

Appendix 1 – Suggested Scrutiny Topics for 2025/2026

Ref	Suggested Scrutiny Investigation Topic	Source	Council Plan 2024-2027, Ambition and Aim
1	<u>Issue of Pigeons and Seagulls</u> There's a big problem across the town centre and wider area regarding excrement, this in turn, can affect people's health. I feel that some businesses residents, and landlords are disregarding their responsibilities.	Councillor	A Healthy Place - <i>protect and improve our environment.</i>
2	<u>Commemorating Middlesbrough's Bicentenary in 2030</u> The Culture team are making preparations for a series of events celebrating the bicentenary of Middlesbrough in 2030.	Officer	Safe and Resilient Communities - <i>promote new ideas and community initiatives.</i>
3	<u>Impact of the Mayoral Development Corporation</u> The Middlesbrough Development Corporation has been in operation for three years now and is now progressing a number of investments.	Officer	A successful and ambitious town - <i>attract and grow businesses to increase employment opportunities.</i> A successful and ambitious town – <i>Ensure housing provision meets local demand</i>
4	<u>Investment Zones</u> The Government backed Investment Zone programme covers Middlesbrough Town Centre and plans are being developed for this by TVCA / Middlesbrough Development Corporation.	Officer	A successful and ambitious town - <i>attract and grow businesses to increase employment opportunities.</i>
5	<u>Improving Private Landlords Standards</u> The Council is looking at developing a new approach to improving private landlord standards and is looking at best practice from other authorities.	Officer	A successful and ambitious town – <i>Ensure housing provision meets local demand</i>
6	<u>The Council's role in housing</u> The Council has just re-established a senior role to lead the strategic direction of housing in Middlesbrough, and will be looking at prioritising where it can make an impact.	Officer	A successful and ambitious town – <i>Ensure housing provision meets local demand</i>

7	<u>Housing Strategy Formulation</u>	Officer	A successful and ambitious town – <i>Ensure housing provision meets local demand</i>
9	<u>Development of a Vision for the Town</u>	Officer	A successful and ambitious town - <i>attract and grow businesses to increase employment opportunities.</i>
10	<u>Regulation</u> How regulation is delivered in the different service areas across the council. This could include an overview of national policy and guidance and the range of approaches used to achieve compliance within Public Protection, Community Safety (Marion's area), possibly Traffic Regulation and Planning and building control.	Officer	A Healthy Place – <i>protect and improve our environment.</i>
11	<u>Neighbourhoods</u>	Officer	A Healthy Place – <i>Protect and improve our environment.</i> A successful and ambitious town – <i>Ensure housing provision meets local demand</i>
12	<u>Pavement Parking</u> I am writing to ask that the scrutiny panel discuss a resolution to the increase in pavement parking. It's completely out of control. It's making using pavements impossible and is dangerous for pedestrians, especially wheelchair users and prams. Vehicles are often fully parked over pavements and more often than not parked over dropped kerbs making getting about as a wheelchair users incredibly difficult. It's also breaking paving slabs and now the council is implementing tarmac to replace them it signals that pavements are even	Resident	A Healthy Place – <i>protect and improve our environment.</i>

	more available to drivers. We need a robust approach to stop this. Thank you.		
13	<p>Review of Selective Landlord Licensing <i>Selective Landlord Licensing North Ormesby Scheme Evaluation Report 2020.</i></p> <p>After reviewing the subject report and its appendices, I am increasingly convinced that a more thorough and up to date examination of the Selective Landlord Licensing North Ormesby Scheme is essential. I believe it is crucial to update the assessment of the scheme and question several of the findings and conclusions from the 2020 report.</p> <p>The last review of the situation was conducted in 2020, with many assessments dating back even further, such as internal property inspections from 2015/2016. Since then, North Ormesby has experienced a dramatic rise in the number of private landlords and short-term transient residents including a large contingent of non-British tenants. This influx has significantly impacted the area's social fabric, leading to growing tensions between long-term residents and newcomers, many of whom are foreign nationals.</p> <p>As reflected in the Council's report, these issues have resulted in several negative outcomes that the council already accept are inevitable consequences, using the council's own assessment:</p> <p>i. Increased Anti-Social Behaviour: There has been a surge in environmental and social anti-social behaviour, including large-scale rubbish and litter dumping, particularly in alleyways. Numerous images document this issue (sample attached).</p> <p>ii. Rising Criminal Activities: There has been a noticeable increase in various crimes, including drug and alcohol abuse, violent crime, theft, burglaries, and vehicle-related offenses.</p>	Resident	A successful and ambitious town – Ensure housing provision meets local demand

	<p>iii. Safety Concerns Among Residents: Long-term residents increasingly report feeling unsafe, particularly with large groups of Romany men congregating late into the night, leaving behind additional rubbish (see sample images attached).</p> <p>iv. Growing Racial Tensions: There is a rise in racial tensions and growing mistrust between different cultural groups, leading to a decline in social cohesion and community morale. Attendance at Community Council meetings is very low, with fewer than 10 participants out of a population of 3,200.</p> <p>v. Decreased Property Values and Sense of Hopelessness: Many residents feel trapped, wanting to move but unable to due to stagnant property prices. This situation benefits private landlords and contributes to a decrease in owner-occupiers, with many residents reluctantly accepting lower property values just to escape. The Council's optimistic projections about property price increases are met with scepticism and derision by the residents.</p> <p>vi. Unregulated Property Management: Such is the rush to get onboard the gravy train, there has been a surge in what can only be described as "cowboy builders," this is evident by the mess left by their construction activities, including plaster and cement poured down street drains or across roads and pavements, external paint spills , rubble and other construction waste surreptitiously rammed into what should be resident's communal bins or simply tossed int the alleys, there is also evidence of hazardous waste (asbestos) being dumped into alleys etc. This raises concerns about unregulated building practices and inadequate maintenance of rented properties, which often pose significant safety risks. Numerous photographs documenting these issues have been previously submitted to the council. All this is happening at a pace right</p>		
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	<p>across North Ormesby without any apparent building control by the council.</p> <p>I would like to challenge several of the findings and conclusions presented in the 2020 report. The report seems to overlook how COVID-19 might have distorted the so-called “improvements” it highlights. While it optimistically mentions rising property prices, these increases are minimal and have not kept pace with other areas. The report praises a decrease in resident turnover as a positive sign, yet it simultaneously describes residents as having “limited choice” and suggests they are not inclined to move—akin to depicting a caged bird as content in its environment.</p> <p>Furthermore, as long-term residents are increasingly displaced by non-British tenants, the new residents may be less likely to voice complaints or move away. The 2020 report appears to emphasise the perceived benefits of the SLL scheme, yet it acknowledges that:</p> <p><i>“The North Ormesby ward remains one of the most deprived in the country based on low income levels, low educational attainment, poor health outcomes, and crime. North Ormesby has the second highest rate of crime and anti-social behaviour out of all Middlesbrough wards.”</i></p> <p>The resident survey from December 2023 indicates that satisfaction levels have declined since the 2017 survey and fall below the national benchmark. While the SLL scheme may have brought about some marginal improvements, these changes are occurring from an extremely low baseline, and the report cannot hide the reality.</p> <p>Given that the Council asserts that “<i>strategies and plans must be evidence-based to effectively address the challenges facing Middlesbrough and maximise opportunities,</i>” it is crucial for the Council to conduct a more current and thorough scrutiny of the SLL scheme, especially considering the</p>		
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	<p>significant changes North Ormesby is increasingly undergoing.</p> <p>I therefore strongly urge that the council reconsider their scrutiny programme 2024/2025 and include a more up to date review of the SLL Scheme and its current impact on North Ormesby.</p>		
14	<p><u>Recycling Exclusions (Terraced Properties)</u></p> <p>Please could you look into why people who live in some of the terraced housing in the borough get excluded from the recycling bins and wheelie bins and will now be excluded from the food recycling. Big communal bins in back alleys lead to more crime, rats and clean up for the bin men who often have to return the day after bin collection day to clean up the back alley. This can't be value for money.</p>	Resident	A Healthy Place - <i>protect and improve our environment.</i>
15	<p><u>Conservation Area Policy</u></p> <p>Is the conservation area policy affordable for families – and is the council being so inflexible in its approach that some families are being priced out of updating their homes with safe and secure doors, windows etc?</p>	Councillor	A Healthy Place - <i>promote inclusivity for all.</i>
16	<p><u>Tree Policy</u></p>	Councillor	A Healthy Place – <i>protect and improve our environment</i>