



HARTLEPOOL
BOROUGH COUNCIL
OFFICER DECISION RECORD

Department:

Division:

Date of Decision / Issue 12/05/2025
of Licence:

Officer Making Decision: MRS DG MCGUCKIN

Subject / Description &
Reason for Decision:
(for publication)

On the 18 March 2025 Children's Services Committee approved the Schools Capital Works Programme for 2025-26. One of the schemes of works approved was for the replacement of the filtration system for the Hydrotherapy Pool at High Tunstall College of Science (HTCS).

The changing room facilities which serve the Hydrotherapy Pool are in a poor state of repair, however, were not identified by the Committee as a scheme to pursue at this time.

Since the filtration system works were approved, the owner of 'Water Babies – Tees Valley' has approached Hartlepool Borough Council (HBC) to offer funding to carry out the works to the filtration system at a reduced cost to the quote the HBC were able to obtain. The offer is made on the basis that the funding approved by the Committee is then used to renovate the changing room facilities.

Water Babies – Tees Valley have a long-standing relationship with HTCS and have been operating on a commercial basis from the pool for over 15 years.

HTCS are supportive of this proposal and have been in discussions with the owner of Water Babies – Tees Valley for some time. There is a lack of water facilities across the town, especially Hydrotherapy facilities of this size with the relevant equipment e.g. safe entry stairs/hoist. Completing the works in this way will enable children from across the town to access the hydrotherapy pool as it is proposed that the pool be made available to all Schools. This will be particularly important to those with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities.

Hydrotherapy offers a range of benefits for children with special educational needs by promoting physical development, sensory regulation, and emotional well-being. The warm, supportive water environment helps improve motor skills, muscle tone, balance, and posture while reducing pain and tension. Sensory input from the water can have a calming effect, particularly for children with autism or sensory processing difficulties. Hydrotherapy also encourages focus, communication, and social interaction through guided play and group activities, boosting confidence, reducing anxiety, and supporting overall learning and development in a fun, therapeutic setting.

The funding offer is time limited and can not wait for a meeting of Children's Committee. Therefore, the decision is taken to reallocate the £25,000 to the changing rooms renovation to enable the private investment to fund the filtration system.

Type of Decision:

Non Key

Nature of Delegation
Being Exercised:

Officer Delegated Authority - MD8

In consultation with the Leader (or in his absence the Deputy Leader), Chair of the relevant Committee (or in his absence Vice Chair) Monitoring Officer and Section 151 Officer, the Managing Director (or in his/her absence the authorised Executive Director) may take a decision normally reserved to Full Council or a Committee where:

(a) Failure to take the decision quickly would, or would be likely to, harm the interests of the Council and the public.

(b) The decision is so urgent that it cannot wait until the next meeting of the Committee at which the decision would normally be taken.

The decision together with the reason as to why it was determined urgent must be recorded on an Officer Decision Record. The record of urgent decisions will be held by the Democratic Services team and will be made available for inspection. Following the decision, it be reported to the next meeting of the relevant committee explaining:

- the decision;
- the reasons for it; and
- the reasons why the decision was treated as a matter of urgency.

Alternative Options
Considered & Rejected:

HBC could have decided not to reallocate the funding which would mean the external funding would not be received and the changing rooms would remain in a poor state of repair.

Any Declared Register of
Interest:

Yes

Yes, the owner of Water Babies Tees Valley (funder) is Councillor Pamela Hargreaves. Water Babies - Tees Valley has commercial agreement with HTCS to use the Hydrotherapy Pool out of school hours.

OFFICER WITH THE DELEGATION

NAME: MRS DG MCGUCKIN

POSITION: Managing Director

IN CONSULTATION WITH...

NAME: JAMES MAGOG

POSITION: Director of Finance, IT & Digital

NAME: HAYLEY MARTIN

POSITION: Director of Legal, Governance & HR

NAME: Brenda Harrison

POSITION: Councillor

NAME: Martin Dunbar

POSITION: Councillor