

# **ADULT SERVICES AND PUBLIC HEALTH COMMITTEE**

## **MINUTES AND DECISION RECORD**

**4 December 2025**

The meeting commenced at 10.00 am in the Civic Centre, Hartlepool

**Present:**

Councillor: Gary Allen (In the Chair)

Councillors: Ed Doyle, Ged Hall, Sue Little, and Aaron Roy

Parish Council representatives:

Scott Gaiety, Headland Parish Council

Also present: Councillor Amanda Napper

Adrian Green, Independent Chair, Teeswide Safeguarding Adults Board

Officers: Jill Harrison, Executive Director of Adult Services and Public Health  
Chris Woodcock, Director of Public Health  
Claire Robinson, Public Health Principal  
Julian Heward and Kieran Homer, Communications and Marketing Team  
Angela Armstrong, Principal Democratic Services and Legal Support Officer

### **9. Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Fiona Cook and Moss Boddy.

### **10. Declarations of Interest**

None.

### **11. Minutes of the meeting held on 6 November 2025**

Received.

## **12. Teeswide Safeguarding Adults Board Annual Report and Strategic Business Plan (Executive Director of Adult Services and Public Health and Independent Chair of Teeswide Safeguarding Adults Board)**

### **Type of decision**

For information.

### **Purpose of report**

To present the Teeswide Safeguarding Adults Board Annual Report 2024/25 and Strategic Plan for 2025-2028.

### **Issue(s) for consideration**

The Independent Chair of the Teeswide Safeguarding Adults Board (TSAB) presented a detailed and comprehensive Annual Report that provided an outline of the role, membership and structure of the Board along with the Board's priorities. A number of key achievements were outlined in the report along with safeguarding data for 2024/25. It was noted that there had been a 7% increase in safeguarding concerns received with a 3% increase in Section 42 Enquiries being carried out. Further details on the type of Section 42 Enquiries and Concerns that had been raised were included within the report. It was highlighted that 96% of the concluded Section 42 Enquiries had resulted in action being taken with an outcome of 76% having risk reduced, 19% having risk removed with 5% where risk remained.

There had been a significant amount of communication and engagement undertaken including awareness raising campaigns, increasing the number of Safeguarding Champions, continuing to expand the Safe Place Scheme and the continued involvement of individuals with lived experience to directly influence the work and priorities of the Board. The results of the Annual Survey undertaken in 2023/24 were outlined in the report with 163 members of the public responding. Feedback received from this survey was included within the report and had helped to inform the work of the Board for 2024/25. The Board continued to deliver its existing multi-agency training programme as well as commissioning additional courses where available.

It was noted that there had been a number of Safeguarding Adult Reviews (SARs) considered during 2024/25 with 3 reports published. The report concluded with an outline of partner activity being undertaken along with the priorities for 2025/26 which were to be implemented as part of a 3-year Strategic Plan for 2025 - 2028.

Members were pleased to note the partnership working with safeguarding concerns being raised by a number of organisations. A discussion ensued on self-neglect and hoarding. The Chair of the TSAB indicated that

hoarding can be linked to self-neglect with 1.5% of the national population being affected by a hoarding disorder. Hoarding was a serious condition and was difficult to manage and affected people psychologically and physically. The Executive Director of Adult Services and Public Health added that there was a service commissioned in Hartlepool for people who were experiencing this condition which provided both psychological and practical support and had achieved some positive outcomes for people.

In response to a question from a Member, the Independent Chair of TSAB recognised work was ongoing to understand new communities within the Teeswide area raising awareness of what it means to have care and support needs and what the safeguarding process involves. The process for recording Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS) was discussed and it was noted that the data collected for DoLS was the number of applications received. It was noted that there were proposals being considered nationally to replace the current DoLS system.

It was noted that the work on rough sleeping was being developed by a number of partner agencies with the aim of reducing the number of persistent rough sleepers through ongoing wellbeing support and ultimately access to accommodation.

The Chair referred to the Safeguarding Champions and recognised the positive work that people were doing within a wide range of organisations. The Independent Chair of the TSAB indicated that additional Safeguarding Champions were always welcomed and that TSAB provided significant support to encourage this. The Chair thanked the Independent Chair of the TSAB for presenting such a detailed and comprehensive report. The Executive Director of Adult Services and Public Health and the Head of Service, Specialist Services and Safeguarding were commended for their work alongside the TSAB in safeguarding adults.

### **Decision**

The Teeswide Safeguarding Adults Board Annual Report 2024/25 and the Teeswide Safeguarding Adults Board Strategic Business Plan for 2025/2028 were approved.

## **13. Development of a Domestic Abuse Strategy (Executive Director of Adult Services and Public Health)**

### **Type of decision**

Key Decision – Test (ii) applies – ACBS 110/26

## **Purpose of report**

To provide the Committee with an opportunity to comment on the draft Domestic Abuse Strategy and to seek approval to consult on the draft strategy prior to it being adopted.

## **Issue(s) for consideration**

The Domestic Abuse Needs Assessment 2024/25 reviewed the level of need for domestic abuse services including:

- Safe accommodation;
- The extent of unmet need and gaps in provision; and
- Effectiveness of current service provision.

The following three key strategic aims had been identified through the needs assessment process:

1. There is an insufficient availability of support services for victims and survivors of domestic abuse, particularly for those who are hidden from services or have complex needs. This limits early intervention and identification of domestic abuse, recovery, and long-term safety.
2. Children affected by domestic abuse are not consistently recognised as victims in their own right, and current services are not always responsive to their needs—whether in the home, in their own relationships, or in cases of child/adolescent to parent violence and abuse (CAPVA).
3. There is a lack of consistent accountability for perpetrators of domestic abuse, and existing intervention services may not be sufficiently effective in changing behaviour or reducing repeat offending.

In response to a question from a Member, the Public Health Principal indicated that work was ongoing across a range of agencies to increase the sample size for the consultation and to consider how best to engage as a lot of domestic violence is hidden, such as children to parental. The Public Health Principal added that it was important to evidence the need in Hartlepool as the data collected and assessments undertaken will inform the national funding received and assist partners in identifying where there were gaps in provision. It was noted that Harbour was commissioned as part of this work and did provide support locally to people subject to domestic violence.

## **Decision**

The consultation process for the draft strategy was approved and it was noted that the final Domestic Abuse Strategy would be presented to Committee in March 2026 for approval.

## 17. Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) 2026/27 to 2029/30 (Director of Finance, IT and Digital and Executive Director of Adult Services and Public Health)

### Type of decision

Budget and Policy Framework

### Purpose of report

To provide an update on the MTFP and to enable the Committee to scrutinise/comment on the savings proposals referred from the Finance and Corporate Affairs Committee.

### Issue(s) for consideration

The Executive Director of Adult Services and Public Health presented the report which reiterated that all councils across the country were facing significant financial challenges owing to the impact of inflation and demand on services along with historic inadequate increases in government funding to meet these challenges. As outlined at Finance and Corporate Affairs Committee in November, the Council had a forecast budget deficit of £8.572m for 2026/27 and £20.591m over the full MTFP period.

As in previous years, addressing the deficit needed to be managed through budget saving actions which sought to minimise the impact on services where possible and limited use of reserves. With regard to savings, proposals totalling £4.117m had been proposed for 2026/27. Pending publication of the local government finance settlement in late December, the acceptance of the proposals for 2026/27 would leave a remaining budget gap of £4.300m. This would mean the budget could not be signed off as robust without significant increased Government funding, further significant budget cuts or savings and/or an increase in Council Tax for 2026/27.

An outline of individual departmental savings was provided with further details provided in Appendix B. The proposals within the remit of this Committee related to sustainability and fees and charges

Financial Assessment Reviews  
2026/27 - £250,000

Use of technology to reduce ASC costs  
2026/27 - £250,000 and 2027/28 - £150,000

Fees and Charges Review  
2026/27 - £164,000 and 2027/28 - £64,000

A discussion ensued on the proposed savings and some concerns were raised in relation to the increase in fees and charges. The Executive

Director of Adult Services and Public Health acknowledged that identifying potential savings had been very challenging especially given that significant savings had been delivered in previous years. Members were reassured that the fees and charges referred to in the report were part of a means tested financial assessment process with support provided to individuals to maximise benefits during the financial assessment process. The Executive Director of Adult Services and Public Health added that the biggest element of the savings from fees and charges related to appointeeships. This concerns people who receive adult social care support but do not have the capacity, or any family members, to manage their finances. Assistance to manage their finances was provided by Adult Social Care and the proposed administrative fee would partly offset the associated costs. It was proposed that fees were matched with those charged by Money Care to ensure an equitable approach.

The Chair recognised that there was an ageing population and that more people were likely to need support in the form of appointeeships in the future, meaning that the current approach is unsustainable. The Chair also commented that the use of new technology had the potential to be a game changer delivering improved outcomes for people and supporting them to be independent for longer. It was recognised that not everyone would wish to pursue this option and noted that the use of new technology would be optional.

### **Decision**

The savings proposals detailed in Appendix B relating to the services within this Committee portfolio were approved to be reported back to Finance and Corporate Affairs Committee on 19 January 2026.

The meeting concluded at 11.05am

**H MARTIN**

**DIRECTOR OF LEGAL, GOVERNANCE AND HUMAN RESOURCES**

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