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING PROCESS	
Neighbourhood Area	In order for a designated Neighbourhood Forum or Parish Council to prepare of Neighbourhood Plan or Order, a Neighbourhood Area must also be applied for, and designated by us. The Neighbourhood Area must have clear boundaries, and not overlap with any existing Neighbourhood Area.
Neighbourhood Forum	A Neighbourhood Forum (not required if a parish) consisting of at least 21 people who live in, work in, do business in, or represent the Neighbourhood Area must apply for designation from us. The Forum will be responsible for developing a Neighbourhood Plan or Development Order. The Neighbour Forum and Area designation can be applied for at the same time.
Neighbourhood Plan or Development Order	A key stage to be involved. The designated Neighbourhood Forum or relevant body can create planning policy for the designated Neighbourhood Area. This can be a lengthy stage, (average 18 months) in preparing drafting the Plan, which also includes a number of local community consultations, prior to submitting the draft Plan to the Council. Once the draft Plan is submitted, we will undertake a further six week consultation process. An examination

4. NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANS

NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING PROCESS	
	is undertaken by an independent examiner, who issues a report, with recommendations on whether we can hold a referendum. If more than 50% of those voting in the referendum vote 'yes', then the Neighbourhood Plan becomes part of the statutory development plan for the area.

NEIGHBOURHOOD AREA APPLICATIONS – DETERMINATION TIME LIMITS

4.5 Applications to designate a Neighbourhood Area must be made to the Council. Once we have received the application, all of the relevant documentation will be put on our website as soon as possible. We must make decisions in line with the following time limits (starting the day after the documentation appears on our website):

- 8 weeks for Neighbourhood Area applications made by Parish Councils, covering the whole parish boundary;
- 13 weeks for all non-parish council Neighbourhood Area and Forum applications; and,
- 20 weeks for Neighbourhood Areas falling within the area of two or more local authorities.

4.6 We will adhere to the above time limits, but would strongly advise groups and residents who wish to apply for Neighbourhood Area and/or Forum status, to contact us before submitting their application/s, in order to discuss various options and avoid unnecessary delays once an application has been submitted.



4. NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANS

NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING - DUTY OF SUPPORT

4.7 We have a duty to provide support to local communities as they prepare their Neighbourhood Plans, and will provide the following:

- **A named officer as the first point of contact for advice and technical support.**
- **General advice on planning matters.**
- **A limited mapping service (subject to availability and resources).**
- **Up to five free A4/A3 colour copies of requested maps prepared by the Council.**
- **Advice on general conformity with the Local Plan and other planning policy documents.**
- **Evidence base requirements.**
- **Electronic access to the Local Plan evidence base.**
- **Directed to other sources of assistance and financial support.**
- **Assist in preparing the Consultation Statement.**

4.8 We will, however, be unable to offer advice or assistance in the following areas:

- **Writing the Neighbourhood Plan, accompanying documentation (other than providing general advice and conformity comments).**
- **Undertaking survey work.**
- **Attending every meeting.**
- **Attending every consultation or workshop event.**
- **Provide direct financial support.**
- **Legal advice.**
- **Secretarial services.**

4. NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANS

- 4.9** We will also ensure that any support given does not conflict with our own existing and scheduled work priorities, which will take precedence.
- 4.10** As Neighbourhood Plans are not prepared by us, the SCI cannot prescribe what methods of community engagement they must follow. We will, however, expect that the methods used meet the requirements set-out in the Regulations and, where possible, follow the general principles and techniques set out in this SCI.
- 4.11** Further advice and guidance on neighbourhood planning can be obtained Locality at: www.locality.org.uk and from the Council's Neighbourhood Planning webpages at: <https://www.middlesbrough.gov.uk/planning-and-housing/planning/planning-policy/neighbourhood-planning> where Neighbourhood Area and Forum application forms can be downloaded.

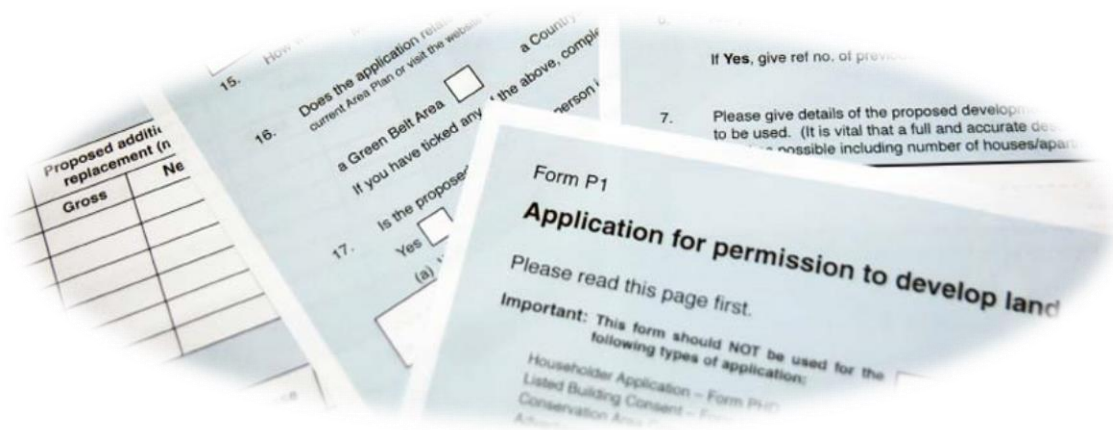


5. PLANNING APPLICATIONS / DECISIONS

5. PLANNING APPLICATIONS/DECISIONS

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT IN PLANNING APPLICATION DECISIONS

- 5.1 The Council's Development Control Team is responsible for the processing of all planning applications within the Borough. Planning applications can include applications for planning permission, listed building consent, tree preservation orders (TPOs), hazardous-substances consent, advertisement consent and prior approvals.
- 5.2 When a planning application is submitted, it is assessed against the planning policies in the Council's Local Plan, any relevant Neighbourhood Plan, national planning policy and guidance, supplementary planning guidance, and other material considerations, before a decision is made.
- 5.3 In addition, for all planning applications there is a period of public consultation where proposals are publicised and comments can be made. All comments during this stage will be taken into consideration before a decision is made.
- 5.4 In some circumstances, the applicant may undertake additional consultation prior to the application being submitted. This pre-application consultation not only helps to raise awareness, but also provides the opportunity to shape the proposals with the community before they are finalised for the planning process.



5. PLANNING APPLICATIONS / DECISIONS

5.5 The flow chart below summarises the stages of the planning application process, including when consultation and public involvement will take place:

<p>1 Pre-Application Stage</p>	<p>An applicant can seek pre-application advice from the Council on a proposed scheme. This is not mandatory and not all developers go through pre-application submissions. We offer free pre-application advice on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whether planning permission is required (for householders) • listed building consent • Whether a tree is covered by a tree preservation order • Whether a property or tree is in a conservation area, or under and Article 4 Direction. <p>Other more detailed pre-application advice has a charge associated with it. Further details can be found on the Council's website https://www.middlesbrough.gov.uk/planning-and-development/pre-application-advice/</p> <p>We encourage applicants to engage with us as early as possible to help ensure a smooth process.</p> <p>The applicant can undertake pre-application consultation with the local community. This is strongly encouraged for major and strategic applications (residential applications with 10 or more dwellings; for other uses with over 1000m² of floorspace or an overall area of 1 hectare or more) see Appendix 2 – Major Development Definition.</p> <p>Locally elected politicians, such as the Mayor and Ward Councillors, may be part of a developer's pre-application consultation, and also have the opportunity to comment at this stage.</p>
<p>2 Formal Application Stage</p>	<p>Once the application is submitted and validated, the Council carries out statutory consultation with the public and other stakeholders. This will always meet the minimum standards (21 days) required by national planning legislation. In some cases, this will be supplemented by additional consultation depending on the type of application. If revisions are made to the application before a decision is made, we may carry out further consultation, depending on the scale and nature of the changes.</p>

5. PLANNING APPLICATIONS / DECISIONS

	<p>Once all comments have been considered, a report is prepared making a recommendation on whether the application should be approved or refused.</p> <p>Most applications are determined by senior planning officers, although larger applications and those where there is substantial public interest are normally decided by the Council's Planning Committee.</p>
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<p>3 Post-Decision Stage</p>	<p>If planning permission (or a related consent) is granted, it may be subject to conditions requiring further details to be submitted and approved at a later date. In some circumstances, permission may be granted subject to a legal agreement for developer contributions (also known as Section 106 Agreements), which may be signed off at a later date.</p> <p>Sometimes amendments to permissions are requested, and are dealt with through a further application. Applications for material amendments and reserved matters (following grant of outline permission) will be subject to consultation including interested parties to the initial application.</p> <p>If permission is refused, the applicant has the right to appeal to the Planning Inspectorate (on behalf of the Secretary of State) to challenge the decision. The procedures for notifying the local community in relation to appeals are set out in national regulations. In some circumstances, a revised planning application may be submitted that seeks to address the reasons for refusal, and these are dealt with using the normal application process.</p>
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WHO IS CONSULTED ON PLANNING APPLICATIONS?

- 5.6** Anybody can make comments on any planning application submitted to us. We will seek to publicise the fact that an application has been submitted in the most appropriate way, using some or all of the following methods:

5. *PLANNING APPLICATIONS / DECISIONS*

- Site Notice.
- Letter to neighbouring and/or nearby properties.
- Statutory Notice in Local Press (Evening Gazette).

5.7 Further details of how we will publicise planning applications are set out in Appendix 3.

HOW LONG IS THE CONSULTATION PERIOD?

5.8 Once a planning application has been submitted, legislation requires us to allow a minimum of 21 days for any comments to be made on planning applications, before a decision can be made. There are a few exceptions to this:

- When the period includes bank or public holidays, it must be extended to allow for the number of days lost.
- When consultation is carried out on amendments to an application that has already been subject to the 21 day period, the additional consultation period will be determined at our discretion (up to 21 days).
- The period for making a decision is extended to 30 days for applications accompanied by an Environmental Statement made under the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Regulations.

5.9 Notification periods have to strike a balance allowing enough time for comments to be made and ensuring decisions are made in a timely manner. Whatever the period, it is always helpful to receive comments as soon as possible.



5. PLANNING APPLICATIONS / DECISIONS

HOW TO VIEW A PLANNING APPLICATION AND MAKE COMMENTS

- 5.10** We ask that people take the time to look at an application before commenting on it. Planning Applications, including all supporting documents, can be viewed on the Council's website at: <https://planning.agileapplications.co.uk/middlesbrough>
- 5.11** We welcome all comments on planning applications but, in order for them to be taken into account, they must be made in writing (by letter or email etc.). The easiest way to make comments is via the website, or by sending them via email to developmentcontrol@middlesbrough.gov.uk. Alternatively, they can be sent to our postal address (see Appendix 4).
- 5.12** Comments do not have to be written in a particular style or format to be considered. Any member of the community can submit comments on any planning application, as long as it is within the consultation period. Comments received after the consultation period, but prior to the application being determined, will normally also be taken into account.
- 5.13** When making a decision, we can only take account of certain issues that are legally allowed to influence planning applications. These are known as 'material planning considerations', and they include:

➤	Planning policies contained within the Local Plan, or a Neighbourhood Plan. This can also include emerging plans that have been through at least one round of public consultation.
➤	Previous planning decisions, including appeal decisions
➤	Loss of light or overshadowing
➤	Loss of privacy or overlooking
➤	Design, appearance and materials of a development
➤	Layout and density of buildings
➤	Traffic, highway safety and parking
➤	Noise, smells and other disturbances resulting from the use of a new development
➤	Loss of trees or other nature conservation effects
➤	Effect on listed buildings or conservation areas
➤	Capacity of physical infrastructure such as public drainage or water systems
➤	Deficiencies in social facilities such as school places
➤	Issues associated with contaminated land

- 5.14** We cannot ordinarily consider issues such as a potential reduction in the value of a property or loss of a private view – but the reason why these things might happen could potentially be material planning considerations. It is important that you make

5. *PLANNING APPLICATIONS / DECISIONS*

your comments clear as planning officers will not make assumptions or add to comments made.

- 5.15** Please be aware that all comments received on planning applications must be made open to public inspection, so only include information that you are comfortable being made publicly available. Any comments which may cause offence will not be published, and may be reported to our legal team.

DECISIONS MADE BY PLANNING COMMITTEE

- 5.16** If the application is to be determined by the Planning Committee, we will normally directly notify everyone who made comments of the date and time of the Planning Committee meeting (providing there is sufficient time to do so). All meetings are held in public and anyone can attend.
- 5.17** The Council allows members of the public and applicants to address the Planning Committee, although the number of speakers and the time they are given to speak is limited. You can find out more about how to register to speak and our committee procedures on our website.

APPEAL OF DECISIONS

- 5.18** When a planning application is refused, the applicant has the right to appeal against the Council's decision. In these circumstances, the application is decided by the Planning Inspectorate. Your comments will be forwarded to the Inspectorate, which may choose to publish them on their website. Anyone who made comments on the planning application will be notified that an appeal has been lodged and of the procedure for considering and determining the appeal.
- 5.19** Appeals can be undertaken in different ways, depending on the type of proposal and the issues that need to be considered:
- **Written representations** – where the Planning Inspector considers the appeal using written evidence from the interested parties.
 - **Hearing** – an informal, round-the-table discussion involving the interested parties will take place, in addition to written evidence.
 - **Inquiry** – a formal procedure, usually involving the most complex cases, where interested parties will be expected to present evidence and be cross-examined by legal representatives of the appellant and the Council.
- 5.20** In some instances, individuals may get the chance to make further comments at the appeal stage; this will be at the discretion of the Planning Inspector.
- 5.21** Third parties (i.e. anyone other than the applicant) do not have a right to appeal a planning decision made by the Council.

6. APPENDIX 1

APPENDIX 1 MAIN AND OTHER CONSULTEE BODIES

- 1.** The Council is required by legislation to consult certain bodies which it considers may have an interest in or be affected by a document. These bodies include (please note the below list is not exhaustive):

- Adjoining Local and County Councils;
- Historic England;
- Environment Agency;
- National Highways;
- Homes England;
- Local Policing Body;
- Marine Management Organisation;
- Natural England;
- Network Rail;
- Parish Councils, adjoining Parish Councils and designated Neighbourhood Forums;
- Sport England;
- Relevant health providers/groups e.g. North East and Cumbria Integrated Care Board;
- Relevant Utility and Telecommunication companies; and
- Duty to Co-operate bodies such as Tees Valley Combined Authority, if relevant and/or in relation to strategic cross-boundary matters.

- 2.** The Council will also consult 'other consultation bodies' which it considers to be appropriate to planning and who do not fall into the main consultee categories, these may include:

- Community Councils;
- Environmental and amenity groups;
- Developers, Landowners and agents;
- Special interest groups;
- Rail Network Operators;
- Local businesses, business networks; and
- Educational establishments.

6. APPENDIX 2

APPENDIX 2 'SOUNDNESS' DEFINITION

Soundness is explained in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). When examining a Local Plan or Neighbourhood Plan an independent Planning Inspector or examiner has to be satisfied that the plan is positively prepared, justified, effective and consistent with national policy. A Local Plan will be sound if they are:

- **Positively Prepared** - providing a strategy which, as a minimum, seeks to meet the area's objectively assessed needs; and is informed by agreements with other authorities, so that unmet need from neighbouring areas is accommodated where it is practical to do so and is consistent with achieving sustainable development;
- **Justified** - an appropriate strategy, taking into account the reasonable alternatives, and based on proportionate evidence;
- **Effective** - deliverable over its period and based on effective joint working on cross-boundary strategic matters that have been dealt with rather than deferred, as evidenced by the statement of common ground; and
- **Consistent with national policy** - enabling the delivery of sustainable development in accordance with the policies of the NPPF and other statements of national planning policy, where relevant.

'MAJOR DEVELOPMENT' DEFINITION

The Town and Country Planning (General Development Procedure) Order 1995, defines 'major development' as being development involving one or more of the following:

- a) the winning and working of minerals or the use of land for mineral working deposits;
- b) waste development (operational development designed to be used wholly or mainly for the purpose of, or a change of use to, treating, storing, processing or disposing of refuse or waste materials);
- c) the provision of dwellinghouses*, where there are 10 or more dwellings, or (if the numbers are not known) on a site having an area of 0.5 hectares or more;
- d) the provision of a building or buildings where the floor space to be created by the development is 1,000 sq.m or more; or,
- e) development carried out on a site having an area of 1 hectare or more.

Note: *For the purposes of clarity the Council considers that this definition will also apply to developments involving apartments/flats.

6. *APPENDIX 3***APPENDIX 3 MINIMUM CONSULTATION METHODS PLANNING APPLICATIONS**

The table below shows the minimum consultation methods for most types of application. Where a particular type of application is not listed, we will follow the procedures set out in national legislation and regulations.

TYPES OF DEVELOPMENT	PRESS NOTICE	SITE NOTICE	NEIGHBOUR CONSULTATION LETTERS – MINIMUM STANDARDS
1. Application supported by an Environmental Impact Statement (EIA Development)	Yes	Yes	Occupiers of land or properties which are adjacent to and/or have a common boundary with the application site and addresses that are within a distance where it is considered the scheme would be likely to have (more than minor) impacts on a property.
2. Major development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10 or more residential units, or a residential site area of more than 0.5 hectares • 1,000 square metres of non-residential floorspace, or a non-residential site area of more than 1 hectare • Includes changes of use where the above apply 	Yes	Yes	Occupiers of land or properties which are adjacent to and/or have a common boundary with the application site and addresses that are within a distance where it is considered the scheme would be likely to have (more than minor) impacts on a property.
3. Actual departures from the Development Plan (not opinionated departure)	Yes	Yes	Occupiers of properties with shared boundary and possibly including those opposite/slightly more distant.
4. Any application affecting a public right of way or footpath/way <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excluding pavement crossovers, new/revised vehicular or pedestrian accesses. 	Yes	Yes	Occupiers of properties with shared boundary and possibly including those opposite/slightly more distant.
5. Non-major development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Less than 10 residential units. 	No	No	Occupiers of land or properties which are adjacent to and/or have a common boundary with the

6. APPENDIX 3

TYPES OF DEVELOPMENT	PRESS NOTICE	SITE NOTICE	NEIGHBOUR CONSULTATION LETTERS – MINIMUM STANDARDS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Less than 1000 square metres of new floor space. • Sites of less than 1 hectare. • Householder development. • Includes changes of use where the above apply. • Telecommunications apparatus that is not permitted development. 			application site, are directly opposite across a road or street and those addresses where an impact of the scheme is likely to be noticeable.
6. Non-major development where no additional floor space is created <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Except telecommunications apparatus and changes of use. • For example, new shop-fronts. 	No	No	Occupiers of properties with shared boundary and possibly including those opposite/slightly more distant.
7. Applications for development or demolition that would affect the character or appearance of a Conservation Area or the setting of a scheduled ancient monument.	Yes (in most cases)	Yes	Occupiers of properties with shared boundary and possibly including those opposite/slightly more distant.
8. Applications for Listed Building Consent	Yes	Yes	Occupiers of properties with shared boundary and possibly including those opposite/slightly more distant.
9. Advertisement Consent <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Signage on shop fronts or business premises b) Free-standing advertisements c) Large scale advert hoardings. 	No	No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Site notice only. b) Apply standards for non-major development. c) Apply standards for major development.
10. Prior Approval – telecommunications	Yes	No	Apply standards as in part (5) above.

6. APPENDIX 3

TYPES OF DEVELOPMENT	PRESS NOTICE	SITE NOTICE	NEIGHBOUR CONSULTATION LETTERS – MINIMUM STANDARDS
11. Prior Approval – Larger household extensions	No	No	Occupiers of neighbouring properties that adjoin the site.
12. Applications for permission in principle	No	No	Apply standards as in part (3) above.
13. Applications for reserved matters after the granting of outline permission	The starting point will be the consultation that took place for the Outline application along with anyone who commented on the outline application.		
14. Applications for variation or removal of planning conditions	<p>The starting point will be the consultation that took place for the Outline application along with anyone who commented on the outline application.</p> <p>A reduced neighbour notification area may be used, depending on the nature of the amendments.</p>		
15. Applications for minor material amendments (Section 73)	<p>The starting point will be the consultation that took place for the Outline application along with anyone who commented on the outline application.</p> <p>A reduced neighbour notification area may be used, depending on the nature of the amendments.</p>		
16. Applications for non-material amendments (e.g. technical amendments)	No consultation is necessary but may be undertaken on the specific nature of the proposal.		
17. Lawful development certificates	These are legal determinations and by definition no consultation would be necessary.		

6. APPENDIX 4

APPENDIX 4 USEFUL CONTACTS

Statement of Community Involvement, Local Plan, Supplementary Planning Documents, and Neighbourhood Plans

If you have any queries regarding this document or other aspects of the plan-making process, please contact officers at:

Planning Services
Middlesbrough Council
PO Box 500, Middlesbrough, TS1 9FT

Telephone: (01642) 729072

Email: planningpolicy@middlesbrough.gov.uk

Council's website: www.middlesbrough.gov.uk

Planning Applications

Queries regarding planning applications should be addressed to the Development Control Section at the above address.

Development Control Contacts:

Telephone: (01642) 729377

Email: developmentcontrol@middlesbrough.gov.uk

Planning Applications: <https://planning.agileapplications.co.uk/middlesbrough>

Council's website: www.middlesbrough.gov.uk

6. APPENDIX 4

Further information and useful contacts

The Planning Portal

The Planning Portal is the Government's online 'one-stop-shop' for planning and building services. It provides information on the planning system, which allows applicants to submit a planning application, find out about development in your area, appeal against a decision and research government policy.

Website: www.planningportal.co.uk

Email: support@planningportal.co.uk

Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG)

The MHCLG provides general information on the planning system including the latest national planning policy, decisions on planning appeals, research and statistics and reform of the planning systems.

Website: <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ministry-of-housing-communities-local-government>

Email: correspondence@levellingup.gov.uk

Postal Address: Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government
2 Marsham Street
London
SW1P 4DF

Tel: 030 3444 0000.

The Planning Inspectorate

The Planning Inspectorate processes planning appeals and holds examinations into planning policy documents.

Website: <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/planning-inspectorate>

Postal Address: The Planning Inspectorate
Room 3 O/P, Temple Quay House
2 The Square
Temple Quay
Bristol
BS1 6PN

Tel: 0303 444 5000

6. *APPENDIX 4*

Planning Aid England (PAE)

Planning Aid England provides free, independent and professional planning advice to communities and individuals who cannot afford to pay professional fees.

Website: <https://www.rtpi.org.uk/planning-advice/about-planning-aid-england/contact-pae/>

Email: info@planningaid.org.uk

Postal Address:

Planning Aid England
The Royal Town Planning Institute,
41 Botolph Lane,
London EC3R 8DL

Tel: 020 7929 8338

6. APPENDIX 5

APPENDIX 5 GLOSSARY

Adopted: Final agreed version of a Local Plan or Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) accepted through a formal resolution of the Council, or authorised Executive Member.

Annual Monitoring Report (AMR): Document produced each year recording and presenting progress on all elements of the Local Plan where measurement is required.

Data Protection Act: the new Data Protection Act 2018, places greater obligations on how organisations handle data. The Act came into force in May 2018.

Inspector's Report: Document produced by an independent inspector from the Planning Inspectorate. It assesses the soundness and robustness of the Local Plan.

Local Development Scheme (LDS): The LDS sets out Middlesbrough Council's proposals for reviewing the Local Plan or other planning policy documents and the timetable for producing them.

Localism Act: The Localism Act has devolved greater powers to local government and neighbourhoods and given local communities more rights and powers over decisions about housing. It also includes reforms to make the planning system more democratic and more effective.

Local Plan: The new term for a local planning authority's development plan. The Local Plan comprises planning policies for a local planning authority's area.

Material Consideration: A factor to be taken into account when making a planning decision.

Major Development: 10 or more dwellings or 0.5 hectares or over. For commercial floorspace this is 1,000sq.m or more.

Minor Development: 9 or less dwellings or land area under 0.5 hectares or up to 999sq.m.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF): A document setting out the Government's national planning requirements, policies and objectives. The NPPF is a material consideration in the preparation of Local plan documents and when considering planning applications.

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Neighbourhood Plan: A duty under the Localism Act 2011 which gives authorised groups the power to prepare a development plan for their area. This plan could include general planning policies and allocations of land for new development.

Other Planning Policy Documents: These include planning policy documents (which form part of the statutory development plan) and Supplementary Planning Documents (which do not form part of the statutory development plan). These documents collectively deliver the spatial planning strategy for the local planning authority's area.

Regulations: Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended), The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended) and the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015.

Section 106 Agreement: Requirements of developers as part of planning permissions. These are agreed in the planning application process, to provide contributions (usually financial) to develop facilities / amenities for the local community (e.g. education, open space).

Stakeholder: A person, group, company, association, etc. with an interest in, or potentially affected by, planning decisions in the borough.

Statement of Community Involvement (SCI): A document which sets out the standards which an authority will achieve with regard to involving local communities in the preparation of Local Plans, other planning policy documents and development proposals.

Supplementary Planning Document (SPD): Documents which local planning authorities may prepare which will provide additional supporting information in respect of policies in the Local Plan. They do not form part of the Local Plan and are not subject to independent examination but they will be treated as a material consideration when determining planning applications.

MIDDLESBROUGH COUNCIL	
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Report of:	Director of Finance and Transformation (S151 Officer)
Relevant Executive Member:	Executive Member for Finance
Submitted to:	Executive
Date:	5 March 2025
Title:	Welfare Support Policy for Residents in Financial Crisis
Report for:	Decision
Status:	Public
Council Plan priority:	Delivering Best Value
Key decision:	Yes
Why:	Decision(s) will have a significant impact in two or more wards
Subject to call in?:	Yes
Why:	Non urgent report

Executive summary
<p>The Welfare Support for Residents in Financial Crisis Policy is an integral part of the Councils wider Welfare Strategy and provides immediate support to financially vulnerable households. Welfare Strategy Middlesbrough Council Open Data</p> <p>The policy sets out how Middlesbrough Council will support residents who are in a crisis situation, i.e. where circumstances occur that are outside of a resident's control which impacts upon their financial situation and in turn creates an immediate risk to the resident or a member of their household. Crisis Support is intended to provide immediate short-term support, with longer term arrangements being considered through the Corporate Welfare Strategy.</p> <p>The policy is reviewed periodically and subject to a full review every 3 years. This is necessary to ensure the policy is keeping pace, reflects any changes in legislation, and includes any necessary amendments or alterations. It is anticipated that further changes will be necessary to this Policy as the Council develops its approach to resolving poverty across the Town.</p> <p>Alongside the further advancement of the Policy, the Council is also progressing with a Centralised approach to delivering support to financially vulnerable households and is</p>

bringing together, Crisis Support, Community Support, Free School Meals, Discretionary Housing Payments, Household Support Fund, Food and Fuel Support, White Goods, Welfare Rights and Benefit Take Up into the Councils newly formed Welfare Support Team. It is anticipated that other support which is delivered across the Council and where appropriate will also transfer into the team. The approach is intended to provide a single-entry point into the Council for residents who need urgent/immediate access to support. Case workers will support residents, with the aim of providing longer term resolve to those experiencing financial difficulties.

The policy is reviewed regularly to ensure it keeps pace and is also subject to a full review every 3 years which is necessary to reflect any changes in legislation, amendments, or alterations and now includes the following amendments.

- Additional payment methods, making it easier and faster for payment to be made.
- A refresh of the language and some minor amendments to the policy.
- Alignment to the Corporate Welfare Strategy

Within the current financial year 533 claims for emergency support have been paid totalling approximately £117k. In addition, 845 Discretionary Housing Payments have been paid totalling approximately £255k. These payments cover any shortfall in rent and are paid for around 26 weeks, and in some instances can prevent homelessness from occurring.

1. Purpose

1.1 A review of the Welfare Support Policy for Residents in Financial Crisis as part of the 3-year review cycle, and to ensure that the current support provided to residents is keeping pace, reflects any changes in legislation, and includes any necessary amendments or alterations. It should also be noted that it is anticipated that further changes will be necessary to this Policy as the Council develops its approach to resolving poverty across the Town.

2 Recommendations

2.1 That the Executive approves the refreshed Welfare Support for Residents in Financial Crisis Policy which includes the following minor changes.

- a) Additional payment methods, making it easier and faster for payment to be made.
 - Allowing payment via text message to send funds direct to a resident's bank account. In addition, e-vouchers can be provided through text messages or emails to a resident with a voucher code which can be redeemed at a supermarket of their choice.
- b) A refresh of the language and some minor amendments to the policy.
- c) Alignment to the Corporate Welfare Strategy

2.2 Provides delegated authority to the Director of Finance and Transformation and the Executive Member of Finance to make any future minor revisions/modifications to reflect the financial / economic climate as necessary.

3 Rationale for the recommended decision(s)

- 3.1 The policy is a key decision that impacts on two or more wards and as such requires Executive approval.
- 3.2 The updated policy upholds good practice within democratic processes and enables the refreshed policy to maintain visibility with the Executive.
- 3.3 Delegated authority to the Director of Finance and Transformation and Executive Member of Finance to approve future minor modifications to the policy maintains service operation levels. As a working policy, failure to keep pace with new legislation or working practices leaves the Council at risk and can result in inconsistent practices.
- 3.4 The proposals provide clarification and ensures vulnerable residents have a clear understanding of the Council's approach to crisis situations and the support available.

4. Background and relevant information

- 4.1 The Council recognises that at times there are circumstances which fall outside of a residents control that can impact upon their financial situation and may place them into crisis. This can present as an immediate financial risk to the resident or a member of their household where short term support can prevent longer term issues from occurring.
- 4.2 Crisis can occur at any time and situations can be very different. Each case is independently assessed by experienced Officers. Although the list below is not exhaustive, some of the more frequent reasons Crisis Support is sought are shown below:-
- Reduction in working hours resulting in loss of earnings.
 - Awaiting benefit entitlement/Change in circumstances
 - Potential Homelessness
 - Theft or loss of essential goods.
 - Burglaries
- 4.3 The Council provides crisis support via the Community Support Team through a number of different options to alleviate the immediate need. This offering has been significantly enhanced over the last three years through the introduction of the Corporate Welfare Strategy. Whilst short term support is provided through the Welfare Support for residents in financial crisis, longer term resolve/prevention forms part of the Welfare Support Strategy and underpins the Council approach to responding to Poverty. With the introduction of the Welfare Support Team, and the introduction of a single front door for Residents will ensure support is easily accessible to those in genuine need.
- 4.4 Since 1 April 2024 the Council have provided support to over 1000 households through either Crisis or Housing Support with payments of around £370k, this will likely increase to around £410k by 31 March 2025. In addition, through close working with partners

such as the Department for Work and Pensions, Officers liaise directly to ensure benefit claims, queries are resolved quickly, and benefit is paid which eliminates the immediate Crisis. In conjunction with this the Councils Welfare Rights Team have supported over 1191 residents with claims for benefit and have secured benefit in excess of £2m. A more recent example, and following an internal referral into the team £88,000.00 of unclaimed State Pension was identified by the Welfare Rights Team for one resident. This is an example of the great work that the Councils Welfare Support Team are doing to maximise unclaimed benefits.

4.5 Although the Policy provides a definition of Crisis, if circumstances present outside of the Crisis Policy, Officers will carry out a comprehensive review of the residents' circumstances as part of the Welfare Strategy. This can mean referrals are made to partnering organisations or that the resident is provided with access to other means of support. A number of cases that present as Crisis can be as a result of budget management issues and can be resolved in some instances very quickly, where debt is more complex Officers will make referrals to organisations such as CAB.

4.6 Crisis can be very worrying for residents and having access to financial support quickly is extremely important. A further enhancement has been made with the introduction of improved payment methods. This new functionality allows payment to be made via text message/direct to a resident's bank account, providing instant access to funds. This differs to earlier methods where payment was via PayPoint outlets, the Policy has been updated to reflect this change.

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

5.1 Do nothing, however the current policy does not refer to the enhanced support options available to residents such as OpenPay or E-Vouchers. In addition, the policy is due to be reviewed as the previous three-year period has expired therefore a refresh of the current offering is required.

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

Topic	Impact
Financial (including procurement and Social Value)	Implementation of the revised policy will be delivered against existing budgets.
Legal	<p>Whilst it is not a legal requirement to have a Welfare Support for Residents in Financial Crisis Policy is it considered as 'good practice'. This Policy forms part of the Councils Corporate Welfare Strategy.</p> <p>There are no other legal implications around this policy.</p>
Risk	The review of the policy ensures that there is adequate governance in place to comply with all relevant legislation and the Council does not breach governance requirements or fail

	to deliver organisational priorities (Risk 08-054). In addition, by reviewing the scheme every 3 years, the Council continues to effectively update and amend the scheme to comply with legislative changes (Risk 08-055).
Human Rights, Public Sector Equality Duty and Community Cohesion	There are no disproportionate adverse impacts on any group or individuals with characteristics protected in UK equity law.
Climate Change / Environmental	There are no disproportionate adverse impacts on the aspirations of the Council to achieve net zero, net carbon neutral or be the lead authority on environmental issues.
Children and Young People Cared for by the Authority and Care Leavers	This policy will have no impact on children and young people cared for by the Authority and Care Leavers.
Data Protection	The collation and use of personal data will be managed in accordance with the Council's Data Protection policy and the Community Support Scheme Privacy Notice Privacy notice - Community Support Scheme Middlesbrough Council

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

Action	Responsible Officer	Deadline
The updated Welfare Support for Residents in Financial Crisis policy will be published on the Council's website	Janette Savage	31 March 2025

Appendices

1	Welfare Support for Residents in Financial Crisis 2025-2028
2	Impact Assessment
3	

Background papers

Body	Report title	Date

Contact: Janette Savage (Head of Resident and Business Support)
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Welfare Support Policy For Residents in Financial Crisis

Live from: March 2025

Live until: March 2028

Title	Welfare Support Policy for Residents in Financial Crisis		
Creator	Author(s)	Kellie Appleyard (Operations Manager)	
	Approved by	Janette Savage / Martin Barker	
	Department	Resident and Business Support	
	Service area	Finance	
	Head of Service	Janette Savage	
	Director	Andrew Humble	
Date	Created	22 January 2025	
	Submitted	21 February 2025	
	Approved		
	Updating Frequency	3 years	
Status	Version: 1.0		
Contributor(s)	Head of Resident & Business Support,		
Subject	Welfare Support		
Type	Policy		
	Vital Record		EIR ✓
Coverage	Middlesbrough Council		
Language	English		
Document Control			
Version	Date	Revision History	Reviser
0.1	27.12.24	Initial review of policy	Kellie Appleyard
0.2	22.01.25	Amends to wording	Kellie Appleyard / Martin Barker
0.3	21.02.25	Further amends to content	Martin Barker
Distribution List			
Version	Date	Name/Service area	Action
0.1			
Contact:	Kellie.Appleyard@middlesbrough.gov.uk		

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1.0 Summary

1.1 This policy forms part of the Council's Welfare Strategy which has been designed to provide financial support to households who are experiencing financial problems.

1.2 The policy sets out how Middlesbrough Council will support residents who are in a crisis situation, i.e. where circumstances occur that are outside of a resident's control which impacts upon their financial situation and in turn creates an immediate risk to the resident or a member of their household. Crisis Support is intended to provide immediate short-term support, with longer term arrangements being considered through the Corporate Welfare Strategy.

2.0 Context

2.1 This policy is designed to complement and enhance the Council's social regeneration plans.

3.0 Purpose

3.1 The policy is reviewed periodically and subject to a full review every 3 years. This is necessary to ensure the policy is keeping pace, reflects any changes in legislation, and includes any necessary amendments or alterations. It is anticipated that further changes will be necessary to this Policy as the Council develops its approach to resolving poverty across the Town.

3.2 The policy sets out the corporate approach to the definition of crisis, what is considered to be a crisis to trigger the relevant support and how payments will be made. The policy also outlines what is not considered as a crisis.

3.3 The policy forms part of a wider package of support which is contained within the Corporate Welfare Strategy.

3.4 Service Areas via referrals, will work together, as and when appropriate to ensure the correct level of support is provided for residents of the Town.

3.5 The overall decision and distribution of funds will be administered and delivered by Resident and Business Support.

3.6 The policy may be extended to include other forms of crisis situations experienced elsewhere within the council, but not specifically covered under the examples contained within this policy.

4.0 Objective

4.1 The Council's Welfare Support for residents in financial crisis policy has the following objectives:

- To promote a consistent and fair approach to supporting residents in crisis, achieved through referrals, joining up and sharing appropriate information to ensure any immediate Crisis is responded to.
- Enable those in crisis to access the funds and support they require.

- Provide an approach and criteria for dealing with residents in crisis.

5.0 Outcomes

5.1 The outcomes expected from this policy are:

- To ensure a quick, efficient and consistent process for residents in crisis through sound and timely decision making.
- Provide consistency in terms of goods and funds;
- Standardise the procedures for considering crisis support requests;
- Provide a clear criteria including procedures when considering residents who are experiencing financial crisis.
- Provide comprehensive wider support through the Councils Welfare Support Strategy.

6.0 Definitions

Crisis is defined as an urgent need for assistance as a consequence of an emergency, **disaster**, unforeseen circumstance or a pressing need that is significantly different to the pressures generally associated with managing on a low income. It is also a situation(s) which poses an immediate risk to health or life and requires urgent intervention. Crisis support is intended to help with extreme and severe one-off situations. It is not intended to be a regular form of support.

For the purpose of **the policy Disaster** is defined as an event of great or sudden misfortune such as major flooding, a gas explosion, chemical leak or house fire but not minor mishaps or damage.

7.0 Scope

7.1 This policy applies to all employees (both permanent and temporary), contractors and consultants of the Council who are given the authority to manage and collect debt and income which is owed to the Council, or will be due to be owed to the Council at a later date.

8.0 Legislative and regulatory framework

Key elements of the legislative and regulatory framework for debt management are set out below.

Local Government Acts 1992 (as amended)	Establishes requirements to manage the Council's financial affairs and the appointment of a section 151 officer.
Council Tax (Administration and Enforcement) Regulations 1992	Make provision for the administration and enforcement of Council Tax.
Non-Domestic Rating (Collection and Enforcement)(Local Lists) Regulations 1989	Make provision for the collection and enforcement of non-domestic rates.
Debt Respite Scheme (Breathing Space Moratorium and Mental Health Crisis Moratorium) Regulations 2020	Establishes a debt respite scheme and establishes a breathing space

	moratorium and a mental health crisis moratorium.
Traffic Management Act 2004	Provide for the enforcement of parking, loading and waiting restrictions and processing of penalty charge notices.
Transport Act 2000	Provide for the enforcement of bus lane contraventions.
Data Protection Act 2018	Controls the lawful passing of personal data from one part of the Council to another.
The Housing Benefit General Regulations 1987 and 1992	Sets out the legislation that governs the payment of Housing Benefit, including Housing Benefit overpayments and their associated recovery
Social Security Contributions and Benefits Act 1992	The primary legislation for most benefits in the UK
Social Security Administration Act 1992	The primary legislation for most benefits in the UK
Taking Control of Goods Regulations 2013	Provides the legislation for the taking control of goods in the UK, including the use of enforcement agents
County Courts Act 1984,	Establishes a single county court and its jurisdiction
Civil Procedure Rules 1998	Establishes the rules of Civil Procedure used by various courts in the UK
Charging Orders Act 1979	An Act to make provision for imposing charges to secure payment of money due, or to become due, under judgments or orders of court; to provide for restraining and prohibiting dealings with, and the making of payments in respect of, certain securities; and for connected purposes.
Insolvency Act 1986	Consolidates enactments relating to company insolvency and winding up, and bankruptcy of individuals
Equality Act 2010.	Is an amalgamation of previous anti-discrimination laws. It is a law which protects from discrimination of unfair treatment on the basis of certain personal characteristics such as age
General Data Protection Regulation 2016 (GDPR) and Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA2018)	The GDPR/DPA2018 place a duty on the Council to comply with the data protection principles relating to processing of personal data: (1)(a) Lawfulness, fairness and transparency; (1)(b) Purpose limitation; (1)(c) Data minimisation; (1)(d) Accuracy; (1)(e) Storage limitation; (1)(f) Integrity and confidentiality (security);

	(2) Accountability (including the rights of data subjects).
Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) 2000	Under the FOIA, the Council has a duty to make information available to the public upon request, unless specific exemption(s) apply. It is also obliged to proactively and routinely publish information that has been frequently requested in the past in its Publication Scheme. Information requests frequently include requests for information held in emails.
Local Government Acts 1972, 1985, 1988 and 1992, Lord Chancellor's Code of Practice on Records Management (S46 Freedom of Information Act)	Establishes requirements to manage records and information, and gives implied authority to share certain kinds of information with partners.
Care Act 2014 and Statutory Guidance Annex D	The Act by which the local authority is able to charge for social care support and the rules imposed on the local authority with regard to recovery of such debt.
Family Law Act 1996	An Act of Parliament governing divorce and marriage.
Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006	An Act to make provision in connection with the protection of children and vulnerable adults.
Modern Slavery Act 2015	An Act designed to combat modern slavery in the UK.
Tribunal Courts and Enforcement Act 2007	An act which makes provision for tribunals and inquiries, particularly relating to the enforcement of judgments and debts.
Taking Control of Goods Regulations 2014	Make provision for recovery of fees and disbursements from debtors to enforcement agents in relation to the procedure for taking control of goods.
Landlord and Tenant Act 1954	Contractual obligations under lease agreements for the payment of rent and other property charges.
Land and Property Act 1925	
Miscellaneous Provisions Act 1986	
Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 (RIPA)	Governs the use of covert surveillance by public bodies.
Children Act 1989 – Section 17	Social services have a general duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in need in their area

9.0 Roles and responsibilities

Head of Service – Resident and Business Support	Overall responsibility for the delivery of the Resident and Business Support Service and the Policy Owner.
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Other Heads of Service	Where appropriate Heads of Service have responsibility for ensuring strategic compliance with the policy.
Strategic Business Managers / Operations Managers.	Where appropriate responsibility for overseeing day-to-day compliance with this policy and the standards set out within it by their staff and other personnel they manage or commission.
All staff, contractors, consultants, interns and any other interim or third parties	Responsible for compliance with this policy.
Data Protection Officer	Responsible for provision of advice and guidance to the Council on its obligations in relation to data protection.

10.0 Supporting policies, procedures and standards

10.1 The following policies, procedures and standards will be implemented across the Council to ensure that the Council's debts are managed effectively and securely.

Corporate Debt Management Policy	This provides a framework for the consistent management of all debt and income across the Council
Debt Write Off Policy	This provides a framework for the consistent management of uncollectable debts.
Welfare Strategy	This provides a framework (e.g. a number of policies – S13a, Crisis Support, Food poverty, etc.) for a joined up approach to a holistic welfare advice and support service for all relevant residents.
Data Protection Policy	This summarises the Data Protection Policy position of Middlesbrough Council and how it will comply with legislation, and associated codes of practice and official guidance in relation to the processing of personal data.
Records Retention Schedule	This defines how long different records should be retained to comply with legal, regulatory or other requirements and the proper arrangements for archiving and destruction.
Records Management Policy and supporting procedures	This provides a framework for ensuring that the Council's records are well kept and that the systems used to hold them are fit-for-purpose.
Information Security and Infrastructure Security Technical Policies	These set out policies and standards for the management and maintenance of the security of Council infrastructure and applications.

Vital Records Standards	This sets out how vital records will be identified and the steps to be taken to ensure their protection and preservation.
Vulnerability Policy	Intended for use by Middlesbrough Council employees when engaging with residents/customers where payment of a collectable debt is being considered.

11.0 What is considered a crisis?

11.1 For those who have suffered a disaster or crisis as defined above, support will be provided if a Middlesbrough resident meets one or more of the following:

- where there has been an unexpected serious emergency or crisis, and there is a significant risk of harm to an adult or child if no assistance is given;
- where a vulnerable person in the community requires help with basic housing needs or food to prevent homelessness or hardship;
- where a resident requires an emergency visit to a hospital (i.e. to Accident and Emergency);
- if there has been a breakdown of the family unit (i.e. fleeing violence);
- if there has been major flooding, gas explosions or fire which affects the home (where insurance or utility companies are not liable);
- if families would suffer severe health and/or safety problems if remedial support were not provided;
- if a resident or child is a victim of any type of domestic abuse and they need help with things like moving away from an abuser;
- a grandparent or other relative has taken over caring for a child, and are waiting on additional state benefits;
- experiencing a gap in your normal income levels because of a redundancy or change in employment at work which means you have no money for food or utilities;
- if a crisis, such as illness, has affected your ability to manage day to day essential living expenses;
- where a family has a disabled child, an award can be considered for the cost of a specific piece of equipment essential to the child if this has been broken, damaged or stolen and the family have no access to other funds;
- the death of a parent, or a carer, or domestic violence incident,

AND

- Have a risk or perceived risk to the personal health and safety of themselves and/or a member of their household or those that are placed in care within the household.

12.0 General principles

12.1 The general principles adopted in this policy are as follows:

- to ensure a professional, consistent and timely approach to dealing with crisis and its associated support across all of the Council's functions;
- where Data Protection legislation allows, promote a coordinated approach towards sharing information internally and managing multiple awards connected to crisis across the whole of the Council;
- to ensure that crisis is managed in accordance with legislative provisions and best practice;
- ensure that any steps taken to deal with crisis in line with the Council's corporate policies on surveillance and data protection, and to ensure compliance with RIPA and GDPR legislation.

12.2 The Council's Community Support team will work in conjunction with Children's Services or any other service to take referrals for Crisis Support where a child or member of their household has an urgent need for assistance which, if not provided, would affect the wellbeing of the child/care leaver/resident.

12.3 This policy will be incorporated into Middlesbrough Council's working practices to ensure every client is treated fairly, with transparency and consistency throughout.

13.0 Ensuring a consistent approach

13.1 In line with this policy, the council will have a consistent approach across all directorates in responding to crisis. Regular training will be delivered on the policy in general and internal processes adjusted as required to ensure they fall in line with this policy.

14.0 What circumstances are not considered to be a crisis?

14.1 Please note that awards will not be made to cover the following:

- if help is likely to be available from other funds or schemes, including if you have access to a short term benefit advance via Universal Credit;
- if you've lost your money, unless this is supported with a crime reference number;
- if you're not responsible for paying rent or Council Tax in your own right (for example, if you live with your parents, you're 'sofa-surfing', or you have no permanent address);
- if your benefit has been sanctioned by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) although we may be able to help with a referral to a local foodbank or similar organisation;
- if you've spent your money before your next payment is due and is purely a budgeting issue;
- if you can apply for other income which may be available to you straight away;
- where the claim is from a person who has been deemed as having no recourse to public funds (NRPF), unless the claim includes dependent children.

15.0 Type of support that can be considered through crisis or a disaster

15.1 The following are areas considered as suitable or eligible for support where a resident is experiencing a crisis or a disaster. This list is not exhaustive and alternative scenarios may be considered:

- daily living expenses such as food, toiletries and fuel;
- to meet the cost of repaying emergency credit on a gas or electric prepayment meter so the supply of fuel can be maintained or restored;
- emergency accommodation charges when homeless - board and lodging or hostel;
- emergency travel expenses where the applicant is stranded away from home in a disaster;
- rent in advance payable to secure fresh accommodation where the landlord is not a local authority (but only in circumstances where an award for a Community Support Grant has been awarded);
- essential clothing for adults or children;
- meals or items deemed as essential through either children's services or the community support team, up to agreed levels;
- white goods, furniture, bedding and household items;
- the provision of a mobile telephone where there are significant health issues, particularly for children and there is no other support available to provide access to first responders in an emergency

16.0 How payments will be made

16.1 The Council provide a wide range of support in line with current procurement guidelines. The pricing of support items will be at the discretion of the Council.

16.2 Physical good such as household furniture and white goods will be provided through a specific retailer who will deliver the goods in line with the Council's contract.

16.3 The vast majority of awards will be made through electronic means such as PayPoint / OpenPay, E-voucher, Love to Reward, BACS payments to suppliers / residents. No cash will be awarded. Routinely, payments will be made as follows:

- E-vouchers, PayPoint or OpenPay for food
- PayPoint or OpenPay for gas and electricity
- PayPoint or OpenPay for essential clothing
- PayPoint or OpenPay for household linen and kitchenware
- Direct referrals to the local foodbank or similar organisations providing essential food and supplies

17.0 What needs are not covered

17.1 Even where a resident fulfils the definition of crisis or disaster, the following needs are not covered under this policy, albeit this list is not exhaustive, there may be other needs that are not covered.

- an educational or training need including clothing, meals and travel;
- expenses in connection with court (legal proceedings) such as legal fees, court fees, fines, costs, damages, subsistence or travelling expenses;
- removal or storage charges if you are being rehoused following a compulsory purchase order, a redevelopment or closing order, a compulsory exchange of tenancies, or under homelessness legislation;
- domestic assistance and respite care;
- any repair to council property and any repair to properties that are the responsibility of housing associations;
- a medical, surgical, optical, aural or dental item or service (needs under all of these headings can be provided free of charge by the National Health Service);
- debts to government departments;
- investments;
- costs of purchasing, renting or installing a telephone and of any call charges;
- holidays;
- non-essential electrical goods;
- any expense which the local authority has a statutory duty to meet;
- costs of fuel consumption and any associated standing charges (except in an emergency/disaster);
- housing costs, other than minor repairs and improvements;
- council tax, water charges or community water charges;
- daily living expenses, such as food and groceries, except in emergency/disaster situations.

18.0 Monitoring and review arrangements

18.1 The implementation and effectiveness of this policy and its supporting procedures will be checked and monitored by the Head of Service and associated management team.

18.2 Any alterations to the policy will be subject to approval by Executive. This policy will be reviewed every three years unless there is a significant development that would require a more urgent review, such as a change in legislation.

19.0 Information sharing

19.1 The Welfare Reform Act 2012 and the Social Security Regulations 2012 (information sharing in relation to welfare services, etc.) enables the Council to access Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) data directly. The annual Memorandum of Understanding between DWP and the Council also confirms what data is allowed to be shared and if it can be, under what circumstances.

20.0 Data Protection

20.1 The collation and use of personal data will be managed in accordance with the Council's Data Protection Policy and the Resident and Business Support Privacy Notice – Community Support [Privacy notice - Community Support Scheme | Middlesbrough Council](#)

21.0 Evaluation

21.1 The policy will be evaluated annually by the Strategic Business Managers within Resident & Business Support. Should findings indicate that revisions to the policy are required, a detailed analysis will be provided to the Head of Resident and Business Support. Any proposed changes will be fully documented and passed through to Executive for consideration.

20.2 The policy provides clear guidance for all Council officers, partners and Middlesbrough residents on the Council's approach to ensure consistency, fairness and transparency.

Impact Assessment Level 1: Initial screening assessment

Subject of assessment:	Welfare Support for Residents in Financial Crisis Policy			
Coverage:	Crosscutting			
This is a decision relating to:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Strategy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Policy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Service	<input type="checkbox"/> Function
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Process/procedure	<input type="checkbox"/> Programme	<input type="checkbox"/> Project	<input type="checkbox"/> Review
	<input type="checkbox"/> Organisational change	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (please state)		
It is a:	New approach:	<input type="checkbox"/>	Revision of an existing approach:	<input type="checkbox"/>
It is driven by:	Legislation:	<input type="checkbox"/>	Local or corporate requirements:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 3 year review
Description:	<p>Key aims, objectives and activities To assess the impact of proceeding with an updated Welfare Support for Residents in Financial Crisis Policy.</p> <p>Statutory drivers The Council does not have a statutory legal obligation to hold a Welfare Support for Residents in Financial Crisis Policy however it is good practice</p> <p>Differences from any previous approach The policy will undergo a 3 year review</p> <p>Key stakeholders and intended beneficiaries (internal and external as appropriate) Key stakeholders: the Council; Council tax payers; local business community,</p> <p>Intended outcomes. To seek the adoption of an updated Welfare Support for Residents in Financial Crisis Policy</p>			
Live date:	10.03.25			
Lifespan:	Until Further Notice (review every 3 years)			
Date of next review:	March 2028			

Screening questions	Response			Evidence
	No	Yes	Uncertain	
Human Rights Could the decision impact negatively on individual Human Rights as enshrined in UK legislation?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	No evidence to suggest that the policy will have an adverse impact on individuals in terms of human rights.
Equality Could the decision result in adverse differential impacts on groups or individuals with characteristics protected in UK equality law? Could the decision impact differently on other commonly disadvantaged groups?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	No evidence to suggest that the policy will have an adverse impact on individuals in terms of equality.
Community cohesion Could the decision impact negatively on relationships between different groups, communities of interest or neighbourhoods within the town?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	No evidence to suggest that the policy will have an adverse impact on relationships between different groups, communities of interest or neighbourhoods within the town.
Next steps: ➡ If the answer to all of the above screening questions is No then the process is completed. ➡ If the answer of any of the questions is Yes or Uncertain, then a Level 2 Full Impact Assessment must be completed.				

Assessment completed by:	Kellie Appleyard	Head of Service:	Janette Savage
Date:	27.12.24	Date:	21.02.25

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

MIDDLESBROUGH COUNCIL	
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Report of:	Executive Director of Finance & Transformation
Relevant Executive Member:	Executive Member for Finance
Submitted to:	Executive
Date:	5 March 2025
Title:	Tender Pipeline Approval 2025/26
Report for:	Decision
Status:	Public
Council Plan priority:	Delivering Best Value
Key decision:	Yes
Why:	Decision(s) will incur expenditure or savings above £250,000 and have a significant impact in two or more wards
Subject to call in?:	Yes
Why:	Non-Urgent decision

Executive summary

To seek Executive approval of the Middlesbrough Council tender pipeline for 2025/26, which is used to provide the market with an understanding of the potential future procurement activity the Council may undertake in the next 12-18 months. This includes the delegation of responsibility for the contract award to the relevant Director who will update their Executive Member.

The recommendation is proposed as it allows strong governance arrangements for procurement activity carried out by the Council and will ensure the Council are compliant with the new Procurement Act 2023 which goes live on 24th February 2025 and will require the Council to formally publish a tender pipeline notice. The only other option would be to not have a tender pipeline which is not something the Council would be supportive of.

The implications of the recommendations have been considered by the appropriate officers of the Council and are set out in the main body of the report.

1. Purpose

- 1.1 To seek Executive approval of Middlesbrough Council's tender pipeline for 2025/26 and agree delegation of the contract award to the relevant Director who will update their Executive Member.

2. Recommendations

2.1 That the Executive

- Approves the Middlesbrough Council tender pipeline for 2025/26.
- Delegation of the contract award to the relevant Director who will update their Executive Member.

3. Rationale for the recommended decision(s)

- 3.1 To continue to have strong governance arrangements in place for procurement activity carried out by the Council.
- 3.2 To be compliant with the new Procurement Act 2023 which goes live on 24th February 2025 and will require the Council to formally publish a tender pipeline notice.

4. Background and relevant information

- 4.1 For clarity this report is not the Corporate Procurement Strategy and that issues such as social value are included in that Strategy.
- 4.2 A tender pipeline is used to provide the market with an understanding of the potential future procurement activity the Council may undertake in the next 12-18 months.
- 4.3 The new Procurement Act 2023 which goes live on 24th February 2025 requires the Council to formally publish a tender pipeline notice.
- 4.4 The Council's [Corporate Procurement Strategy 2024 - 2026](#) sets out the strategic direction for the implementation of the Contract Procedure Rules, which are the regulatory framework for all staff to follow in respect of purchasing goods, services and works regardless of value. The Strategy supports the aims and priorities of the Council. It sets out how the Council will:
- Strive to make procurement easier for suppliers and the Council alike
 - Challenge and drive value for money from all procurement activity.
 - Maximise innovation, sustainability, and collaboration in our procurement activities to support the Council's strategic objectives
 - Ensure social value and local return is at the heart of our procurement opportunities
 - Continue to increase the visibility of our tender opportunities to our local and SME suppliers
 - Make the best use of local, sub-regional, regional and national collaborative arrangements where significant benefits for Middlesbrough can be evidenced.

- 4.5 Within that Corporate Procurement Strategy, a tender pipeline is used to provide the market with an understanding of the potential future procurement activity the Council may undertake in the next 12-18 months and so increases the visibility of our tender opportunities.
- 4.6 The tender pipeline may be of particular benefit to small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) and voluntary, community and social enterprises as it provides them with time to plan for future work, ensuring a competitive and diverse market.
- 4.7 Middlesbrough Council's tender pipeline for 1st April 2025 to 31st March 2026 has been developed as part of our governance processes and the new impending Procurement Act 2023 requirements. This report seeks Executive approval for the planned procurement activity and delegates authority for the contract award to the relevant Director who will then update their Executive Member.
- 4.8 In order to be transparent, the pipeline includes all known procurement activity and not just contracts over the Key Decision threshold, please note this means that not all of these opportunities will be on the publicly published pipeline as not all opportunities are available to the full market.
- 4.9 The Middlesbrough Council tender pipeline for 2024/25 had **113** procurements proposed and below is an update on progress:
- 49 – Contracts have been awarded
 - 13 – procurement is in progress
 - 10 – did not progress as no longer needed
 - 41 – procurements have been delayed and will now be published in 25/26 pipeline
- 4.10 The tender pipeline will be a live record which will be maintained by the Commissioning and Procurement Team and will be available for the supplier market to view on the Council website.
- 4.11 If any new procurements with the full contract value of £250,000 or more are identified during the year, an Individual Executive report outlining the procurement request will be presented. This should be minimal, as all known procurements are captured within the pipeline work programme, however, this may occur if new funding is made available, i.e. through grant income.

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

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

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

Topic	Impact
Financial (including procurement and Social Value)	<p>Activity within the procurement pipeline work programme will be progressed in accordance with the Contract Procedure rules, approved in September 2023. All activity within the procurement pipeline is known activity that is factored within service area budgets, or funding sources have been agreed. This pipeline report does not provide any additional pressures to the budgetary position.</p> <p>Social value is considered and included in all our tenders and is presently bespoke to each individual tender. Middlesbrough Council's Social Value Charter is now part of our standard tender documentation moving forward and bidders are required to provide their commitment to support the Council in delivering it.</p>
Legal	<p>This decision will enhance governance of procurement, and processes will be compliant with the authorities Contract Procedure Rules and the Public Contract Regulations 2015.</p> <p>This will also prepare the Council to be compliant with the impending Procurement Act 2023.</p>
Risk	<p>In accordance with the Contract procedure rules, any procurement in excess of the Executive key decision threshold must be approved by Executive, to ensure governance is followed the pipeline report identifies all potential procurement activity for 2024/2025 and seeks approval to progress with the appropriate procurement routes. Sign off to a successful procurement and contract award is delegated to the relevant Director who will then update their Executive portfolio holder</p>
Human Rights, Public Sector Equality Duty and Community Cohesion	<p>An Impact Assessment has been completed and found no concerns that the Tender Pipeline and delegation of responsibility could have any adverse effects and the assessment is attached as Appendix B.</p>
Climate Change / Environmental	<p>There are no adverse effects for Climate Change / Environmental from this report, however sustainability is a key factor within procurement processes.</p>
Children and Young People Cared for by the Authority and Care Leavers	<p>There are potentially positive impacts for Children and Young People Cared for by the Authority and Care Leavers from this report in some of the tender pipeline projects for 2025/26 for Children's Services.</p>

Data Protection	There are no data protection or GDPR implications from this report. The procurement process within the authority has embedded with it appropriate procedures for ensuring compliance with GDPR where appropriate.
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Actions to be taken to implement the recommended decision(s)

Action	Responsible Officer	Deadline
Publish Middlesbrough Council Tender Pipeline 2025/26.	Specialist Commissioning & Procurement Manager	30 th April 2025

Appendices

1	Appendix A – Tender Pipeline 2025/26
2	Appendix B – Equality Impact Assessment

Background papers

None

Contact: Claire Walker, Specialist Commissioning & Procurement Manager

Email: Claire_walker@middlesbrough.gov.uk

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APPENDIX A – TENDER PIPELINE 2025/26
DIRECTOR OF ADULT SOCIAL CARE

PROJECT TITLE	DESCRIPTION OF SERVICE	ANTICIPATED PUBLISH DATE*	ANTICIPATED PURCHASE ROUTE
Residential Options for Adults	To provide a range of residential providers to register with the Council and allow for direct award placement choice awards moving forward	Not Applicable	Direct Award (Procurement Act 2023)
Veterans Supported Accommodation	Supported housing project located in Teesside housing single ex-service veterans experiencing homelessness or at risk of experience rough sleeping	Not Applicable	Exemption
Mental Health Assessors (Section 12 Assessments)	Assessments under the Mental Health Act Section 12	May 2025	Provider Selection Regime (PSR)
OSG One	Supported Accommodation for complex persons (all primary support reasons)	Not Applicable	Direct Award (Procurement Act 2023)
Salvation Army Housing Association	Supported Accommodation – Mental health	Not Applicable	Direct Award (Procurement Act 2023)
Richmond Fellowship	Supported Accommodation – Mental health	Not Applicable	Direct Award (Procurement Act 2023)

APPENDIX A – TENDER PIPELINE 2025/26
DIRECTOR OF ADULT SOCIAL CARE

PROJECT TITLE	DESCRIPTION OF SERVICE	ANTICIPATED PUBLISH DATE*	ANTICIPATED PURCHASE ROUTE
By and For Framework	Supporting persons with protected characteristics and need support with domestic abuse.	TBC	Tender
Funeral Service	Funeral services to support the Estates Team	Nov/Dec 25	Quotation
Housing with Extra Care	Care within 2 extra care schemes	TBC	Tender
Stages	Homeless Hostel Service	TBC	TBC
Adult Respite Provision	Potential to develop joint commissioning with health for provision of adult respite provision	TBC	TBC
Additional Support for Carers	Potential to commission online and face to face services to support carers	TBC	TBC
South Tees Carers Forum Chair	Chairperson for the South Tees Carer Forum.	April 2025	TBC

APPENDIX A – TENDER PIPELINE 2025/26
DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES

PROJECT TITLE	DESCRIPTION OF SERVICE	ANTICIPATED PUBLISH DATE*	ANTICIPATED PURCHASE ROUTE
Adoption Support Fund	Contract to provide therapy services to children and young people with a SGO or Child Arrangement Order	TBC	TBC
Independent Visitors	Independent Visitors for children and young people	TBC	TBC
Tees Alternative Education Provision	Alternative Education Provision for children and young people	TBC	Re-open Framework
Short Breaks	Short Breaks for children and young people to support in and outside of the family home	TBC	TBC
Safe Families	Bespoke packages of support for vulnerable families to reduce the need for statutory services	TBC	TBC
Children's Residential Placements	To ensure delivery of statutory sufficiency duty the Council may undertake various procurements in order to ensure placement choice for the children and young people in its care. This maybe via individual placement purchase for choice of care through to partnership agreements or block arrangements.	TBC	Direct Award (Procurement Act 2023)
Transport Support	To procure services that can deliver a range of transport cover for Adults and Children's services that fall outside of the Integrated Transport Unit (ITU)	TBC	TBC

APPENDIX A – TENDER PIPELINE 2025/26
DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES

PROJECT TITLE	DESCRIPTION OF SERVICE	ANTICIPATED PUBLISH DATE*	ANTICIPATED PURCHASE ROUTE
Therapy Services	Contract to provide therapy services for our children and young people	TBC	TBC
Park End Family Hub – Alternations 2024	Asbestos works	TBC	TBC
Holmwood School	Replacement of roof fans	TBC	TBC
Agency Staff Teams for Children	To provide access to agency staff team to support children and young people in their home or another property when a placement is not available.	TBC	Open Framework
Sandringham House	Provision of additional and alternative education places via contribution towards building refurbishment	TBC	TBC
Youth Services	Range of youth services for children and young people in Middlesbrough	Dec 2025	Tender
Speech and Language Provision	Provision of Speech and Language for children and young people potentially in collaboration with Health and other Local Authorities.	TBC	Tender
SENDIASS	SENDIASS Service	Feb 2026	Tender

APPENDIX A – TENDER PIPELINE 2025/26
DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES

PROJECT TITLE	DESCRIPTION OF SERVICE	ANTICIPATED PUBLISH DATE*	ANTICIPATED PURCHASE ROUTE
Care Leavers Accommodation	Provision of accommodation for Care Leavers	TBC	TBC
Accommodation Provision 16+	Supported Accommodation for 16-18 year old – various routes	TBC	TBC
Education Management System	Education Management System for Early Years	TBC	Framework

APPENDIX A – TENDER PIPELINE 2025/26
DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

PROJECT TITLE	DESCRIPTION OF SERVICE	ANTICIPATED PUBLISH DATE*	ANTICIPATED PURCHASE ROUTE
Parts and Materials for Vehicles	Contract for the supply of parts and materials for commercial vehicles	TBC	Framework
Commercial Waste Collection Service	Contract for the collection of commercial waste	TBC	TBC
Annual inspections for safety equipment	Contract for the testing and maintenance of safety equipment at various MBC sites	July – Sept 2025	Quotation
Supply and Delivery of traffic signal cables	Contract for the supply and delivery of cables for traffic signals	Jan – Mar 2025	Quotation
Removal and collection of refuse from Council Buildings and Schools	Contract for the removal and collection of refuse from corporate buildings and schools	TBC	Framework
Installation of Traffic Signal Loops and Detection	Contract for the supply and installation of Traffic Loop Detection systems – carried over as waiting for detail from service area	Jul – Sept 2025	Framework

APPENDIX A – TENDER PIPELINE 2025/26
DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

PROJECT TITLE	DESCRIPTION OF SERVICE	ANTICIPATED PUBLISH DATE*	ANTICIPATED PURCHASE ROUTE
Tree Surveying and Repairs	Tree surveying and repairs	Jul – Sept 25	Tender
Sandwiches and Food to Go	Secure provision of food for school catering services.	May / June 25	Framework
Investing in People & Cultures (IPC) Support Package	To secure a provider to offer integration and employability of Ukrainian communities.	August / September 25	TBC
Transport Provision	Work to review and deliver alternative delivery model for the Integrated Transport Unit (ITU) in order to develop a more fit for purpose future delivery model and achieve savings	TBC	TBC
Provision of Transport to Convey Children to and from Schools, Special Schools, Colleges and Adults to Adult Day Centres and Other Sites	Extension of current DPS Taxi and minibus service for children and adults (education premises)	Mar – Apr 25	Extension

APPENDIX A – TENDER PIPELINE 2025/26
DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

PROJECT TITLE	DESCRIPTION OF SERVICE	ANTICIPATED PUBLISH DATE*	ANTICIPATED PURCHASE ROUTE
NEPO231 Highway and Civil Engineering Materials - Call-Off (C-011871)	Pole Products for Traffic Light Signals	June / August 2025	Framework
Street Lighting Connections	Street Lighting Connections	MAR - MAY 25	Framework / ITQ
Hire of Equipment for Fleet Services	Hire of Equipment	MAR - MAY 25	Framework / ITQ
Street Lighting Technical Approval Consultant	Street Lighting Technical Approval Consultant	FEB-MAR 25	Framework
Trackers Fitted to Council Vehicles	Trackers Fitted to Council Vehicles	June / August 2025	ITQ
Condition Surveys	Condition Surveys. Full ABC Classified Carriageway Network; 25% of our Footway Network; 25% of our Unclassified Carriageway Network. NEPO209 Highways Technical Surveys	MAR - MAY 25	Framework / ITQ
BOHO - Removal of pipework, Replacement faulty	BOHO - Removal of pipework, Replacement faulty pressurisation, Fire Dampers Maintenance. Cumberland Resource Centre & Centre Square - air conditioning. Pallister Park - uncover gas main in caretakers garden. Remove leaking pipework	MAR - MAY 25	Framework / ITQ

APPENDIX A – TENDER PIPELINE 2025/26
DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

PROJECT TITLE	DESCRIPTION OF SERVICE	ANTICIPATED PUBLISH DATE*	ANTICIPATED PURCHASE ROUTE
pressurisation, Fire Dampers Maintenance.			
Concrete Testing	Concrete Testing	TBC	TBC
Footway Resurfacing	Footway Resurfacing	TBC	Framework
TAA, Project Manager, Site Supervisor	TAA, Project Manager, Site Supervisor to oversee the project work on the A174 and various other projects	TBC	Framework
Traffic Management	Traffic Management	TBC	Framework
Workshop Work Wear and Cleaning	Cleaning of fleet workshop overalls	TBC	TBC
Transporter Bridge Works	Transporter Bridge Works	Summer 2025	TBC
A66 High Mast Maintenance	A66 High Mast Maintenance	TBC	Framework

APPENDIX A – TENDER PIPELINE 2025/26
DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

PROJECT TITLE	DESCRIPTION OF SERVICE	ANTICIPATED PUBLISH DATE*	ANTICIPATED PURCHASE ROUTE
Hydraulic Services	Hydraulic Service, Maintenance and Emergency responses to Fleet Services in maintaining and keeping the Councils Fleet operational.	TBC	TBC
Managed Stored Services Fleet	Managed Stored Services Fleet	TBC	TBC
Tree Surveying and repairs	Tree Surveying and repairs	TBC	TBC
Increased street lighting	Increased street lighting in key hotspot locations across the town including TS1 & TS3 (Newport & North Ormesby) as identified via Cleveland Police Op Deterrence.	TBC	TBC
Regional Commercial Waste Contract	This contract is to replace the current commercial waste contract and has been tendered regionally	April 2025	Tender
Highways Surveys	Surveys to assess the condition of highways.	May 2025	Direct Award Framework
Food Waste Collection	Collection of food waste from council's premises: Offices, Care homes and children's homes.	May 2025	TBC
Maintenance of crematories software agreement -	Maintenance of crematories software agreement - Teesside Crematorium software used for cremations, burials & memorials	TBC	TBC

APPENDIX A – TENDER PIPELINE 2025/26
DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

PROJECT TITLE	DESCRIPTION OF SERVICE	ANTICIPATED PUBLISH DATE*	ANTICIPATED PURCHASE ROUTE
Teesside Crematorium software used for cremations, burials & memorials			
Waste	Extension of current Waste contract to ensure continuity of service whilst procurement process completed.	Mar – Apr 25	Extension
Crematorium Music / Tribute	Crematorium Music / Tribute at the Crematorium	TBC	TBC

APPENDIX A – TENDER PIPELINE 2025/26
DIRECTOR OF FINANCE AND TRANSFORMATION

PROJECT TITLE	DESCRIPTION OF SERVICE	ANTICIPATED PUBLISH DATE*	ANTICIPATED PURCHASE ROUTE
Corporate Purchase Card Contract	Contract for the Corporate Purchasing Card solution – this has carried over due to work to reduce need for cards so need to wait for that work to be completed	TBC	Framework
Banking Provision	Council banking requirements	TBC	Framework
Hosted Payments and Income Management Solution	Services under electronic payment services requirement	TBC	TBC
Social Fund Software	Cloud hosted software to allow submissions of application for help in crisis situations	March – April 25	TBC
Redemption of Community Support Grant Vouchers		March – April 25	Quotation

APPENDIX A – TENDER PIPELINE 2025/26
DIRECTOR OF LEGAL AND GOVERNANCE SERVICES

PROJECT TITLE	DESCRIPTION OF SERVICE	ANTICIPATED PUBLISH DATE*	ANTICIPATED PURCHASE ROUTE
Digital Mail and Print	Digital Mail and Print	May 2025	Framework
Multi-Functional Devices	Multi-Functional Devices	May 2025	Framework
WPC Coroners Case Management	To secure provider who offers a hosting platform for the coroners service with successful Coronial support.	August / September 25	TBC
Customer Relationship Management System	Customer Relationship Management System	November / December 2025	Framework
Kemp Load Renewal	Licenses for IT virtual load balancing server	October / December 2025	Quotation
Occupational Health Service	Occupational Health Service	March 2025	Extension
Coroners Services	To procure a range of services to support the Coroners service to deliver its service on behalf of the region as per the shared service arrangements	November / December 2025	TBC

APPENDIX A – TENDER PIPELINE 2025/26
DIRECTOR OF LEGAL AND GOVERNANCE SERVICES

PROJECT TITLE	DESCRIPTION OF SERVICE	ANTICIPATED PUBLISH DATE*	ANTICIPATED PURCHASE ROUTE
Transformation	Where a need arising to secure support in relation to transformation (not a delivery partner) and savings then one individual procurement will be carried out to secure a service, consultant or agency support to meet that need. This may or may not happen and the procurement team will support any service area with this procurement requirement.	April 25 – March 26	TBC (Various)
Purchase of Laptops	Laptops for council staff.	April 2025	TBC
Network Hardware and Service Desk	ICT service desk facility.	July 2025	TBC
Central Intercept X Advance Including Central Phish Threat	Antivirus and anti-phishing software.	August 2025	TBC
Alteryx Designer and Server Licences	Analytic Process Automation (APA).	December 2025	TBC

APPENDIX A – TENDER PIPELINE 2025/26
DIRECTOR OF LEGAL AND GOVERNANCE SERVICES

PROJECT TITLE	DESCRIPTION OF SERVICE	ANTICIPATED PUBLISH DATE*	ANTICIPATED PURCHASE ROUTE
Checkpoint Renewal	Cyber security platform.	March/April 2025	Direct Award Framework
Xpress Core System Software Package - Civica	Electoral roll software.	March/April 2025	Extension
T S S 1 2 3 RSA SecurID Authentication Manager	Security login tokens.	March/April 2025	TBC
Maintenance and Support of GGP Licences/Software	Provider of Geographical Information Systems (GIS) software.	May 2025	Extension
GIS Support and Maintenance	Mapping and spatial data analytics software.	May 2025	TBC
FME Licence Support and Maintenance	Annual package of technical support. It ensures that your software is always functional and up-to-date.	February 2025	Direct Award Framework

APPENDIX A – TENDER PIPELINE 2025/26
DIRECTOR OF LEGAL AND GOVERNANCE SERVICES

PROJECT TITLE	DESCRIPTION OF SERVICE	ANTICIPATED PUBLISH DATE*	ANTICIPATED PURCHASE ROUTE
Internet and WAN lines	Internet connection.	May 2025	TBC
Network Cabling	Network Cabling.	July 2025	Extension
HR & Payroll System	Payroll, HR, Recruitment, Timesheets and Expenses	October 26	Framework
Software Licenses G-Cloud 11 Framework Agreement (RM1557.11)	Software Licenses	March / May 2025	Framework
Middlesbrough Learns (carry over 24/25)	Secure an online platform solution for Middlesbrough Learns	TBC	TBC

APPENDIX A – TENDER PIPELINE 2025/26
DIRECTOR OF REGENERATION

PROJECT TITLE	DESCRIPTION OF SERVICE	ANTICIPATED PUBLISH DATE*	ANTICIPATED PURCHASE ROUTE
Property Management	Potential to procurement property management arrangements for Council owned buildings where internal resource is not available and/or where a commercial return can be made for the Council	TBC	TBC
Card Reading Machines	Payment Card Reading Machines installation	MAR - MAY 25	Exemption
Planned Maintenance Built Assets (carry over 24/25)	Framework for all planned maintenance requirements not covered by hub Frameworks	Jun – Jul 25	Tender
Structural Surveys	Built Assets requirement for structural surveys to be carried, some are mandatory.	TBC	TBC
Mechanical and Electrical Products	Products used internally by DLO for repairs and maintenance	TBC	TBC
Plant and Accommodation Hire	Occasional hire of plant and accommodation requirement	TBC	TBC
Artist Commission for Statement Artwork for	Artwork piece required following refurbishment of Old Town Hall	TBC	TBC

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APPENDIX A – TENDER PIPELINE 2025/26
DIRECTOR OF REGENERATION

PROJECT TITLE	DESCRIPTION OF SERVICE	ANTICIPATED PUBLISH DATE*	ANTICIPATED PURCHASE ROUTE
Middlesbrough Old Town Hall			
Reimagining Middlesbrough's Old Town Hall - Digital Model	Creation of a digital model of the planned Old Town Hall refurbishment	TBC	TBC
Transporter Bridge Rack and Pinion Lift - Servicing	Biannual servicing of the lift, specialist requirement	TBC	Exemption
Planning software system	Updated requirement by Planning team to manage planning requirements. (Pre-Market Engagement may start end 2025.)	2026/27	Tender
Reimagining Middlesbrough's Old Town Hall – Refurbishment	Refurbishment of Old Town Hall as Media Business Centre	TBC	Tender / Framework
Supply and Distribution of Spirits, Wine, Beer and Cider	Supply and distribution of drinks in the Town Hall and Theatre	April 2025	Framework
Grounds Maintenance at Boho 8 and TeesAMP and to include Boho X		June 2025	Quotation

APPENDIX A – TENDER PIPELINE 2025/26
DIRECTOR OF REGENERATION

PROJECT TITLE	DESCRIPTION OF SERVICE	ANTICIPATED PUBLISH DATE*	ANTICIPATED PURCHASE ROUTE
Cannon Park Industrial Estate – Cladding Works (2024)	Roof refurbishment and cladding works of industrial unit, including internal refurbishment of Kitchen and Office areas, electrical works and replacement of existing windows and external doors and shutters.	March/April 2025	ITT
Southlands Community and Sports Centre	New Build Work	April 2025	ITT
Cannon Park Industrial Units 6	Roof & Wall Cladding Replacement.	April 2025	ITT
Thorntree Hub	Internal Alterations 2024.	April 2025	ITT
Cleveland Centre	Employment Hub Works.	April 2025	ITT
Removal Services	Removal provision	Oct – Dec 2025	Tender
Transporter Bridge Rack and Pinion Lift – Servicing	Biannual servicing of the lift, specialist requirement	TBC	Exemption
Timber, Masonry and Damp Surveys	Surveys required for Middlesbrough Old Town Hall prior to refurbishment	Feb-Mar 2025	Quotation

APPENDIX A – TENDER PIPELINE 2025/26
DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC HEALTH

PROJECT TITLE	DESCRIPTION OF SERVICE	ANTICIPATED PUBLISH DATE*	ANTICIPATED PURCHASE ROUTE
South Tees Fluoride Varnish Programme	Public Health with R&C, children's programme to prevent / lessen tooth decay	TBC	Provider Selection Regime
0-19 Healthy Child Programme	Universal and targeted services, aimed at improving the health and wellbeing of children and young people, that proactively address poor health outcomes and inequalities that are most relevant to the population of Middlesbrough.	Apr – Jun 2025	Provider Selection Regime (PSR)
Infection Prevention and Control Nurse	Infection Prevention and Control Nurse staff who provide additional capacity to the team which aims to reduce the transmission of communicable disease and illness within the care sector across South Tees.	Apr - Jun 2025	Provider Selection Regime
Holiday Activities Fund (HAF)	Range of activities for residents of Middlesbrough	TBC	TBC

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

Template for Impact Assessment Level 1: Initial screening assessment

Subject of assessment:	Tender Pipeline 2025/26			
Coverage:	overarching/crosscutting			
This is a decision relating to:	<input type="checkbox"/> Strategy	<input type="checkbox"/> Policy	<input type="checkbox"/> Service	<input type="checkbox"/> Function
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Process/procedure	<input type="checkbox"/> Programme	<input type="checkbox"/> Project	<input type="checkbox"/> Review
	<input type="checkbox"/> Organisational change	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (please state)		
It is a:	New approach:	<input type="checkbox"/>	Revision of an existing approach:	X
It is driven by:	Legislation:	<input type="checkbox"/>	Local or corporate requirements:	<input type="checkbox"/>
Description:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Key aims, objectives and activities Annual Executive approval of the Tendering Pipeline for the forthcoming financial year and seeking delegated authority to the relevant Director and Executive Member for contract award. Statutory drivers (set out exact reference) There are no statutory drivers for this service, however, procurement must comply with a range of legislation and instruments, including but not exclusive, Public Contract Regulations 2015 and the Provider Selection Regime (PSR). The annual Tender Pipeline approval strengthens our internal governance arrangements. The new Procurement Act 2023 will provide more requirements for a formal tender pipeline notice to be published. Differences from any previous approach This process has now become business as usual following its introduction in April 2021. Key stakeholders and intended beneficiaries (internal and external as appropriate) The Council, residents of Middlesbrough, local suppliers, and supply chains Intended outcomes Strengthen internal governance in respect of the award of high value contracts. Increase the markets understanding of tender opportunities for the coming financial year. 			
Live date:	April 2025			
Lifespan:	April 2025 – March 2026			
Date of next review:	January/February 2026			

Screening questions	Response			Evidence
	No	Yes	Uncertain	
Human Rights Could the decision impact negatively on individual Human Rights as enshrined in UK legislation?*	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The approval from Executive of the tender pipeline for 2025/26 and delegated responsibility to the relevant Director for contract award will ensure that the Council is being fair, open and transparent in all its formal tendering activity. It is not envisioned that this Tender Pipeline approval would negatively impact on individual Human Rights as enshrined in UK Legislation. Evidence includes analysis of performance against legislative requirements. E-tendering portal used to publish tenders and all suppliers are directed and encouraged to register on the portal which provides (this is free of charge)

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

Screening questions	Response	Evidence
<p>Equality</p> <p>Could the decision result in adverse differential impacts on groups or individuals with characteristics protected in UK equality law? Could the decision impact differently on other commonly disadvantaged groups?*</p>	<div></div> <div>X</div> <div></div> <div></div>	<p>The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) requires that when exercising its functions the Councils must have due regard to the need to:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act; • advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; and • foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it. <p>In having due regard to the need to advance equality of opportunity, the Council must consider, as part of a single equality duty:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic; • taking steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of people who do not share it; and • encouraging people who share a protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation is low. <p>The Tender Pipeline 2025/26 is in place to ensure that the Council is fair, open and transparent in all its tendering activity. The Tender Pipeline will ensure fair access to procurement opportunities for all. There are no concerns that these changes could result in adverse differential impacts on groups or individuals. Evidence includes analysis of performance against legislative requirements. E-tendering portal used to publish tenders and all suppliers are directed and encouraged to register on the portal which provides (this is free of charge)</p>
<p>Community cohesion</p> <p>Could the decision impact negatively on relationships between different groups, communities of interest or neighbourhoods within the town?*</p>	<div></div> <div>X</div> <div></div> <div></div>	<p>The Tender Pipeline 2025/26 is in place to ensure that the Council is fair, open and transparent in all its tendering activity. There are no concerns that the proposal could have an adverse impact on community cohesion. Evidence includes analysis of performance against legislative requirements. E-tendering portal used to publish tenders and all suppliers are directed and encouraged to register on the portal which provides (this is free of charge).</p>

Screening questions	Response	Evidence
<p>Next steps:</p> <p>➡ If the answer to all of the above screening questions is No then the process is completed.</p> <p>➡ If the answer of any of the questions is Yes or Uncertain, then a Level 2 Full Impact Assessment must be completed.</p>		

Assessment completed by:	Claire Walker	Head of Service:	Louise Grabham
Date:	21 st January 2025	Date:	21 st January 2025