

2023/24

**Equality, Diversity
and Inclusion
Report**



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Introduction

As a Council, we are committed to challenging discrimination and promoting equality of opportunity in all aspects of our work. Our approach to Equality Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) outlines our commitment as an employer, as a service provider, and as a community leader. We aim to focus on people who access our services by looking at their whole identity and recognising and valuing that each individual resident, visitor, partner, service provider, service user and employee is unique. The Council is committed to promoting a community and organisational culture that fully respects and values everyone's differences and needs.

We are clear that EDI should influence how we act as an employer; how we develop, evaluate and review our policies; how we design, deliver and evaluate services, and how we commission and procure from others. Equality Impact Assessments form an integral part of our decision making process and reports to Council and all Council Committees must demonstrate how EDI has been considered in the proposals being brought forward so that Elected Members can make informed decisions. Procurement and commissioning activities also require consideration of EDI as a matter of routine.

As a Council we take all complaints seriously and they are responded to following the Council's agreed Corporate Complaints, Comments and Compliments Procedure. The outcome of complaint investigations and lessons learned from complaints are actioned and monitored. Any complaints relating to equality characteristics are considered by senior managers. We are also keen to understand the views of our local community and to involve them in shaping our services through our consultation and engagement activities. We recognise that some people may have difficulties accessing traditional consultations and we endeavour to be as open and inclusive as possible. Where individuals face barriers to being involved we are keen to work with them to identify alternative methods for engagement or provide additional support to enable them to be involved e.g. sign language interpreters or easy read formats of documents.

The information collected through consultation helps to inform the Council when it is thinking about things like changing services, checking on how well services are performing and deciding what should be the Council's priorities in the future. People can access consultations through the Council's Your Say, Our Future site.

Within our EDI Policy, agreed in March 2023, we have extended our approach to EDI beyond the 9 legally protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010 to also give consideration to those who are care leavers and the Armed Forces Community (as established in our Armed Forces Covenant). We also consider inequality related to poverty and disadvantage recognising that this relates to individuals as well as children and families.

Through the publication of this Equality Report we aim to demonstrate our compliance with the Public Sector Equality Duty with regard to people affected by our policies and practices and our employees. We are also using this report to publish our gender pay gap data.

Hartlepool Population Equality Fact File

Data from the 2024 Mid-Year Population Estimates, England and Wales, published by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) in July 2024

Total Population = 95,366

Population aged 16+ = 77,311

Households = 40,930 (Source: Census 2021, ONS)

Sex:

Percentage of the total population who are male = 48.7%

Percentage of the total population who are female = 51.3%

Percentage of population aged 16+ who are male = 48.0%

Percentage of population aged 16+ who are female = 52.0%

Age:

Total population broken down by age bracket (percentage)	Male only population broken down by age bracket (percentage)	Female only population broken down by age bracket (percentage)
15 and under = 18.9%	15 and under = 20.1%	15 and under = 17.8%
16 – 25 = 11.3%	16 – 25 = 11.5%	16 – 25 = 11.0%
26 – 35 = 12.5%	26 – 35 = 12.3%	26 – 35 = 12.7%
36 – 45 = 11.8%	36 – 45 = 11.5%	36 – 45 = 12.1%
46 – 55 = 12.2%	46 – 55 = 12.2%	46 – 55 = 12.2%
56 – 65 = 14.4%	56 – 65 = 14.5%	56 – 65 = 14.4%
66 – 75 = 10.7%	66 – 75 = 10.8%	66 – 75 = 10.6%
76 – 85 = 6.0%	76 – 85 = 5.5%	76 – 85 = 6.5%
86 and over = 2.1%	86 and over = 1.5%	86 and over = 2.6%

Data from the Census 2021, produced by the Office for National Statistics (ONS)

Ethnicity:

Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh = 1.7%

Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or African = 0.5%

Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups = 0.7%

White = 96.5%

Other ethnic group = 0.6%

Religion:

Christian = 52.5%

Buddhist = 0.2%

Hindu = 0.2%

Jewish = 0.0%

Muslim = 1.3%

Sikh = 0.2%

Other religion = 0.3%

No religion = 40.1%

Not answered = 5.1%

Disability:

Long-term health problem of disability where day-to-day activities are limited a lot = 11.4%

Long-term health problem of disability where day-to-day activities are limited a little = 11.5%

Day-to-day activities not limited = 77.1%

Gender:

Gender identity the same as sex registered at birth = 94.5%

Gender identity different from sex registered at birth = 0.4%

Not answered = 5.1%

Sexual Orientation:

Straight or Heterosexual = 91.1%

Gay or Lesbian = 1.5%

Bisexual = 1.1%

Other Sexual Orientation = 0.2%

Not answered = 6.1%

Other areas of priority from the Council's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy:

Armed Forces:

Proportion of usual residents who previously served in UK regular armed forces = 4.1%

Data from the Census 2021, produced by the Office for National Statistics (ONS)

Care Leavers:

Total number of care leavers aged 17 to 18 = 34

Total number of care leavers aged 19 to 21 = 77

Total number of care leavers aged 22 to 25 = 93

Data from the annual SSDA903 Children Looked After Return as at 31st March 2023 (reporting year 1st April 2022 to 31st March 2023)

Poverty and Disadvantage:

Percentage of children living in families with less than 60% of the median UK household income, after housing costs have been taken into account = 32.9%*

Data from Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) 2022/23

* Please note that there are concerns about the robustness of the data provided above which is based on Households Below Average Income (HBAI) data from DWP. Confidence issues have been identified with the HBAI data in recent years due to data collection issues during the pandemic which led to it being calculated on a 2-year average rather than the usual 3-year rolling average. In addition there were changes to the fieldwork methodology used during the pandemic and there have been concerns around falling survey response rates post-pandemic which are not uniform across regions. As the smallest region the North East can be more subject to sample fluctuations than other parts of the country. In addition this data only reflects those households with children and our focus on poverty and disadvantage extends to the whole population not just this particular section. Investigation work will be undertaken over the next few months to identify a better indicator to demonstrate population level poverty and disadvantage.

Hartlepool Borough Council Workforce Equality

This section of the report provides a summary and analysis of Hartlepool Borough Council's workforce, excluding Local Authority Maintained Schools. The workforce profile is shown as at 31st March 2024, while the data is for the period 1st April 2023 to 31st March 2024. The data included in this section of the report is based on individuals and their main posts in the Council, excluding Local Authority Maintained Schools, and not workers e.g. casuals. Therefore, where an individual holds more than one post with the Council (e.g. multiple part time positions) they will only be included once.

Hartlepool Borough Council's aim is to have a workforce that reflects the diversity of our residents, customers and stakeholders and we recognise that promoting equality benefits public services for all.

The Council has a legal duty under the Equality Act 2010 to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation, advance equality of opportunity and promote good relations between people. As part of this Act, the public sector equality duty requires the Council to show how it is meeting its responsibilities as an employer, including a requirement to publish information regarding our workforce. This report forms part of the Council's response to that duty, providing a summary and analysis of Hartlepool Borough Council's workforce against protected characteristics.

Our workforce profile compared to the community we serve

Hartlepool Population		Hartlepool Borough Council Workforce
<p>Population = 95,366*</p> <p>*of which 77,311 are aged 16+</p> <p>(Source: 2024 Mid-Year Population Estimates, England and Wales, published by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) in July 2024)</p>	Headcount	<p>Employees working for HBC = 2,113</p>
<p>Male = 47.98%*</p> <p>Female = 52.02%*</p> <p>* Percentage of population aged 16+</p> <p>(Source: 2024 Mid-Year Population Estimates, England and Wales, published by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) in July 2024)</p>	Sex	<p>Male = 26.55%</p> <p>Female = 73.45%</p>
<p>66+ = 23.22%*</p> <p>56-65 = 17.8%*</p> <p>46-55 = 15.09%*</p> <p>36-45 = 14.56%*</p> <p>26-35 = 15.42%*</p> <p>16-25 = 13.91%*</p> <p>* Percentage of population aged 16+</p> <p>(Source: 2024 Mid-Year Population Estimates, England and Wales, published by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) in July 2024)</p>	Age	<p>66+ = 3.12%</p> <p>56-65 = 27.40%</p> <p>46-55 = 25.22%</p> <p>36-45 = 20.35%</p> <p>26-35 = 18.13%</p> <p>16-25 = 5.77%</p>

Hartlepool Population		Hartlepool Borough Council Workforce
<p>Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh = 1.7%</p> <p>Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or African = 0.5%</p> <p>Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups = 0.7%</p> <p>White = 96.5%</p> <p>Other ethnic group = 0.6%</p> <p>(Source: ONS Census 2021)</p>	Ethnicity	<p>BME = 0.85%</p> <p>White / Other = 68.10%</p> <p>Undeclared = 31.10%</p>
<p>Christian = 52.5%</p> <p>Buddhist = 0.2%</p> <p>Hindu = 0.2%</p> <p>Jewish = 0.0%</p> <p>Muslim = 1.3%</p> <p>Sikh = 0.2%</p> <p>Other religion = 0.3%</p> <p>No religion = 40.1%</p> <p>Not answered = 5.1%</p> <p>(Source: ONS Census 2021)</p>	Religion / Beliefs	<p>Christian = 21.25%</p> <p>Buddhist = 0%</p> <p>Hindu = 0%</p> <p>Jewish = 0%</p> <p>Muslim = Suppressed, less than 5</p> <p>Sikh = Suppressed, less than 5</p> <p>Other religion = 1.18%</p> <p>Not stated = 56.79%</p> <p>Prefer not to say = 1.33%</p> <p>None = 19.26%</p>
<p>Long-term health problem of disability where day-to-day activities are limited a lot = 11.4%</p> <p>Long-term health problem of disability where day-to-day activities are limited a little = 11.5%</p> <p>Day-to-day activities not limited = 77.1%</p> <p>(Source: ONS Census 2021)</p>	Disability	<p>Disabled = 1.94%</p> <p>Not disabled = 60.10%</p> <p>Undeclared = 37.96%</p>

Our workforce profile in 2023/24 compared to our workforce profile in 2022/23

Hartlepool Borough Council Workforce 2022/23		Hartlepool Borough Council Workforce 2023/24
Employees working for HBC = 2,044	Headcount	Employees working for HBC = 2,113
Male = 27.64% Female = 72.36%	Sex	Male = 26.55% Female = 73.45%
66+ = 3.33% 56-65 = 27.54% 46-55 = 26.76% 36-45 = 19.86% 26-35 = 16.88% 16-25 = 5.63%	Age	66+ = 3.12% 56-65 = 27.40% 46-55 = 25.22% 36-45 = 20.35% 26-35 = 18.13% 16-25 = 5.77%
BME = 0.64% White / Other = 67.22% Undeclared = 32.14%	Ethnicity	BME = 0.85% White / Other = 68.10% Undeclared = 31.05%
Christian = 20.50% Buddhist = 0% Hindu = 0% Jewish = 0% Muslim = Suppressed, less than 5 Sikh = 0% Other religion = 1.13% Not stated = 60.52% Prefer not to say = 1.47%	Religion / Beliefs	Christian = 21.25% Buddhist = Suppressed, less than 5% Hindu = 0% Jewish = 0% Muslim = Suppressed, less than 5% Sikh = Suppressed, less than 5% Other religion = 1.18% No religion = 19.26% Not stated = 56.79% Prefer not to say = 1.33%
Disabled = 1.86% Not disabled = 59.49% Undeclared = 38.65%	Disability	Disabled = 1.94% Not disabled = 60.10% Undeclared = 37.96%

^ Please note due to rounding this does not add up to 100%

Workforce Summary

The data highlights that:

- Almost 60% of the workforce are over 45 years old and over a quarter of the workforce are over 55 years old. The aging profile of our workforce is recognised and we are making plans to support succession planning and the development of future leaders and managers in the organisation. This profile has not changed significantly from the previous year;
- We have a predominantly female workforce which can in part be attributed to a greater number of female part-time workers across the Council and the flexible/family friendly working policies available to Council workers;
- Limited information has been provided by our employees in relation to their ethnicity, religion/beliefs and disability status. Employees have the ability to update their own personal details online through the Council's HR/Payroll system and provided a paper form is available for those employees without access to the internet at work. This has resulted in a small reduction in the percentage of employees undeclared/not stated for ethnicity and religion/beliefs. However, further promotion work will be undertaken in 2023/24 in an attempt to further improve this data.

Recruitment

The following table sets out the profile of the 1,940 internal/external applicants, applying for job vacancies with the Council, during 2023/24 and how this compares with the previous year:

	Applications Received 2022/23	Applications Received 2023/24
Sex	Male = 30.91% Female = 55.27% Unknown = 13.82%	Male = 29.02% Female = 57.68% Unknown = 13.30%
Age	65+ over = 3.11% 56-65 = 8.90% 46-55 = 14.58 % 36-45 = 22.01% 26-35 = 27.53% 16-25 = 23.87%	65+ over = 0.31% 56-65 = 6.34% 46-55 = 13.87% 36-45 = 19.79% 26-35 = 31.13% 16-25 = 28.56%
Ethnicity	BME = 4.53% White / Other = 69.58% Undeclared = 25.89%	BME = 7.27% White / Other = 69.02% Undeclared = 23.71%
Disability	Disabled = 2.79% Not disabled = 68.27% Undeclared = 28.92%	Disabled = 2.94% Not disabled = 69.59% Undeclared = 27.47%

Recruitment Summary

The data highlights that:

- The majority of applicants were female (57.68%).
- Over half of the applicants were aged 35 and under.
- The percentage of BME applicants had increased compared to the previous year.
- There is no change to the percentage of disabled applicants compared to the previous year.

Leavers

The following table sets out the profile of the 267 employees who left the Council during 2023/24:

Sex	Male = 32.96% Female = 67.04%
Age	66+ = 9.36% 56-65 = 27.34% 46-55 = 15.73% 36-45 = 16.10% 26-35 = 16.10% 16-25 = 15.36%
Ethnicity	BME = Suppressed, less than 5 White / Other = 65.54 % Undeclared = 33.71%
Religion / Beliefs	Christian = 17.60% Other religion = Suppressed, less than 5 No religion = 21.35% Not stated = 57.68% Prefer not to say = Suppressed, less than 5
Disability	Disabled = 2.62% Not disabled = 59.55% Undeclared = 37.83%

Leavers Summary

The data highlights that:

- The turnover rate of the Council for 2023/24 was 12.86%.
- Of those who left the organisation:
 - Suppressed, less than 5 left by redundancy (includes voluntary & compulsory)
 - 45.69% (122) left by voluntary resignation
 - 16.48% (44) left to retire
 - 36.70% (98) left for other reasons

Gender Pay Gap

The Council's mean gender pay gap:

2023/24	2022/23
-1.69%	-0.39%

The Council's median gender pay gap:

2023/24	2022/23
0.74%	0.25%

The mean is the average of the figures and is calculated by adding up all the figures and divided by the total number of figures. The median is the salary figure that sits in the middle when all figures are ordered lowest to highest.

The overall mean gender pay gap for the Council is -1.69%, which means that female employees, overall, receive, on average, 1.69% more total pay than male employees.

The Council's gender pay gap falls well below the national public sector mean and median of 11.5% and 14% respectively*.

* Data Source: ONS 2023 Provisional Public Sector Gender Pay Gap

Understanding our gender pay gap

This year the pay gap has seen a reduction resulting in female employees receiving more total pay than male employees do. This can be attributed to the higher percentage pay increase, applied to the Councils lowest paid employees, combined with a greater proportion of the lower paid employees being female.

What are doing to ensure our 'pay gap' does not increase?

- Making the workplace more accessible, by enabling greater flexibility via a range of policies that allow for flexible working, flexitime, emergency dependants leave and shared parental leave.

- Equality in Employment Policy recognises the value of ‘helping all those who work for the Council to develop their full potential so that the talents and resources of the workforce are utilised fully to create a borough of opportunity for all.’
- Continue to provide Learning and development opportunities to all employees and where appropriate.
- Continue to develop and where possible expand apprenticeship opportunities, including degree level apprenticeships for both new and existing employees. This will assist employees to fulfil their aspirations and support them to progress within their chosen career path.
- Monitor the annual review process to ensure employees are provided with the opportunity to discuss any concerns with their manager and identify development opportunities.

<u>Gender Pay Gap – Quartile Analysis by Employee</u>					
	Total	Female	Male	Female (%)	Male (%)
Lower Quartile	528	443	85	83.90%	16.10%
Lower Middle Quartile	528	348	180	65.91%	34.09%
Upper Middle Quartile	528	376	152	71.78%	28.79%
Upper Quartile	529	385	144	72.45%	27.22%
Total	2113	1552	561	72.45%	26.55%

Consultation and Employee Engagement

Consultation with Trade Unions

The Council works in partnership with Trade Unions and meets regularly to discuss issues affecting the Council and its workforce, including matters in relation to equality. The Trade Unions can also provide a range of support to their members on individual workplace or personal issues.

Employee Engagement

We are committed to employee engagement and seek to ensure that the right conditions are in place for all members of our workforce to give of their best each day. We want our employees to be committed to our organisational goals and values and be motivated to contribute to the overall success of the organisation whilst being supported to enhance their own sense of well-being.

There are various ways in which we undertake employee engagement and some approaches vary between departments. Whole Council engagement activities that are delivered corporately include:

Executive Leadership Team (ELT) Roadshows

ELT Roadshows are held throughout the year and are an open to all employees. Multiple sessions are held across 2 weeks and all are led by a member of ELT covering the same content. The sessions are delivered at different times and days and at a range of venues across Hartlepool to enable as many employees as possible to attend. There is also an online session included which is recorded and made available for any employees unable to attend.

ELT Roadshows provide an opportunity to hear first-hand about emerging areas of Council work such as the budget setting process or development of the Council Plan. They are also an opportunity for employees to ask questions of senior managers and get involved in activities to inform the development of Council policy such as Hybrid Working.

Hartlepool Borough Council (HBC) Managers Forum

The HBC Manager Forums provides regular online briefing / discussion sessions with all employees who have managerial responsibility. It is chaired by the Managing Director. Recent sessions have covered the Big Conversation (the Council's consultation and engagement exercise to inform

the new Council Plan), a budget update, the employee health and wellbeing programme and the Council's Values and Behaviours.

Annual Employee Survey

An employee survey was undertaken in autumn 2023 and the findings and corresponding action plan to address areas identified for improvement have been shared. In future employee surveys will be undertaken once a year to benchmark progress.

Staff Equality Network

The aim of the Staff Equality Network is to facilitate direct engagement with employees representing the full range of protected characteristics. The network also welcomes employees who actively support the promotion of equality and diversity or who have a specific personal interest in the subject area.

Your Say Staff Hub

Our online Staff Hub available to all staff via the Council's consultation and engagement platform. Only employees can access the Staff Hub and it is used to share employee specific consultation for example the development of our hybrid working policy or quick polls on specific topics of interest. The Staff Hub also provides host to a mental health hub, menopause hub, cost of living crisis support hub and the equality network hub.

Update on the Council's Equality Objectives 2021/22 – 2023/24

Since our first equality objectives were published in April 2012 we have based them on the strategic objectives set out in our Council Plan. By doing this we demonstrate that EDI is a core part of what we do as an organisation and not an add on activity. The Council's vision is set out in our Council Plan 2021/22-2023/24 and our equality objectives are:

Hartlepool will be a place...

...where people are enabled to live healthy, independent and prosperous lives;

...where those who are vulnerable will be safe and protected from harm;

...of resilient and resourceful communities with opportunities for all;

...that is sustainable, clean, safe and green;

...that has an inclusive and growing economy;

...with a Council that is ambitious, fit for purpose and reflects the diversity of its community.

Progress made in 2023/24

Hartlepool will be a place where people are enabled to live healthy, independent and prosperous lives.

Water Well Being Accreditation

Mill House Leisure Centre is one of only 18 sites across England to gain Water Well Being Accreditation. The scheme reflects an on-going commitment to provide high-quality opportunities for people who are inactive and/or have long-term health conditions to become physically active in water.

Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) Programme

The Holiday and Activities Food programme is now fully embedded in the business of Children's Services and delivered during the three long school holidays (Easter, Summer and Christmas). The HAF provides free activities and a healthy meal for children and young people from low income families. The reach and uptake from these families is increasing as the booking system has been developed to offer places to children eligible for free school meals in the first instance before making the offer more widely available.

During 2023/24 there were 37 providers delivering 794 sessions over 117 clubs with 19,050 attendances from children across the Easter, Summer and Christmas holiday programmes. Provision scored highly in terms of quality assurance and feedback indicates a near 100% would attend future provision.

Poverty Investigation by Audit and Governance Committee

The investigation into poverty has been completed and recommendations have been agreed by Elected Members. A poverty action plan is now in place which includes plans to progress to adoption of the Socio Economic Duty together with robust impact assessments that ensure socio economically disadvantaged residents are not unnecessarily affected by council policies, procedures and plans.

Joint Sensory Support Plan

A Joint Sensory Support Plan has been co-produced with local organisations and people with lived experience. The plan highlights the support currently in place for residents of Hartlepool with sensory loss, single and combined, and members of the Deaf Community, recommends a set of actions to fill gaps revealed during the consultations and recommends further collaborative work as we continue to emerge from the pandemic and economic crisis.

Hartlepool will be a place where people are enabled to live healthy, independent and prosperous lives.

Waterfront connectivity (Towns Deal)

Phase 1 of the Waterfront Connectivity Project is complete including accessible ramps at the rear of Tees and Hartlepool Yacht club including a new tarmac / ultracrete footpath along the promenade and a new tarmac footpath along the water's edge.

Good Boost for Leisure Users

The implementation of Good Boost technology for leisure users is seeing a positive impact on long term health conditions and wellbeing. Good Boost is a social enterprise that provides affordable and accessible therapeutic exercise programmes, through cutting-edge technology. The programmes are designed to be beneficial and fun for people with a wide range of musculo-skeletal (MSK) conditions, including arthritis and back pain.

The People Power of Purpose (PPP)

The aim of the People Power of Purpose is a course developed to inspire people with additional needs to find a purpose in life, in a vocational sense, and develop a circle of support.

The PPP brought together a group of people who were informed and inspired about the power of having a purpose. Over the summer of 2023, the group explored finding their own unique meaningful purpose in life and started building their confidence and developing plans on how they could get to where they wanted to be.

After celebrating the successful completion of the course, the group have gone on to get involved in a range of activities including volunteering with, for example, the local football team, in a care home and in the local hospital.

Supported Internships

Supported internships are a structured, work-based study programme for 16 to 24-year-olds with SEND, who have an education, health and care (EHC) plan. The core aim of a supported internship study programme is a substantial work placement, facilitated by the support of an expert job coach.

The Department for Education commissioned the National Development Team for Inclusion (NDTI), in partnership with the British Association of Supported Internship (BASE) and DfN Project Search to support more young people with

Hartlepool will be a place where people are enabled to live healthy, independent and prosperous lives.

additional needs to have greater choice and control over their future, opening up opportunities that prepare them for adult life and independent living.

HBC has become a host organisation for Supported Internships. Working with DfN Project Search and Jobs and Skills as education provider, our first cohort of 5 young people with additional needs started the programme in September 2023. The group have successfully completed their first placement.

The Support Hub – wellbeing offer

Provides the opportunity for residents to participate in a range of social and physical activities that encourage a more active lifestyle. The sessions are open to all adults living with a long term condition that limits their activities of daily living.

The sessions are group activities or 1:1 face to face personalised programmes of support all with a focus on:

- Reducing falls and fall related fractures
- Improving functional ability so supporting independence
- Improving muscle strength and better balance and coordination

Available sessions/activities include:

- The Moto-med stationary specialist exercise cycle
- Steady Feet Programme
- Healthy Hearts Circuit
- Chair based exercise
- Neurological group exercise session
- Exercise therapy room

Household Support Fund (HSF)

Funded by the Department for Work and Pensions, this grant is targeted at relieving the cost of living crisis through support towards food, energy and household goods. Working in conjunction with the voluntary and community sector, the council has over the past year reached more than 20,000 people providing shopping vouchers, cash payments, energy top ups, household goods, support with housing costs to alleviate risks of eviction.

Hartlepool will be a place where people are enabled to live healthy, independent and prosperous lives.

Home Library Service

The mental health benefits of reading cannot be underestimated and the home library service ensures that everyone is able to engage with reading material for as long as possible through physical books and audiobooks. The service is available to people who are housebound due to ill health, infirmity or lack of transport. In 2023/24 an average of 376 people benefited from the home library service.

Young Men's Better Mental Health Group

The Young Men's Better Mental Health Group is a weekly social inclusion project for men aged 18-35 which takes place at Hartlepool's Community Hub Central, aiming to lower the impact of social isolation on men's mental health.

Bread and Butter Thing

The Bread and Butter Thing- providing nutritious affordable food to residents at locations across Hartlepool. We host at Community Hub Central and Community Hub South.

English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL)

The Council's Jobs & Skills Service deliver a range of ESOL courses which offer more than just learning basic English skills, they are designed to empower individuals from diverse backgrounds to thrive in an interconnected world. Our ESOL curriculum goes beyond grammar and vocabulary; it offers a gateway to increasing confidence, career advancement, and those all-important meaningful connections. Whether you are navigating a new country, looking to pursue higher education, or aiming to excel in your career, proficiency in English is fundamental. The ESOL courses we offer are delivered in a supportive and immersive learning environment where you will not only master language skills but also embrace a vibrant environment in the Community Hubs.

- Piloted a bespoke model of delivering ESOL which combined the qualification with enrichment so the learners and their families are supported to integrate in our communities. This will be expanded in 2024/25 as it has been successful with strong attendance, achievement and progress alongside being praised by funders, stakeholders and Ofsted.
- Created new partnerships with community groups such as The Link CIC and to provide enrichment opportunities for learners so they can continue

Hartlepool will be a place where people are enabled to live healthy, independent and prosperous lives.

using their language skills outside of the classroom whilst also allowing us to create stronger communities within Hartlepool.

All of our ESOL learners are part of our community studying and socialising with everyone from a broad range of cultures. They have the opportunity to be involved in a range of activities, both inside and outside the Community Hubs to enrich their learning, volunteer and gain new experiences.

Independent Living

The Council's Jobs & Skills Service in partnership with the Leaving Care Team are delivering the Staying Close Independent Living Programme. This is focused on helping looked-after children aged 16 to 24 years old make a successful transition to adulthood. There are a range of fun and exciting topics being delivered as part of the programme including:

- Earning and spending money
- Keeping track of your money
- Making financial choices
- Health and wellbeing
- Cooking on a budget
- Practical cooking skills
- Cleaning skills
- Career management and preparing for the world of work

All of the young people are then allocated a dedicated Careers Advisor who supports them throughout their next steps including looking for work, apprenticeships or making informed choices about further education. This model will be expanded in 2024/25.

Hartlepool will be a place where those who are vulnerable will be safe and protected from harm.

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

The SEND strategy and the Inclusion Statement of Intent are integrated and we are working to strengthen the inclusiveness of all schools to support more children in Hartlepool with SEND to attend mainstream settings where it is in their interests to do so. To this end, we have recruited a Senior Adviser for

Hartlepool will be a place where those who are vulnerable will be safe and protected from harm.

Inclusive Learning and SEND to work with schools to strengthen their offer of what is 'ordinarily available' in schools.

In March 2023, Ofsted and CQC inspected the Hartlepool Local Area arrangements for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities. The final report of the inspection was published on 17th May 2023. The inspectors judged that the local area partnership's arrangements typically lead to positive experiences and outcomes for children and young people with SEND and summarised their findings as follows:

"Leaders, across education, health and social care, articulate their vision for children and young people with SEND well. Leaders understand the issues facing families in the local area. They are committed to providing person-centred services to meet individual needs. School and college leaders agree that there is a shared ambition to develop an inclusive approach to SEND provision across Hartlepool."

Hartlepool achieved the highest judgement and are currently the only area partnership in the country to do this.

Free School

Building work on the Free School for children with social, emotional and mental health needs is underway with an expected completion / opening date of September 2024. This project is led and delivered by the Department for Education.

Togetherall

Togetherall was launched in April providing a diverse and safe online community aimed at improving and maintaining mental wellbeing – a place where people can feel safe to share their feelings, support each other and start to feel better. This initiative has expanded the role and reach of peer support and is available to anyone over the age of 16 with a Hartlepool postcode.

Adult Social Care

A new service has been launched to support people who are experiencing or at risk of self-neglect or hoarding. The service is delivered through a collaborative approach involving three Hartlepool Voluntary & Community Sector

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organisations and offers deep cleans, house decluttering and psychological support utilising the Disabled Facilities Grant.

An independent peer review by Partners in Care and Health ([PiCH](#)) of adult safeguarding arrangements was completed in March 2023 it identified a number of areas of good practice including the daily Police and Community Safety huddles and the delivery of Community Led Support through Community Hubs. As a result of work supported by the Continuous Improvement Group we have further strengthened our First Contact arrangements for Adult Safeguarding and have implemented a new Power BI dashboard which gives us a greater understanding of our local population.

The Council has worked collaboratively with partners across the Tees Safeguarding Adults Board to complete a review of the Team Around the Individual approach and subsequently implemented a revised approach which has been re-launched as the High Risk Adult Panel (HRAP).

Changing Place Toilet (CPT) Facility

Construction 2 new Changing Place Toilet (CPT) facilities has taken place using capital funding from the Department for Levelling Up Homes and Communities. . The new facilities at the Central Hub and Seaton Carew are designed so that they are completely accessible and provide sufficient space and equipment for people who are not able to use the toilet independently. There are now 5 CPT registered facilities in Hartlepool with a plan to develop more in 2024/25 <https://www.changing-places.org/find>

Autism Accreditation

The National Autistic Society (NAS) accreditation for services provided at the Centre for Independent Living and Waverley Terrace Allotment was retained.

Support at Home

A new provider (Taking Care) has been commissioned to provide an assistive technology service and just over 3,000 people have been transferred from the previous provider. This will enable us to introduce improved technological solutions to meet people's needs more creatively going forward.

A new overnight home care service is being introduced to complement our assistive technology offer and help us to support more people in the community who have planned overnight support needs. This will enable people to live

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independently in their own homes for longer and will reduce the need for people to move into residential care.

Multi Agency Child Exploitation Hub

The Hub is now fully embedded within the Children's Hub and working with partners in real time to safeguard children and young people from exploitation and harm outside of the home. New meeting arrangements have been established to assess and manage the risks to children and young people from exploitation and engage parents and the extended family network in safety planning.

The Hartlepool and Stockton Safeguarding Children's Partnership undertook a multi-agency audit of the work within and found positive impact and improved outcomes secured for young people through the proactive work of the hub to safeguard them.

National Safeguarding Adults Week

Safeguarding Adults Week 2023 took place from Monday 20 – Friday 24 November 2023. It was an opportunity for organisations to come together to raise awareness of important safeguarding issues. The aim was to highlight key safeguarding key issues, start conversations and raise awareness of safeguarding best practice. The week was celebrated by bringing together safeguarding champions for a development and wellbeing event.

Learning Disability Week

"Do you see me?" is about challenging the barriers people with a learning disability face. Staff and people who use the services at the Centre for Independent Living (CIL) together with families supported the national Mencap campaign and celebrated the things people with a learning disability bring to society. We looked to challenge the barriers that people with a learning disability face, we talked about and celebrated the amazing things that people with a learning disability are doing in our community and finished with a wellbeing workshop at the end of the week, where people came together and enjoyed a Quiz with their friends and families.

Hartlepool will be a place where those who are vulnerable will be safe and protected from harm.

Bag Books at the Community Hubs

Community Hubs continue to deliver Bag Books – weekly multi-sensory books and storytelling sessions for children with severe or profound and multiple learning disabilities.

Hartlepool will be a place of resilient and resourceful communities with opportunities for all.

Poverty Truth Commission

Establishment of a Poverty Truth Commission with membership that include residents as well as young people. Facilitated by Thrive Teesside with support from the council's Poverty Action Group, this group of Hartlepool people aims to shine a light on hardship and normalise conversations around talking about life's struggles with the aim of communities helping each other through a network of Hartlepool Helpers, Community Champions and Navigators.

Hartlepool Art Gallery and Museum of Hartlepool

As part of our work in Poverty Proofing in Museums we are working through our action plan and campaigns for a cheap day out. We have provided 100 Christmas Activity Packs for Hartlepool Food Bank and all our family programming is free.

The following were also delivered:

- 6 Relaxed Opening session at Hartlepool Art Gallery engaging 33 participants using a range of sensory toys and aids.
- 2 Catcote Academy workshops in the gallery supporting their older students.
- Our Young Producers programme supported by Tees Valley Museum Group (TVMG) and Tees Valley Combined Authority (TVCA) holding 3 meetings and engaging 43 young people.
- A programme with Born2Be Youth Group.
- Participated in TVMG Togetherfest across the Tees Valley delivering two free workshops engaging 31 participants
- A Mini Pride with Curious Art at Hartlepool Art Gallery engaging 33 participants.
- Engaged 175 SEND pupils through school visits to our museum and gallery.

An independent Access Audit for Hartlepool Art Gallery was commissioned and are developing an action plan to implement recommendations. The deadline for the plan is August 2024. Consultation with TVMG Access group has also taken place regarding the redevelopment of the Museum of Hartlepool and Hartlepool Art Gallery and we will continue to engage with this group past March 2025.

Learning for Inclusion

The Council's Jobs & Skills Service lead on Learning for Inclusion which is part of the Adult Education Budget and is externally funded through the Tees Valley Combined Authority. The aim of the provision is to deliver informal learning, to engage adults and assist in addressing some of the key priorities in communities across Hartlepool. This provision allows us to co-create programmes with adults and, by working together with community partners, provide learning provision, which responds to local needs with a focus on key topics such as:

- Learning for personal development aimed at addressing the specific needs of individuals to tackle topics such as isolation, social exclusion, mental health and well-being
- Learning that aims to enhance community engagement and develop stronger communities whilst also responding to the priorities within communities across Hartlepool.
- Learning to support adults to overcome barriers which are impacting on their ability to move closer or into employment. This includes activities focused on digital skills, volunteering and budgeting.

The provision has supported over 600 people in 2023/24 and the outcomes are far ranging including progressing into employment, volunteering and formal learning such as Functional Skills. The ultimate impact is that it encourage positive participation and a lifelong love of learning leading to person centred, positive outcomes, new skills and learning opportunities for all.

Family Homework Clubs

In January 2024, the Council's Jobs & Skills and Community Hubs Teams launched weekly sessions to support children and their parents/carers with school homework, and their confidence and wellbeing in education. The ambition was to ensure that children and their parents/carers could learn together whilst promoting literacy, numeracy and the wider benefits from the Community Hubs such as the Library Service and Fab Lab.

This model started as a pilot for Ukrainian families in partnership with the Council's Resettlement Team and was then expanded to any parents/carers and

children across Hartlepool. The sessions are free and up to 60 people including parent/carers and school-aged children now attend each week on a Wednesday evening at Community Hub Central.

Learning Support

The Council's Jobs & Skills Service believes that learning should be available to everyone so we have dedicated supporting funding through the externally funded Adult Education Budget. This means that eligible adults aged 19+ can access support to overcome any supported to financial hardship or barriers to participation in learning including:

- Travel Costs
- Kit and Equipment
- Free Meals on Lesson Days
- Childcare

This has been essential in supporting more adults to access learning and, in 2023/24, over 1,400 learners have participated in formal and in-formal learning through the Jobs & Skills Service.

Hartlepool Youth Service

For the third year in a row Hartlepool Borough Council Youth Services won the Local Authority Commitment to LGBT Communities award at the LGBT Alliance Awards 2024.

Stand Together, a group of young people aged 13-18 supported by Hartlepool Youth Service, organised a day-long programme of events to mark Holocaust Memorial Day in January 2024. The group worked with two primary schools in Hartlepool to create candle holders from glass jars decorated to reflect communities. These were then displayed at the Community Hub Central and Community Hub South. People were invited to join a candle-lighting ceremony from home on the day. In addition series of leaflets were created around Refugees / Asylum Seekers / Migrants explaining what these terms mean and myth busting. A leaflet aimed at young people who are asylum seekers / refugees was also created and included information about where they can get support. There was also a special screening of "The Old Oak" a film about refugees coming to a Northern community and the young people involved invited members of the community to watch the production with them.

Community Hubs

Community Hubs continued the delivery of the Bookstart Programme which forms part of the Universal Reading Offer –providing free resources targeted to the most disadvantaged children in Hartlepool.

Community Hubs continue to offer an inclusive culture towards Community Volunteering opportunities, with 85 regular volunteers giving their time to support the Community Hubs offer.

A recent poll reported that volunteers felt:

- An increased sense of purpose (45% of people)
- Increased happiness (36%)
- Improved mental wellbeing (26%)
- Greater self-esteem and self-confidence (20%)
- Reduced stress (11%)

The libraries' LGBTQ+ book collection was promoted throughout LGBTQ+ History Month in February and during Pride month in June.

Just Transition to Net Zero

The Council partnered with the Institute of Community Studies to host 'Just Transition to Net Zero' workshops with community partners in July 2023 to ensure that the interests of those that are most affected by the low-carbon transition including vulnerable communities are considered in climate action.

Hartlepool will be a place that is sustainable, clean, safe and green.

Council Housing

The last period has seen the Council's Housing Revenue Account (HRA) take possession of 18 new units (10 houses and 8 bungalows) having been built by Keepmoat on Brenda Road. In total there are 358 homes within the Council's Housing Revenue Account available for social rent with 1 fully disabled adapted bungalow and a further 34 bungalows (many with level access showers).

E-Billing

Introduction of eBilling for Council Tax, Business Rates and BIDs, reducing the organisational carbon footprint through reduction of paper, printing and postage, and in turn making the service more accessible for residents.

Hartlepool will be a place that is sustainable, clean, safe and green.

Sustainable Warmth

Sustainable Warmth project completed with energy efficiency improvements and associated carbon reductions to 238 private homes at a value of around £2m

Net Zero

The Council adopted its first Net Zero Strategy and Action Plan in November 2023 setting out the pathway to reaching 'net zero' emissions from council services and operations by 2050. This will contribute to improving air quality and wider environmental improvements.

Hartlepool will be a place that has an inclusive and growing economy.

National Careers Week

A Business breakfast event was held in March in conjunction with Hartlepool Sixth Form College as part of National Careers Week at Sixth Form.

Tall Ships

Successful delivery of Hartlepool Tall Ships Races 2023 attracting over 300,000 visitors and 38 visiting ships from across the world, with 85 local young people aged 15-25 supported to access the opportunity of a lifetime to sail on a Tall Ship.

Summer at Seaton

Summer at Seaton activities and promotion delivered in July 2023 to encourage families to visit Seaton.

Healthy workforce Week

This was held in January to promote health & wellbeing to businesses and their workforce.

Hartlepool Business Awards

The first business awards ceremony celebrating the success of Hartlepool businesses was held since 2019. Awards included Community Business of the Year which was won by Hartlepool Reloved Clothing which aims to relieve poverty by providing access to free clothing, including school uniforms, for children and adults across Hartlepool.

Hartlepool Restaurant Week

Two Hartlepool Restaurant weeks were held with 26 local eateries offering set price menus.

Hartlepool will be a place that has an inclusive and growing economy.

Hartlepool Creative Business

The first Hartlepool Creative Business Week was held in October offering a week long programme of events aimed specifically at supporting creative businesses.

Business Forum

A new Business Forum was launched in February with local business leaders forming a steering group to drive forward business objectives.

Resettlement

Over the past year the council has continued to support humanitarian efforts to alleviate those suffering in countries troubled by war. Individuals and families have been resettled through approved government routes from Ukraine and Afghanistan. Work includes supporting integration into the community, help with language acquisition, training and employment.

Civil Engineering Skills Academy opportunities

A new Fabrication and Welding academy opened in April 2019 in partnership with Hartlepool College of Further education and part funded by the Town Deal, with 182 learners already enrolled on Level 1 and 2 courses and 225 learners to achieve qualifications by March 2025. The Academy's Brenda Road facility currently under construction will open in September 2024 with 202 learners already enrolled on Level 2 – 5 courses and 289 learners to achieve qualifications by March 2025.

Health and Social Care Skills Academy opportunities

A new skills Academy funded by the Town Deal and providing Level 2 – 5 qualifications in a range of health and social care disciplines, is under construction at University Hospital of Hartlepool in partnership with the North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust. 198 learners will achieve qualifications by March 2025.

Employment and Skills Hubs

Our Jobs & Skills Hubs are the front door to accessing bespoke support and guidance from the Council's Jobs & Skills Service or any of our partners within Hartlepool covering:

- Employment Support
- Careers Guidance
- Learning Opportunities
- Qualifications

Hartlepool will be a place that has an inclusive and growing economy.

- Voluntary Placements
- Enrichment Activities, and much more ...

Whether an individual is looking for a job, apprenticeship, to change career or simply to access a learning opportunity. Our dedicated team of experts will support them to achieve their goals and realise their career ambitions. Since launching in October 2022, the team have delivered over 4,000 interventions and improved the aspirations and prospects for nearly 2,000 unique people from Hartlepool.

Youth Hub

The Youth Hub is partnership between the Council's Jobs & Skills Service and the Department for Work & Pensions. The Youth Hub provides dedicated support for young people aged 16 to 24 year olds who are not in work, education and training across Hartlepool.

- Careers education, information, advice and guidance incorporating both one to one and group support
- Training programmes to help develop new skills linked to the labour market and gain valuable work experience.
- Access to vacancies and opportunities with employers including help with CVs and Job Applications
- Support to help with health and wellbeing through a range of community-based partners

The Youth Hub Partnership incorporates over forty providers, employers and community organisations who are all focused on supporting young people to progress into high-value employers across Hartlepool. The Hub is a one stop shop for support and have supported over 300 young people in 2023/24.

Multiply Programme

Numeracy skills are essential to unlock jobs and for everyday life as it is known that people who improve their numeracy skills are more likely to be in employment, have higher wages, and have better wellbeing. The Council's Jobs & Skills Service leads on the Tees Valley Multiply (Community Led) Programme across Tees Valley which is externally funded via UK Shared Prosperity Fund.

Multiply offers fun activities to build confidence with numbers to support adults to understand and use maths within their daily lives, at home and in work. Whether that be through improved budgeting, helping children with homework, understanding energy costs or making more sense of figures in bills.

Over 3,150 adults aged 19+ have participated in fun and innovative sessions through the programme which has provided them with practical learning and enhanced their numeracy skills. The focus of the programme has been on

Hartlepool will be a place that has an inclusive and growing economy.

engaging people within priority hot-spot neighbourhoods and the provision is primarily delivered by community-based Voluntary & Community Organisations who are trusted in their communities. In 2023/24, 17 VCS Organisations formed our partnership and helped deliver the Multiply Programme.

The impact has been significant with 45% of learners having already progressed onto accredited learning mainly Functional Skills and 36% of learners have progressed onto further community-based learning such as Learning for Inclusion.

Hartlepool will be a place with a Council that is ambitious, fit for purpose and reflects the diversity of its community.

Workforce

During this year the Council has launched a new Values and Behaviour Framework and Workforce Strategy, which focus on building an inclusive and supported workforce.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Training is available to all staff via the Workforce Development Programme with both in person sessions and e-learning modules available.

A Hybrid Working Policy was officially launched demonstrating the Council's commitment to enhance its flexible working offer to employees.

An employee survey was undertaken and the findings and corresponding action plan to address areas identified for improvement have been shared.

The Workforce Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy has been refreshed and an action plan has been prepared to ensure that EDI is embedded into our working practices and is central to our culture.

All employees have been encouraged to update their personal EDI information to improve the overall quantity and quality of the Council's workforce data and to ensure future actions can be data driven.

Transgender Ally training was delivered by Unison in March 2024.

Hartlepool will be a place with a Council that is ambitious, fit for purpose and reflects the diversity of its community.

Better Health At Work Award

The Council was successful in their annual assessment to Maintain Excellence and its Ambassador Status for the North East Better Health at Work Award 2023. The Better Health At Work Award (BHAWA) provides a framework to build healthy and happy workforce culture with an engaging health and well-being offer to help address health inequalities. Within the Council our Strategic Health and Wellbeing Group is embedded and our Health & Wellbeing Advocate network continues to develop.

Recent work includes:

- The launch of the Council's annual Employee Health and Wellbeing Programme to engage teams in four key wellbeing areas across each calendar quarter of 2024 – Q1 Alcohol and Substance Awareness / Q2 Healthy Eating / Q3 Getting Active / Q4 Mental Wellbeing.
- The recruitment of 3 new workplaces who have signed up to BHAWA framework for Hartlepool.
- Maintenance and support of 10 workplaces in Hartlepool at various levels of the framework and positive feedback has been received about the support given to those workplaces.
- Participation in Director of Public Health's Annual Report to showcase the benefits of BHAWA in improving health and well-being in the workforce.
- Health Advocate (HA) training, with Make Every Contact Count (MECC) training incorporated, supported / delivered to workplaces across Hartlepool

Disability Confident

The Council was successful in achieving Level 3 Disability Confident Leader status in May 2023.



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Staff Equality Network

The Council has a Staff Equality Network which brings together employees who identify themselves as having a protected characteristic along with employees who regard themselves as allies.

The Staff Equality Network focussed on a number of activities and projects, these included:

- Setting up an EDI tile on the homepage of the staff intranet to bring together a range of useful information for staff into one place. Content includes: how to write accessible content for disabled people, how to use the interpretation services for speakers of other languages and BSL users and a simple guide to pronouns
- Promoted a range of training to group members and wider staff including Dual Sensory Loss, Making Sense of Autism and Trans Ally training as well as the various EDI-themed online learning resources available through Skills Gate
- Contributing to the development of the revised Equality in Employment policy
- Planned and delivered the Council's first official Pride Month campaign in June 2023.

Lunch and Learn Sessions

Lunch and learn sessions were launched in 2023 as a way to share information about EDI issues in an engaging and accessible format. The sessions are designed to last around one hour and take place over MS Teams. Having the sessions virtually means that staff who find it difficult to attend physical sessions because of time constraints or location are able to take part. Also, by holding the sessions at lunch time it means that staff with a personal interest in the topic can still attend even if it is not directly related to their day jobs, thus increasing awareness of EDI issues.

The topic for the first session was chosen to fit with the wider Pride Month campaign planned for June 2023. Other topics during the year were chosen either in relation to current events, notable dates or at the request of staff. With the exception of the Pride session, which was delivered by staff from Hart Gables, the other three sessions were all delivered by Council staff.

During the sessions speakers are requested to include information to help officers who are approached by someone from these communities to respond

Hartlepool will be a place with a Council that is ambitious, fit for purpose and reflects the diversity of its community.

appropriately and effectively. Each session also includes a “myth-busting” section and an audience Q&A. Feedback from participants on the sessions held so far has been very positive with a cohort of officers who attended all 4 sessions.

The sessions held were:

- Pride (Hart Gables) – June 2023
- Working with armed forces personnel and veterans – November 2023
- The work of the refugee integration team – February 2024
- Substance misuse – March 2024

Consultation and Engagement

The Council's Your Say consultation and engagement platform continues to develop and recent activity has included:

- Cost of Living Crisis (youth services)
- Family Support Survey Spring 2023
- Armed Forces Personnel and Veterans (staff survey)
- Wrap-Around Childcare Provision
- Infant Feeding Survey

In addition a new Hub has been launched to support the ‘Parents Pulling Together’ project, a 3 year project funded by the National Lottery to offer training and support to parents across Hartlepool.

Big Conversation

The Big Conversation consultation and engagement exercise launched in November 2023 and will run until 14th February 2024 (12 weeks). The underlying principle is to engage with people where they are rather than holding large scale events and expecting people to come to us. The exercise includes activities at Community Hubs, engagement through a range of groups and events that the Council is already involved with and opportunities to engage online through our Your Say platform. The findings from the Big Conversation will be used to inform the development of the new 5 year Council Plan.

Digital Progression

The Council continues to develop its digital offer and has been providing increasing opportunities for residents to contact the Council through digital channels. At the end of quarter 4 there were 34,719 active HBC self-online

Hartlepool will be a place with a Council that is ambitious, fit for purpose and reflects the diversity of its community.

accounts and there had been 359,776 transactions delivered digitally across the year. Digital projects delivered in last few months include:

- Holiday Activities and Food Programme (Easter Programme)
- Companion Bus Passes
- Adult Services Booking Solution
- Procurement of a new digital solution that will allow residents to check their Council Tax balance online and request an e-bill, making the service more convenient and sustainable.

Accessibility of Council Services – Scrutiny Investigation

The Audit and Governance Committee's investigation into the accessibility of Council services for those with disabilities or long-term conditions has been completed and a number of recommendations were approved by the Finance and Policy Committee, however, the Committee requested further information on the costs associated with the implementation of a number of recommendations. Details of cost have now been compiled and are to be presented to the September meeting of the Finance and Policy Committee to allow a decision to be taken in relation to the implementation of the recommendations.

The Council's vision has been updated for our Council Plan 2024/25-2028/29:

Hartlepool will be a place...

...where people are enabled to live healthy, independent and prosperous lives;

...where people will be safe and protected from harm;

...of resilient and resourceful communities with opportunities for all;

...that is connected, sustainable, clean and green;

...that has an inclusive and growing economy;

...with a Council that is ambitious, fit for purpose and reflects the diversity of its community.

Activity planned for 2023/24

Hartlepool will be a place where people are enabled to live healthy, independent and prosperous lives.

- Continue to develop our offer for people with additional needs to ensure we maximise the opportunities that people have. This will include a Supported Internship programme.
- Continued development of the Support Hub Wellbeing offer meeting the needs of people.
- Work towards adoption of the Socio-Economic Duty.
- Consider auto-enrolment for Free School Meals.
- Deliver a Hartlepool-wide income maximisation strategy with partner agencies.
- Support Dementia Friendly Hartlepool and Dementia Action Week.
- Expand the Reading Well Collections – a series of self-help book collections to support adults with minor mental health issues, long-term conditions and those living with dementia.

Hartlepool will be a place where people are enabled to live healthy, independent and prosperous lives.

- Refurbish Seaton Carew Library into a more accessible space.
- Continue to develop the Jobs & Skills Hubs to engage priority groups including disability/health problems, economically inactive and lone parents so they receive tailored support to progress closer/into work.
- Expand the bespoke ESOL course giving qualifications and helping integrate families into the local community.
- Deliver independent living and employability programmes for care leavers and young / ex carers.

Hartlepool will be a place where people will be safe and protected from harm.

- Complete a new Changing Place Facility.
- Promote / deliver campaigns for a Spotlight on Carers (with Teeswide Safeguarding Adults Board) in June, Learning Disability Week in June, a Spotlight on Discriminatory Abuse in September, World Mental Health Day in October and National Safeguarding Adults Week in November.
- Introduce bariatric chairs in Community Hubs.
- Promote the range of safeguarding, mental health and prevent training available to staff, residents and businesses through the Jobs and Skills Service.

Hartlepool will be a place of resilient and resourceful communities with opportunities for all.

- Launch the Poverty Truth Commission.
- Hartlepool Youth Service will host an event to celebrate Black History Month in October.

Hartlepool will be a place of resilient and resourceful communities with opportunities for all.

- Stand Together will mark their 10th Year of Holocaust Memorial Day activities with an event in January.
- Host Twoomph!' an open mic poetry event for all genders as part of the Crossing the Tees Festival.
- Host Trisha Ashley in Conversation with Juliet Greenwood as part of the Crossing the Tees Festival where Trisha, a visually impaired author, speaks about her work, and how her sight loss has affected the way she approaches her writing.
- Deliver Colours of Courage – Building an Inclusive Teen Zine Sanctuary – to maximise the library offer for teenagers and creating a DIY zine library and creation station.
- Create a Community Hubs Youth Board.
- Expand the community volunteering offer across Preventative and Community Based Services.
- Reading for Wellbeing offer to be delivered by Community Hubs, targeting residents at risk of chronic loneliness to take part in social activities around reading for pleasure.
- Expand Family Homework Clubs so parents/carers and children can learn together through Community Hubs.
- Continue to support the Young Producers programme developing and implementing a legacy project in collaboration with Tees Valley Museums Group (TVMG).
- Work with Curious Arts and HartGables to host Hartlepool Pop Up Pride and collect memories of the event for the museum collections.
- Participate in TVMG Togetherfest.
- Deliver relaxed sessions in Hartlepool Art Gallery and Museum.

Hartlepool will be a place that is connected, sustainable, clean and green.

- Begin deliver of further Waterfront Connectivity phases which include new accessible routes, footpaths and cycleways.
- Develop Waverley Allotment into Waverley Outdoor Community Hub.

Hartlepool will be a place that has an inclusive and growing economy.

- Launch Literacy and Numeracy Strategic Partnership.
- Support Creative Careers Week in November.
- Explore Living Wage accreditation and 'City of Sanctuary' status.
- Learning and Skills Service to deliver events and other activities as part of Youth Employment Week in July, National Inclusion Week in September, National Older Workers Week in November and National Careers Week in March.
- Lead on the UKSPF Move Forward Programme supporting adults to move closer to work / into employment.
- Lead on the Multiply Programme to improve adult literacy skills.
- Complete and open the Civil Engineering and Health and Social Care Skills Academies.

Hartlepool will be a place with a Council that is ambitious, fit for purpose and reflects the diversity of its community.

- Sign up to the Social Care Workforce Race Equality Standard.
- Launch a Single Impact Assessment with associated toolkit and training bringing together the Equality and Child and Family Poverty Impact Assessments.

- Relaunch the Workforce Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Policy.
- Ensure all new employees and those changing job roles, are aware of the Council's commitment to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion by including in the new Corporate induction Arrangements.
- Promote the Staff Equality Group to encourage new membership and engagement.
- All new managers to complete the Manager's Induction Programme, including attending the mandatory Equality, Diversity and Inclusion training.
- Improve and promote the EDI learning and development offer to all employees including Lunch and Learn Sessions.
- Identify, promote and deliver an EDI campaign programme to all employees to increase awareness and understanding.
- Promote Apprenticeships to care leavers by working with the Through Care Team as part of the annual apprenticeship recruitment campaign
- Develop a policy and process for an annual Work Experience Programme including Care Leavers, individuals with SEND, students and ad-hoc requests.
- Increase the number of responses to the Leavers Surveys from employees leaving the Council and identify any EDI feedback.
- Explore quality standards for EDI for example Stonewall, the Race Equality Charter and others.
- Continue to encourage employees to update their personal EDI information, with particular emphasis on employees without access to HBC IT systems, to improve the overall quantity and quality of the Council's workforce data and to ensure future actions can be data driven.

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