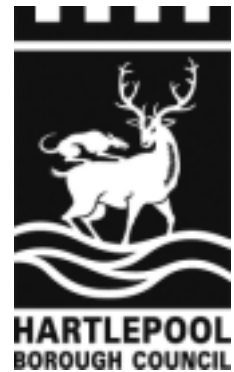


# SCRUTINY CO-ORDINATING COMMITTEE AGENDA



Friday 24 April 2009

at 2.00 p.m.

in the Council Chamber,  
Civic Centre, Hartlepool.

MEMBERS: SCRUTINY CO-ORDINATING COMMITTEE:

Councillors Akers-Belcher, Atkinson, Brash, R W Cook, S Cook, James, Kaiser, London, A Marshall, McKenna, Preece, Richardson, Shaw, Simmons, Wright and Young

Resident Representatives: Christopher Akers-Belcher, Iris Ryder and Linda Shields.

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

2. **TO RECEIVE ANY DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST BY MEMBERS**

3. **MINUTES**

3.1 To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 20 March 2009 (to follow)

4. **RESPONSES FROM THE COUNCIL, THE EXECUTIVE OR COMMITTEES OF THE COUNCIL TO REPORTS OF THE SCRUTINY CO-ORDINATING COMMITTEE**

4.1 Portfolio Holder's Response to the Final Report into the Use of Agency Workers within the Council – *Chief Personnel Officer and the Deputy Mayor / Portfolio Holder for Performance.*

5. **CONSIDERATION OF REQUEST FOR SCRUTINY REVIEWS FROM COUNCIL, EXECUTIVE MEMBERS AND NON EXECUTIVE MEMBERS**

No items.

**6. CONSIDERATION OF PROGRESS REPORTS / BUDGET AND POLICY FRAMEWORK DOCUMENTS**

No items.

**7. CONSIDERATION OF FINANCIAL MONITORING/CORPORATE REPORTS**

No Items.

**8. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION**

8.1 Access to Recreation Facilities for Vulnerable/Older People – Final Report – *Chair of the Adult and Community Services Scrutiny Forum*

8.2 Reaching Families in Need – Final Report – *Chair of the Health Scrutiny Forum*

8.3 The Marketing of Hartlepool – Final Report – *Chair of Regeneration and Planning Services Scrutiny Forum*

8.4 Coastal Defences and Shoreline Management in Hartlepool – Final Report – *Chair of the Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum*

8.5 Appropriate Accommodation for Homeless Young People – Final Report – *Chair of the Children's Services Scrutiny Forum (to follow)*

8.6 Extending Young People's Involvement in the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Arrangements – *Scrutiny Manager*

8.7 Draft Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report for 2008/09 – *Scrutiny Manager*

**9. CALL-IN REQUESTS**

**10. ANY OTHER ITEMS WHICH THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS ARE URGENT**

## SCRUTINY CO-ORDINATING COMMITTEE

24 April 2009



**Report of:** Joint Report of Chief Personnel Officer and the Deputy Mayor / Portfolio Holder for Performance

**Subject:** PORTFOLIO HOLDER'S RESPONSE TO THE FINAL REPORT INTO THE USE OF AGENCY WORKERS WITHIN THE COUNCIL

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### 1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide Members of the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee with feedback on the recommendations from the investigation into the use of Agency Workers within the Council which was reported to Cabinet on 9 February 2009.

### 2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

2.1 The investigation into the Use of Agency Workers within the Council conducted by this Committee falls under the remit of the Chief Executive's Department and is, under the Executive Delegation Scheme, within the service area covered by the Deputy Mayor / Performance Portfolio Holder.

2.2 On 9 February 2009, Cabinet considered the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee's Final Report into the Use of Agency Workers within the Council. This report provides feedback from the Portfolio Holder following the Cabinet's consideration of, and decisions in relation to this Committee's recommendations.

2.3 In addition to this report a further progress report will be produced for Member's during July 2009 to enable Members to monitor the implementation of their recommendations.

### 3. SCRUTINY RECOMMENDATIONS AND EXECUTIVE DECISION

3.1 Following consideration of the Final Report, Cabinet approved the recommendations in their entirety. Details of each recommendation and proposed actions to be taken following approval by Cabinet are provided in the Action Plan attached at **Appendix A**.

#### 4. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 That Members note the proposed actions detailed within the Action Plan, appended to this report (**Appendix A**) and seek clarification on its content where felt appropriate.

**Contact Officer:-** Joanne Machers –Chief Personnel Officer  
Chief Executive’s Department  
Hartlepool Borough Council  
Telephone Number: 01429 523003  
E-mail – joanne.machers@hartlepool.gov.uk

#### BACKGROUND PAPERS

The following background papers were used in the preparation of this report:-

- (i) The Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee's Final Report into the Use of Agency Workers within the Council considered by Cabinet on 8 February 2009.
- (ii) Decision Record of Cabinet held on 8 February 2009.

**OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY ENQUIRY ACTION PLAN****NAME OF FORUM:** Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee**NAME OF SCRUTINY ENQUIRY:** Scrutiny Investigation into the Use of Agency Workers within the Council**DECISION MAKING DATE OF FINAL REPORT:** Cabinet of 9 February 2009

	<b>RECOMMENDATION</b>	<b>EXECUTIVE RESPONSE / PROPOSED ACTION</b>	<b>FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS</b>	<b>LEAD OFFICER</b>	<b>DELIVERY TIMESCALE</b>
(a)	That a review be undertaken to substantially reduce the current level of expenditure on the use of agency workers / specialists across the Authority;	Each department to review agency posts and ensure continuous assessments is in place as an ongoing exercise, with a view to reducing the numbers, exploring alternatives, improve planning and consider permanent appointments	Potential in reduction of numbers and, for example savings where expensive agency staff are replaced by permanent staff (but opposite could apply in some cases)	Joanne Machers	April 2009

	<b>RECOMMENDATION</b>	<b>EXECUTIVE RESPONSE / PROPOSED ACTION</b>	<b>FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS</b>	<b>LEAD OFFICER</b>	<b>DELIVERY TIMESCALE</b>
(b)	That the current arrangements for the recruitment of agency workers / specialists across the Authority be centralised and appropriate control measures introduced;	New control protocols to be agreed by CMT and implemented across the Council, including the recording and monitoring of agency staff in post	Possible additional HR staffing and resourcing of central Procurement Unit via CPU in the interim, but ultimately HR/Payroll system could be used	Graham Frankland	May 2009
(c)	That the duration of engagement for all agency workers / specialists be restricted to short-term use and not exceed twelve months;	Instruction and guidance to service managers on the engagement of agency workers and the introduction of monitoring process	None, although changing agency staff may affect service provision, but this needs to be “managed”	Joanne Machers	March 2009

	<b>RECOMMENDATION</b>	<b>EXECUTIVE RESPONSE / PROPOSED ACTION</b>	<b>FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS</b>	<b>LEAD OFFICER</b>	<b>DELIVERY TIMESCALE</b>
(d)	That the Authority be encouraged to share innovative approaches to minimise the future demand of agency workers / specialists where appropriate;	Options to be pursued including a regional portal for staff recruitment, a Hartlepool recruitment pool were appropriate, succession planning and staff development / secondment opportunities. An exercise to exchange good practice between departments e.g. the use of casual lists, maintaining contact with leavers etc	Possible pressure for investment needs, but part of ongoing staff development and recruitment strategies	Joanne Machers	August 2009
(e)	That a feasibility study be undertaken to determine the appropriateness of establishing either a council-run agency or a joint procurement arrangement with neighbouring local authorities across the Tees Valley;	Joint procurement exercise across Tees Valley being pursued. Also potential option for NEPO arrangements. Future consideration of in-house provision required	Potential management costs of in-house option (if pursued)	Graham Frankland	May 2009 (Joint Procurement)  March 2010 (In-house feasibility)

	<b>RECOMMENDATION</b>	<b>EXECUTIVE RESPONSE / PROPOSED ACTION</b>	<b>FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS</b>	<b>LEAD OFFICER</b>	<b>DELIVERY TIMESCALE</b>
(f)	That there appears to be some conflict between the Council's recruitment and retention policies, namely the securing of temporary and permanent positions by modern apprentices versus permanent posts occupied in the short-term by agency workers and this should be addressed appropriately; and	Recruitment and retention protocols around Modern Apprentices to be agreed and implemented prior to intake of Modern Apprentices	None	Joanne Machers	August 2009
(g)	That twelve months after the implementation of the new HR/payroll system and the introduction of centralised control measures for the recruitment of agency workers / specialists across the Authority, a detailed monitoring report on the level of expenditure and usage be submitted to this Committee and the appropriate Portfolio Holder thereafter.	Provide monitoring report	None	Joanne Machers	September 2010



**SCRUTINY CO-ORDINATING COMMITTEE**

**24 April 2009**



**Report of:** Adult and Community Services Scrutiny Forum

**Subject:** ACCESS TO RECREATION FACILITIES FOR  
VULNERABLE / OLDER PEOPLE – FINAL REPORT

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**1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1.1 To present the draft findings of the Adult and Community Services Scrutiny Forum following its investigation into 'Access to Recreation Facilities for Vulnerable / Older People'.

**2. SETTING THE SCENE**

2.1 At the meeting of the Adult and Community Services Scrutiny Forum of 20 June 2008, Members determined their Work Programme for the 2008/09 Municipal Year. The topic of 'Access to Recreation Facilities for Vulnerable / Older People' was agreed as the second topic for investigation for the Forum's 2008/09 work programme.

2.2 Activity is an essential part of life for all individuals and has a significant positive effect on an individual's well-being, improving health, social skills, interaction and community integration. To be active is to be involved in life and to have people to see, places to go and things to do. The National Association for Providers of Activities (NAPA) for Older People is a voluntary organisation dedicated to increasing the profile and understanding of the activity needs for older people, and equipping staff with the skills to enable older people to enjoy a range of activity.

2.3 Recreational facilities can be divided into several areas including sport, arts and culture and organised activities. Hartlepool Borough Council provides a wide range of activities. Apart from the numerous parks, open spaces and access to leisure centres, specific areas of activities on offer include, swimming, bowling, aquafit, tea dances, arts and crafts, adult education, bespoke library services and reminiscence therapy.

### **3. OVERALL AIM OF THE SCRUTINY INVESTIGATION**

- 3.1 To review the current provision of recreation facilities / activities available for vulnerable / older people in Hartlepool exploring the factors which might prevent access to these facilities / activities.

### **4. TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE SCRUTINY INVESTIGATION**

- 4.1 The following Terms of Reference for the investigation were agreed by the Adult and Community Services Scrutiny Forum on 21 January 2009:-

- 4.2 The following Terms of Reference for the review are proposed:-

- (a) To consider, and agree, a definition of ‘recreation facilities / activities’, ‘vulnerable people’ and ‘older people’ for the purpose of this investigation:
- (b) To gain an understanding of the Council’s current recreation facilities / activities available for vulnerable / older people in Hartlepool;
- (c) To explore the recreation facilities / activities which vulnerable / older people in Hartlepool enjoy and use;
- (d) To compare examples of good practice in other Local Authorities to improve access to recreation facilities for vulnerable / older people; and
- (e) To seek a range of views from vulnerable / older people in relation to access to the Council’s recreation facilities / activities.

### **5. MEMBERSHIP OF THE ADULT AND COMMUNITY SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM**

- 5.1 Membership of the Adult and Community Services Scrutiny Forum for the 2008/9 Municipal Year was as outlined below:-

Councillors Atkinson (Vice – Chair), Brash, Fleet, A Marshall, McKenna, Plant, Preece, Simmons (Chair), and Worthy

Resident Representatives:

Mary Green, Evelyn Leck and Mary Power

### **6. METHODS OF INVESTIGATION**

- 6.1 The Members of the Adult and Community Services Scrutiny Forum met formally from the 21 January 2009 to 08 April 2009 to discuss and receive evidence directly relating to their investigation into ‘Access to Recreation Facilities for Vulnerable / Older People’. A detailed record of these meetings

is available from the Council's Democratic Services or via the Hartlepool Borough Council website.

6.2 A brief summary of the methods of investigation are outlined below:-

- (a) A Presentation from Hartlepool Borough Council Officers which was enhanced with verbal evidence;
- (b) Verbal evidence from the Portfolio Holder for Adult and Public Health and the Portfolio Holder for Culture, Leisure and Tourism;
- (c) Verbal and written evidence from service users;
- (d) Verbal evidence from a variety of key stakeholders;
- (e) Site visit by Members to Mill House Leisure Centre in Hartlepool and Freemans Quay Leisure Centre in Durham;
- (f) Site visit by Members to Hartlepool Sportability Club at the Headland Sports Hall; and
- (g) Verbal evidence from Care Home Managers.

## **FINDINGS**

### **7. DEFINITION OF RECREATION FACILITIES, VULNERABLE PEOPLE AND OLDER PEOPLE**

7.1 The Forum decided that it would be beneficial at the start of their investigation to agree key definitions in relation to 'recreation facilities', 'vulnerable people' and 'older people'. Members agreed on the following definitions:-

- (i) Recreation facilities: Activities which people take part in within their community, examples include bowling, dancing, swimming. The focus will primarily be on recreational facilities specifically offered by the Council;
- (ii) Vulnerable people: Those adults (aged 18+) who depend upon the support of others, including, for example, people with learning disabilities, sensory impairment, physical disabilities, people who feel isolated; and
- (iii) Older people: people aged 50+.

### **8. VIEWS FROM THE COUNCIL'S PORTFOLIO HOLDER'S FOR ADULT AND PUBLIC HEALTH AND CULTURE, LEISURE AND TOURISM**

8.1 Members of the Forum agreed that it would be beneficial to their investigation if both the Portfolio Holder for Adult and Public Health and the Portfolio Holder

for Culture, Leisure and Tourism outlined their views in relation to recreation facilities in Hartlepool. The evidence of the Portfolio Holders is outlined below:

### **Evidence from the Portfolio Holder for Adult and Public Health**

- 8.2 The Council's Adult and Community Services Department provides a significant range of services over and above those that are statutory. Members were informed that the link between many of the leisure services and the public health agenda is very strong and one that should be maintained. Prevention is a key mechanism; keeping people active and involved in recreational activity will keep people healthy.
- 8.3 As Co-Chair of the Learning Disabilities Partnership Board, the Portfolio Holder is very aware of the excellent work that is being undertaken in this area and emphasised how important it is to get the message across to the public about the range of leisure services available. The Portfolio Holder informed the Forum that the new approach to individual budgets will open up a wider range of leisure services to vulnerable and older people.

### **Evidence from the Portfolio Holder for Culture, Leisure and Tourism**

- 8.4 Members of the Forum were informed that the take up of certain recreational activities may not be as high as anticipated but this did not mean that these activities should be stopped. The Portfolio Holder was very much in favour of the Council moving away from the concept of single use buildings. For example, using a building as a multi-functioning facility, a police station, a crèche, offices, a facility for sport and leisure activities – in other words a 'community hub' approach.
- 8.5 It was emphasised that despite a lot of promotional work, not all people are aware of the activities / initiatives on offer by the Council. The Forum agreed that the activities / initiatives need to be further publicised on the Council's website, in 'Hartbeat', in the local press and on local radio. The Forum felt that it is important to actively try and engage with vulnerable and older people to encourage their participation.

## **9. ACTIVITIES CURRENTLY OFFERED BY HARTLEPOOL BOROUGH COUNCIL**

- 9.1 Members of the Forum were keen to gain an understanding about the recreational facilities and activities currently offered by the Council. The Forum welcomed evidence from the Council's Assistant Director of Community Services.

### **Evidence from Hartlepool Borough Council**

- 9.2 The Forum was very interested to hear about the wide range of recreational facilities offered by the Council including the libraries, museums, allotments, bowling greens and the theatre and arts as well as sport and physical activities and facilities.

- 9.3 The home library service is a mobile library service which is offered by the Council to people who cannot access the library because they are housebound or have mobility difficulties. The service is also offered to nursing and residential homes and sheltered accommodation. Residents are able to choose a variety of books, including large print materials and spoken word materials in the comfort of their own home.
- 9.4 Members were informed that there are approximately 12 reading groups across the town including reading groups for people with visual impairment and mental health needs. Reminiscence sessions and the distribution of reminiscence materials are also available. Members of the Forum questioned the provision of services to the deaf and how people can access these services. It was acknowledged by the Department that translation services are provided but it is an area that required some appropriate information and publicity.
- 9.5 Museums are also a form of recreational activity and within Hartlepool reasonably accessible facilities are offered at Hartlepool Art Gallery, the Museum of Hartlepool and Hartlepool Maritime Experience including the HMS Trincomalee. The Forum was informed that 50% of all the visits to the museums are by older people. The percentage of disabled people who visit the museums is 7.5%, which is low compared to 21.8% of the population reported as disabled but this figure is comparable to similar museums in the North East. The Forum was pleased to hear that the top outreach priority for the next two years is to increase engagement with disabled groups.
- 9.6 Many people own an allotment or enjoy the use of an allotment in Hartlepool as can be seen by the 1100 allotments town wide with a high percentage of older people as tenants. An allotment in Waverley Terrace has been allocated for people with mental health needs and learning disabilities to grow their own vegetables and flowers benefiting all who use it by increasing confidence, self esteem and skills.
- 9.7 Bowling is another very popular activity. Aside from the Indoor Bowls Centre, a management partnership with the Bowls Consortium offers access to several outdoor greens in Hartlepool, all of which now have automatic watering systems.
- 9.8 Members were informed that the Council provides a range of theatre and arts activities including regular tea dances, nostalgia performances with matinees targeted at elderly people in care or living alone. Other community groups include Flex Hartlepool Performances, which is a dance group comprising of people with learning disabilities who have devised and performed new work as part of the Maritime Festival; the Roaring Mouse Group which is a performance group for people with learning disabilities; and an intergenerational physical theatre project is being run within the Burbank Community.
- 9.9 The Forum was informed that in relation to access to recreational activities, older and vulnerable people can access these activities through, for example, the Community Sports Coach Drugs Intervention Programme, the Outdoor Adventurous Activity Programme, the Health Walks Programme, and the

Special Olympics Football Tournament at Grayfields or the Warren Road Day Service, which the Council financially supports.

- 9.10 Many activities have been launched by the Council's Sport & Recreation service including 'Boccia', which is a paralympic sport, designed for people with cerebral palsy or motor skill disabilities but can be played by anyone. It is similar to bowls in that the aim of the game is to throw the balls, coloured red or blue, as close as possible to a white target ball. A regional event was held recently at the Headland Sports Hall. The Forum was pleased to hear that the Hartlepool Community Activities Network (CAN) has been allocated, by the Primary Care Trust and Communities for Health, £75,000 for physical activity initiatives within Hartlepool. Applications are open to anyone who feels they have a project which will address any gap in existing physical activity provision.
- 9.11 The Forum raised concerns over how groups can access grants available to them from the Council. The Assistant Director of Community Services informed Members that there is a very good network of grant information within Hartlepool and even if groups cannot be supported through the Community Pool, they are advised on how and where to apply for funding. Seaton Carew Sports and Social Club is a good example. The Department has assisted the Club in the development of its bid as a sporting centre while only providing around 5% of the total finance.
- 9.12 As in many areas, football is a key passion for many people. The Football Development Programme is another initiative offered by the Council's Sport & Recreation service which focuses on creating the quantity and quality of opportunities to, play, coach and officiate football through schools, community, and club and league organisations. Many partnerships to other agencies have resulted, for example with Hartlepool MIND and Warren Road Day services. A significant achievement has been the development of disability football in the town.
- 9.13 Hartlepool Sportability Club is a weekly club supported with grant funding by the Council. The Club is based at the Headland Sports Hall whereby vulnerable people can take part in sports activities such as 'Boccia', badminton and trampolining.
- 9.14 Members were also interested to hear of the introduction of concessionary charging to all over 60's from November 2008 and the introduction of free swimming for over 60's and under 16's from April 2009 for two years.
- 9.15 The Forum was very pleased to hear that under National Indicator 8 relating to physical activity participation in 2005 / 06 was 19.1% and by 2007 / 08 participation had increased by 3% to 22.1%, which is the highest increase amongst all other Tees Valley Local Authorities.
- 9.16 It was acknowledged by the Forum that not all of the facilities in Hartlepool are in good physical condition, as seen from the older buildings such as Mill House Leisure Centre. Members were informed of some of the new and future developments for the town including the introduction of the Playbuilder, which is an initiative to enhance play facilities in the town for children and adults and the potential rethinking of the Mill House Centre now that the

development of the H2O Centre on Victoria Harbour is considered to be too far away in the future.

- 9.17 Although new facilities are to be developed, Members of the Forum raised some concerns over the 'centralisation' of leisure services. Many people in the past could walk to their nearest centre, such as the Eldon Grove Leisure Centre, but with provision being centralised, for example at the Mill House Leisure Centre or Headland Leisure Centre, most people are finding themselves having to travel by car or bus. The 'Recreation Strategy' had however concluded that according to facility planning models and taking into account local demographics now and into the future, that there are too many different facilities in the town, many of which not in the right location nor are in good condition. As a result, in order to be able to apply or compete for government finance, the Council have had to take this strategic approach and rationalise accordingly in order to be able to progress with good schemes that are needed in the borough. The leisure provision formerly at Eldon Grove has been moved to other centres within the town and there is now the development of the tennis club on that site which will bring a new and exciting tennis facility that has not previously been provided to this extent in the town.

## **10. EVIDENCE FROM MEMBERS OF THE SCRUTINY FORUM – SITE VISITS**

- 10.1 Members of the Forum thought it would be beneficial to the undertaking of their investigation if they visited a leisure facility in Hartlepool and a leisure facility at another local authority to compare areas of good practice. For the visit in Hartlepool, Members decided that they would visit the Mill House Leisure Centre and the Headland Sports Hall.
- 10.2 Mill House Leisure Centre was originally built in 1972 as a swimming baths but is now a large multi purpose leisure centre. A wide variety of sports activities are available including two swimming pools, one to competition standard with a 57 metre waterslide and diving facilities as well as a teaching pool and sauna and steam facilities. A multi purpose hall is available which is used for a wide range of sporting activities such as badminton, five-a-side football, netball and basketball as well as providing a venue for concerts, theatre productions, trade fairs and conventions. A fitness room is also available equipped with single station resistance equipment and cardio-vascular fitness machines
- 10.3 Classes and courses are also available to all ages and tastes including swimming lessons, football coaching, gymnastics, fitness courses, karate classes and adult swim sessions.
- 10.4 Members of the Forum who visited Mill House Leisure Centre were of the opinion:-
- (a) It is in need of updating, however, Members recognised the difficulties in modernising a 1970's building;
  - (b) The pool is tired and in need of a revamp;

- (c) Lack of disabled parking bays in the main public car park for cars and mini buses;
- (d) The Forum welcome the idea of a ‘changing village’ to replace the existing changing rooms; and
- (e) Signage / leaflets / posters could be improved in the Leisure Centre.

10.5 It was apparent by Members who visited Mill House that it is in need of replacement and if funding would allow, Members would like Hartlepool to aspire to a facility similar to Freeman’s Quay Leisure Centre in Durham, the newest in the area. It is an ambition of the Council to build a new multi-purpose leisure facility and proposals have been put forward for a new facility, the H2O Centre, but at present these are only proposals and a vision for the future. Members were informed that realistically any kind of replacement of Mill House would be in excess of five years therefore until then the facilities at Mill House would be improved, where possible, and subject to funding availability.

10.6 The Council has submitted an application to the Free Swim Capital Modernisation Programme which is a fund provided by the Government as part of the free swimming initiative to help modernise swimming pool provision and support plans for increased physical activity participation as part of the London 2012 Legacy action plan. The Forum was informed that if the Council is successful in their bid then the changing facility within Mill House would be refurbished and redesigned as a ‘changing village’, hopefully this year.

10.7 *Photographs illustrating the Condition of Mill House Leisure Centre*



10.8 After the visit to Mill House Leisure Centre, members visited Freeman’s Quay Leisure Centre in Durham. This is the newest facility in Durham which has a 25 metre, 8 lane pool and learner pool, 130 work station fitness centre, dance studio, sports hall and internet cafe. The fitness centre offers a stylish surrounding with the best in cardiovascular and resistance equipment. However, the development did come at a cost of £13.5m. Members were impressed to hear that partnership working played a huge role in building the leisure centre and in helping to maintain the sports equipment. The sports



equipment partnership is with a company called Competition Line who supply and maintain the Centre with all its fitness equipment in return for a percentage of the membership fees. With this system in place it ensures that the equipment is always up to date and replaced if necessary.

10.9 Members of the Forum who visited Freeman's Quay Leisure Centre were of the opinion:-

- (a) That it is an outstanding facility with an excellent design;
- (b) That the facility can be easily accessed by people with disabilities; and
- (c) That partnership working in this instance is really beneficial.

10.10 During the site visit Members were also keen to see how older / vulnerable people accessed recreational facilities and therefore thought it would be beneficial to their investigation if they visited Hartlepool Sportability Club. This Club runs every Tuesday night at the Headland Sports Hall offering activities to vulnerable members of the community. Activities on offer are badminton, use of the fitness centre, table tennis and use of the trampoline. Members were very impressed with the Club and the activities on offer and also the facilities at the Headland Sports Hall.

## **11. RECREATION FACILITIES / ACTIVITIES WHICH VULNERABLE / OLDER PEOPLE IN HARTLEPOOL ENJOY AND USE AND FACTORS PREVENTING ACCESS**

11.1 The Forum was very keen to engage with local community groups and clubs and therefore the following groups and clubs were invited to attend the Forum meetings to share their experiences and opinions along with any of their concerns:

- (a) Hartlepool's 50+ Forum;
- (b) Life Chances Partnership Board;
- (c) Learning Disability Partnership Board;
- (d) Hartlepool Mental Health Local Implementation Team;
- (e) Hartlepool Carers;
- (f) Carers' Strategy Group;
- (g) LINKs;
- (h) Hartlepool Sportability Club; and
- (i) Care home managers / residents.

## Feedback from the Learning Disability Partnership Board

11.2 The comments from the Learning Disability Partnership Board are summarised below:

(a) In relation to access at Mill House Leisure Centre:

- **Parking:** Disabled parking is available near the building but there are only 3 spaces;
- **Reception:** Automatic doors at the entrance now make it easier to access the leisure centre, however, the big glass screen at reception is not very welcoming, it is not very good for people with poor hearing or people in a wheelchair; there is a lift but it is small;
- **Changing Rooms:** Floor in changing room is slippery and there is nowhere large enough for wheelchair in main changing rooms;
- **Swimming Pool:** There is a hoist but most people do not know this; and
- **Leaflets:** More easy read information about Mill House is needed.

(b) In relation to access at the Headland Sports Hall:

- **Reception / rooms / halls:** nice reception area, wide doors, automatic lighting, access is good but lift is near reception which could be bad if there is a queue. An idea would be to look at moving reception away from lift; and
- In general it is more accessible than the older buildings.

(c) In relation to access at the Bridge:

- Easy to park, easy access, electric door at front, but it sometimes does not work.

(d) In relation to access at Summerhill:

- **Car Park:** speed bumps changed for right of way traffic system; smooth path from disabled parking bays to entrance doors and
- **Reception:** Electric doors on entrance, smooth floors inside main building. Floors look good but not very safe if you are unsteady on your feet and uncomfortable if you are in a wheelchair.

11.3 The Learning Disability Partnership Board highlighted the following as issues that they feel prevent access to recreation facilities:

(a) Not enough disabled car parking spaces;

- (b) Poor access for large vehicles, e.g a mini-bus;
  - (c) Not enough information about what you can do; and
  - (d) Some doors not wide enough for wheelchair users.
- 11.4 The following ideas on how access to leisure services can be improved were suggested:
- (a) More automatic doors on entrance to buildings and inside buildings / widen doorways;
  - (b) More welcoming receptions: not behind glass and low enough for wheelchair users;
  - (c) Facility should be well lit (Mill House needs new carpets, lighting etc throughout); and
  - (d) Need easy to read notices in all buildings with an easy to read information pack about all buildings and what activities are available.

#### **Feedback from the Fens Residents Association**

- 11.5 Comments were received from the Fens Residents Association who acknowledged that access, in the form of transport to recreational facilities is a problem for some older people.
- 11.6 One of the difficulties reported to the Association was the lack of activities which people want to attend. For example, vulnerable / older people may not wish to engage in physical activities but instead may wish to participate in mental activities such as educational courses. Unfortunately, residents felt as though the courses which are available are held in venues which are unknown except to those who live in the immediate vicinity or at obscure times.
- 11.7 Suggestions from the Association on activities which are thought to be desirable, which were previously available include:-
- (a) Cookery courses for men;
  - (b) Motorcycle maintenance;
  - (c) Pottery; and
  - (d) The opportunity to study subjects perhaps not studied during school days i.e. GCSE courses.
- 11.8 The Forum agreed with the Association that older people are the fastest growing group in the community and unless they are helped to be more active, both physically and mentally, there are implications on the amount of money which will need to be spent on care and health in the future.

### **Feedback from the Heart Health Group**

- 11.9 The heart health group is a group for members of the local community with heart conditions along with a multiplicity of other health issues. The group access the Central Library community room on a monthly basis and staff are very helpful, the meeting room is accessible and the facility is centrally located.
- 11.10 The group also access the facility at Summerhill on a fortnightly basis and thinks that it is the 'Jewel in the Crown'. The group is very pleased with the staff who are all extremely welcoming and make every effort to support the members of the group and tailor any pieces of work accordingly. The group uses the motorised wheelchairs, which are very important in terms of inclusion, as it means that all members of the group can be accommodated in all activities and there has been the requisite training and support from staff in order to do this. Activities which the group participate in include team building events, gentle walks, and a variety of speakers.
- 11.11 In terms of support for people with heart conditions, the support from the Sports Development Team is excellent. The staff are well trained, knowledgeable, caring and give great consideration to individual needs. The Forum was extremely pleased to receive these very encouraging comments.
- 11.12 The Forum referred to initiatives which are currently facilitated through the Primary Care Trust, such as an exercise class carried out in the swimming pool for people with heart problems. However, concern was raised over the limited number of places available on such courses and it was suggested that the Council look to work with partner organisations to offer further activities.

### **Feedback from Hartlepool's 50+ Forum**

- 11.13 The Forum was pleased to receive feedback from the 50+ Forum, whose comments are summarised below:
- (a) The changing rooms at Mill House Leisure Centre are uninviting;
  - (b) Lack of knowledge of the activities available prevent people from attending;
  - (c) Cost of hire charges for venues prevent people from using the facilities; and
  - (d) Improved transport links to facilities and / or improved locations of facilities / activities would improve access.

### **Feedback from Members of the Public**

- 11.14 The main areas of concern which members of the public raised are as follows:
- (a) Travel costs to facilities / activities; and

- (b) Location of facilities / activities, difficult to access because not in the local area.

11.15 Members agreed that travelling costs can escalate if the facility or activity is not offered close by and acknowledged that the centralisation of leisure activities may prevent people from being able to access the activity.

#### **Feedback from Viewpoint**

11.16 As Members of the Forum were very keen to engage with the community, one of the ways to do so was by online consultation via the Council's 'Your Town, Your Say' Webpage. An online viewpoint questionnaire was launched at the start of the investigation asking people to give their views on the Council's recreation facilities / activities and the problems encountered when accessing these activities / facilities. However, unfortunately, no responses to the questionnaire were received.

## **12. CONCLUSIONS**

12.1 The Adult and Community Services Scrutiny Forum concluded:-

- (a) That there are a range of activities offered by the Council which are reasonably accessible by vulnerable / older people;
- (b) That members of the public are unaware of some of the activities / facilities offered by the Council;
- (c) That there is a need for a new leisure facility within Hartlepool but until this is possible, the Forum welcome the updating of the existing facilities;
- (d) That the new leisure facility at Durham is inspirational and is a facility which the Council should strive to aspire to;
- (e) That local community groups play a vital role in providing activities for vulnerable / older people to participate in, as demonstrated by the Hartlepool Sportability Club;
- (f) That due to the centralisation of services, access to facilities / activities for residents may become increasingly difficult due to travelling and transport; and
- (g) That the Free Swim Capital Modernisation funding will be essential to improving Mill House Leisure Centre.

## **13. RECOMMENDATIONS**

13.1 The Adult and Community Services Scrutiny Forum has taken evidence from a range of sources to assist in the formulation of a balanced range of

recommendations. The Forum's key recommendations to the Cabinet are outlined below:

- (a) That the Council continues to improve the way in which it raises public awareness of the available recreational activities through the increased promotion of activities on the Council's website and in 'Hartbeat', with emphasis on the provision of information in an easily accessible way;
- (b) That in continuing to improve the way in which available recreational activities are publicised, the Council ensures that arrangements are formalised for increased promotion of activities in the local press and radio (including Radio Hartlepool);
- (c) That the Council develops easy to read notices detailing forthcoming recreational activities to display in all leisure facilities, community and voluntary group buildings, libraries, doctors surgeries and schools;
- (d) That the Council produce an easy to read information booklet detailing all the leisure facilities and activities available and it be displayed in all leisure facilities, community and voluntary group buildings, libraries, schools and on the Council's website;
- (e) That the Council continues to work in partnership with key organisations to develop new recreational activities / initiatives which will improve the health and well being of the people in Hartlepool;
- (f) That the Council supports the interim improvement measures and future investment in the town's leisure facilities to maintain and improve access, participation and satisfaction levels; and
- (g) That the Council considers the value of partnership working in any future plans for the building of a new leisure facility within Hartlepool.

## 14. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

14.1 The Forum is grateful to all those who have presented evidence during the course of the Scrutiny Inquiry. We would like to place on record our appreciation for all those witnesses who attended the Forum. In particular the Forum would like to thank the following for their co-operation during the Scrutiny Investigation:-

### Hartlepool Borough Council:

Councillor Ged Hall – Cabinet Member, Portfolio Holder for Adult and Public Health.

Councillor Vic Tumilty – Cabinet Member, Portfolio Holder for Culture, Leisure and Tourism

John Mennear – Assistant Director of Community Services

Pat Usher – Sport and Recreation Manager

John Lovatt – Head of Adult Care

Kath Millican – Locality Team Manager

Lyn Duncan – Development Manager

Craig Mitchelson – Duty Manager, Mill House Leisure Centre

External Representatives:

Members of the Public

Glynis Hansen – Hartlepool Sportability Club

Liz Starrs – Hartlepool Sportability Club

Life Chances Partnership Board

Learning Disability Partnership Board

Hartlepool Mental Health Local Implementation Team

Hartlepool Carer's

LINKs

Care Home Managers / residents

Elmtree Community Action Group

Hartlepool's 50+ Forum

**COUNCILLOR CHRIS SIMMONS  
CHAIR OF THE ADULT AND COMMUNITY SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM**

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## BACKGROUND PAPERS

The following background papers were used in preparation of this report:-

- (a) Report of the Scrutiny Support Officer entitled 'Access to Recreation Facilities for Vulnerable / Older People – Draft Scoping Paper' presented to the Adult and Community Services Scrutiny Forum of 21 January 2009.
- (b) Report of the Scrutiny Support Officer entitled 'Access to Recreation Facilities for Vulnerable / Older People – Setting the Scene and Evidence from the Authority's Portfolio Holder's for Adult and Public Health and Culture, Leisure and Tourism'– Covering Report' presented to the Adult and Community Services Scrutiny Forum of 11 February 2009.
- (c) Presentation of the Assistant Director of Community Services entitled 'Access to Recreation Facilities for Vulnerable / Older People – Setting the Scene delivered to the Adult and Community Services Scrutiny Forum Services Scrutiny Forum of 11 February 2009.
- (d) Report of the Scrutiny Support Officer entitled 'Access to Recreation facilities for Vulnerable / Older People – Discussion with Key Stakeholders – Covering Report' presented to the Adult and Community Services Scrutiny Forum Services Scrutiny Forum of 11 February 2009.
- (e) Report of the Scrutiny Support Officer entitled 'Access to Recreation Facilities for Vulnerable / Older People: Discussion with key Stakeholders' - Covering Report' presented to the Adult and Community Services Scrutiny Forum Services Scrutiny Forum of 05 March 2009.
- (f) Report of the Scrutiny Support Officer entitled 'Access to Recreation facilities for Vulnerable / Older People: Feedback from Site Visit - Covering Report' presented to the Adult and Community Services Scrutiny Forum Services Scrutiny Forum of 05 March 2009.
- (g) Feedback from the Learning Disability Partnership Board;
- (h) Feedback from the Fens Residents Association;
- (i) The National Association for Providers of Activities (NAPA) for Older People, [www.napa-activities.co.uk](http://www.napa-activities.co.uk)
- (j) Minutes of the Adult and Community Services Scrutiny Forum of 21 January 2009, 11 February 2009, 05 March 2009 and 08 April 2009.



# SCRUTINY CO-ORDINATING COMMITTEE

24 April 2009



**Report of:** Health Scrutiny Forum

**Subject:** REACHING FAMILIES IN NEED – FINAL REPORT

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## 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To present the findings of the Health Scrutiny Forum following completion of its 'Reaching Families in Need' investigation.

## 2. SETTING THE SCENE

2.1 At the meeting of the Health Scrutiny Forum on 17th June 2008, Members determined their Work Programme for the 2008/09 Municipal Year. In identifying a topic for in-depth consideration, the Forum identified a need to explore the issue of social inclusion in Hartlepool, and its effects, as a very real, serious and multifaceted problem.

2.2 It was apparent to Members, in selecting the 'Reaching Families in Need' investigation, that a small minority of families exist in Hartlepool that continue to fail to benefit from rising living standards and increased opportunities. These families also experience a wealth of problems that cross a broad spectrum of issues with associated general well being and specific health problems. Moreover, the perpetual cyclical nature of these problems tends to have the effect of exacerbating health inequalities as well as pushing the individuals further into social isolation and away from possible help.

2.3 Problems these families experience include:-

- (i) Health inequalities;
- (ii) Overcrowded / unsuitable housing;
- (iii) Being victims and perpetrators of crime;
- (iv) Poverty, wordlessness, poor job prospects;
- (v) Benefits and dependency;
- (vi) Poor school attendance linked to poor attainment;
- (vii) Poor academic and social skills;
- (viii) Poor parenting;
- (ix) Domestic violence;
- (x) Drug and alcohol abuse;

- (xi) The difficulties of young parenthood;
- (xii) Unstable partnerships; and
- (xiii) Low aspirations, low self esteem and aimlessness.

2.4 In looking at these families, the Forum recognised that their identification was a real issue. Whilst there was a recognised formulae for the designation of a hard to reach family, being any five of the following indicators as laid down within the Families and Children Study(as outlined below), their practical identification and how they are encouraged to take advantage of the services available is a real issue:-

- (i) No parent at Work;
- (ii) Poor quality or overcrowded housing;
- (iii) No parent with qualifications;
- (iv) Mother has mental health problems;
- (v) At least one parent with longstanding limiting illness, disability or infirmity;
- (vi) Low income (<60% of median); and
- (vii) Cannot afford a number of food and clothing items.

2.5 The Forum also recognised the importance of providing care and assistance for families in need, with particular emphasis on:-

- (i) Social Responsibility – Each Council under its democratic mandate places a high priority on meeting the needs of all elements of the community, with particular emphasis on the requirements of the most needy;
- (ii) Community Cohesion - Many families in the most deprived 3% have a marked negative effect on their communities. However, not all of these families are the same and whilst some may be involved in crime or anti-social behaviour many are not; and
- (iii) A Strong Economic Argument - The most deprived families tend to be a significant pressure on the taxpayer, in terms of welfare benefits, social care, healthcare, criminal justice and educational support. By intervening more effectively to support them at an earlier stage, they are likely to become less dependent on these high cost services.

2.6 The Forum found that these families, and the problems they experience, exist not only locally but also on a national level. Government estimates are that approximately 2-3% of families nationally are in this position. In recognition of this, the Government has established a clear and ongoing social inclusion agenda, including the publication of "Think Family: Improving the Life Chances of Families at Risk" in 2008. As part of this agenda, and most clearly seen in the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007, Councils are now required to work with their local partners and offer strategic leadership for service provision across their community. The Forum was interested to discover that there is also a clear indication that individual bodies acting in isolation cannot properly address the most

pressing problems in society, such as social inclusion. To fully combat these problems, which are undoubtedly seen in Hartlepool, the public sector must work as one body, in conjunction with voluntary and independent sector, under the strategic leadership of the local authority.

### **3. OVERALL AIM OF THE SCRUTINY INVESTIGATION**

- 3.1 The overall aim of the Scrutiny investigation was to explore the town's current approach to targeted intervention for hard to reach families in need and to make suggestions for improvement, where possible, that encourage the take up of local health services.

### **4. TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE SCRUTINY INVESTIGATION**

- 4.1 The Terms of Reference for the Scrutiny investigation were as outlined below:-

- (a) To gain an understanding of the current multi agency approach to the provision of targeted wellbeing and preventative health services for hard to reach families in need in Hartlepool;
- (b) To explore what strategies are in place that identify and offer assistance to hard to reach families who have specific and persistent issues in Hartlepool;
- (c) To seek good practice from another local authority in relation to their approach to targeted intervention for hard to reach families in need; and
- (d) To identify suggestions for improvement, with particular focus on partnership working and innovative practices of targeted intervention.

### **5. MEMBERSHIP OF THE HEALTH SCRUTINY FORUM**

- 5.1 The membership of the Scrutiny Forum was as detailed below:-

Councillors Barker, Brash, R W Cook, S Cook, A Lilley, Plant, Simmons, Sutheran and Young.

Resident Representatives: Jean Kennedy, Linda Shields and Mike Ward.

### **6. METHODS OF INVESTIGATION**

- 6.1 Members of the Health Scrutiny Forum met formally from 9 September 2008 to 7 April 2009 to discuss and receive evidence relating to this investigation. A detailed record of the issues raised during these meetings is available from the Council's Democratic Services.

- 6.2 A brief summary of the methods of investigation and sources of evidence are outlined below:-
- (a) Detailed Officer reports supplemented by verbal evidence;
  - (b) Evidence from the Children's Services Department and Adult and Community Services Department (Including the Family Intervention Project);
  - (c) Evidence from the Authority's Elected Mayor and Cabinet Member Portfolio Holder for Adult and Public Health Services;
  - (d) Evidence from the Director of Public Health;
  - (e) North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust and Hartlepool Primary Care Trust;
  - (f) Voluntary Sector and Community Groups (including Hartlepool Families First and Hartlepool Patch);
  - (g) Hartlepool Partnership;
  - (h) Housing Hartlepool;
  - (i) Job Centre Plus;
  - (j) Anti-Social Behaviour Unit and Youth Offending Team;
  - (k) Hartlepool New Deal for Communities (NDC); and
  - (l) The views of local residents.

## **FINDINGS**

### **7 THE DEFINITION OF A 'FAMILY IN NEED'**

- 7.1 As a starting point for the investigation the Forum explored, and identified, a clear definition of a 'family in need'.
- 7.2 In relation to the term 'family' Members agreed that for the purpose of the investigation it would be a family unit, including children up to the age of 16. This was, however, with the proviso that the definition could be expanded should it be necessary. In addition to this, the Forum agreed that a family 'in need', would be one of the small minority of families that continue to fail to benefit from rising living standards and increased opportunities, experiencing a broad spectrum of general well being and specific health problems (as outlined in Section 2.3 above).

## 8 ISSUES AFFECTING HARD TO REACH FAMILIES (FAMILIES IN NEED) IN HARTLEPOOL

8.1 Throughout its investigation, the Forum welcomed evidence from a variety of sources and obtained a clear understanding of what a 'family in need' was and the factors / issues that impact upon them (as shown in Section 2 above). Evidence provided was also of assistance in giving the Forum an understanding of the role health inequalities play in the lives of these families and the wider Hartlepool community.

8.2 It came as no surprise to the Forum that 'families in need' are more susceptible to the effects of health inequalities. Members were, however, interested to learn that in Hartlepool, and indeed across the country, a number of issues significantly impact upon the ability to address health inequalities and in turn deal with the problems experienced by these families. These include:-

(i) Family experiences that:

- Limit aspirations;
- Reinforce cycles of poverty;
- Provide poor models of behaviour; and
- Damage the ability of children to build up resilience to problems or to benefit from the opportunities they are given.

(ii) Complex factors that can be associated with a lack of engagement:

- Lack of understanding of services and how to use them;
- Don't think it is relevant to them;
- No mutual respect;
- Focus on crisis management rather than prevention;
- Inflexible and fragmented services;
- Intimidating environments where services are delivered; and
- May focus more on enforcement than help.

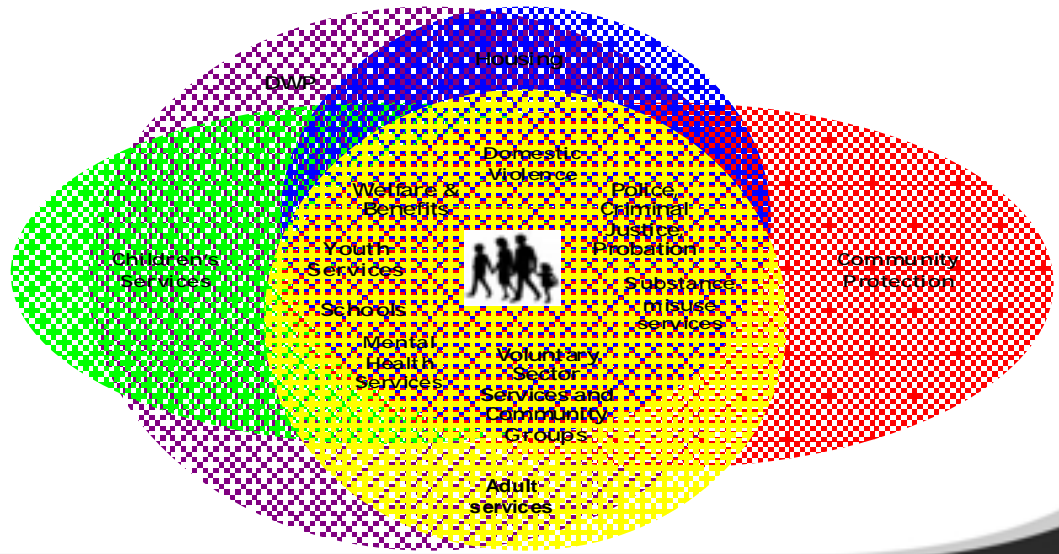
8.3 On a wider health inequality basis, Members were well aware that across the whole of Hartlepool cardiovascular disease, cancer and other major issues, such as mental health problems, are more prevalent than they are nationally. There was, however, concern regarding the differential in terms of the level of such these conditions across different sectors / areas of the community and disappointed that there seemed to have been extremely limited progress with regard to the following conditions in narrowing the gap between Hartlepool and the England average:-

- (i) Breast Feeding Initiation;
- (ii) Teenage Pregnancies;
- (iii) Binge Drinking (including alcohol related hospital stays);
- (iv) Drug Misuse;
- (v) Smoking in Pregnancy;
- (vi) Obese Adults;

- (vi) Healthy Eating; and
- (viii) Incapacity benefit for Mental Health.

## 9 SERVICES PROVIDED AND STRATEGIES INPLACE TO ASSIST HARD TO REACH FAMILIES (FAMILIES IN NEED) IN HARTLEPOOL

9.1 Over the course of the investigation the Forum was surprised to discover the wide variety of agencies, organisations and service areas required for the effective provision of services for families in need, as illustrated below.



9.2 Looking specifically at the work being undertaken in Hartlepool, Members were encouraged to see that a wealth of targeted wellbeing and preventative health services are already being provided to help reach families in need. Evidence provided broke these services down for ease of reference into those provided by the Council and those provided by other agencies and bodies.

### Services Provided by the Council

9.3 At various meetings throughout the investigation, the Forum welcomed detailed evidence from key Council departments with a role in the provision of services for families in need:-

- (i) Adult and Community Services;
- (ii) Children's Services; and
- (iii) Regeneration and Planning Services (i.e. Strategic Housing)
- (iv) Neighbourhood Services (i.e. the Family Intervention Project, the Anti Social Behaviour Unit and the Youth Offending Service).

9.4 Adult and Community Services Department - Members welcomed clarification of the impact of work being undertaken at many levels through the Adult and Community Services department, in particular activities with

vulnerable adults and the wider health and wellbeing agenda. This included universal services, prevention, early intervention and low level support.

- 9.5 It was evident from the evidence provided that the services needed by families in need were in place across various departments and other bodies, however, there was an issue around difficult to reach families (with multiple problems) knowing and being able to access all of the various strands of what they need. In exploring this issue, the Forum welcomed confirmation that systems were already in place whereby self assessments can be completed by service users. It was also clear that there is a key role for the lead practitioner in each case, with recognised benefits for the development of relationships with families and individuals, something that was crucial for the identification and engagement of families. In addition to this, Members were delighted to find that the development of an adult CAF was now being pursued and were supportive of the identification of funding, with the proviso that the adult and children's CAF's be designed in such a way as they can work together.
- 9.6 Referring back to concerns in terms of how families who do not want to take advantage of services can be encouraged to do so, whilst Members were disappointed they acknowledged that where there were no significant concerns there was no way of identifying and contacting families. The Forum was, however, encouraged to find that processes were in place to monitor families through their Health Visitors, who had first hand knowledge of the families and the services that have been accessed. As part of this, a Children's Centre Database was in the process of being developed for the retention of information, tracking visits and interventions to support the identification of families not engaging.
- 9.7 The Forum was very interested in the role and purpose of the new Children's Centre Database, however, it was recognised that the utilisation of the information contained within it would be limited by access to information and privacy laws. Despite this the Forum was keen to see this explored as a way of further accessing vital information to help identify families in need.
- 9.8 Children's Services Department - The Forum, at its meeting on the 9 December 2009, gained a full understanding of the work undertaken within the Children's Services Department in identifying and engaging families in need. Members noted detailed evidence in relation to the provision of universal, targeted and specialist services with particular attention drawn to the ongoing development and use of the Common Assessment Framework (CAF).
- 9.9 During the course of discussions, a number of issues were raised regarding the existence of formal arrangements for the sharing of information between the various agencies and bodies involved. The Forum welcomed assurances that processes were in place to share information through, means such as the Common Assessment Framework (CAF) and the up and coming E.CAF (both devised with the purpose of identifying any areas where support was required within a family at an early stage). The Forum agreed

that once fully developed the CAF would be an extremely useful tool in relation to the provision of services for families, however, it had come to light through the investigation that there were some mixed views in terms of its ultimate usability by some bodies or groups of staff. This was primarily on the grounds of its size and complexity and is discussed further in Section 9.11 of the report.

- 9.10 In terms of the CAF and the issues raised during the course of the investigation, further information was provided by the Children's Services Department in relation to its format and use. Members were please to learn that Hartlepool was a trail blazer in terms of its activities in tying the CAF to Special Assessment Guidance and was in fact being approached by other local authorities in relation to this.
- 9.11 Attention was drawn to the pre-CAF (a much smaller document) and Members suggested that this could be used as an alternative where the full CAF was felt to be too difficult. Members' views were, however, reiterated in terms of the need for all forms of the CAF, whether that is the Pre CAF, Full CAF or E.CAF to be able to be used together. Members were also supportive of a pilot project for an Adult CAF that was ongoing and the need for full and effective training in relation to the use of any and /or all versions of the CAF for it to be an effective means of gathering and sharing information.
- 9.12 Regeneration and Planning Services Department - At the meeting held on the 4 November 2008, Member's views were reinforced regarding the intrinsic importance of good quality housing to the health and wellbeing of all families, in particular in relation to families in need.
- 9.13 Evidence from the Strategic Housing Manager confirmed that there were good examples of partnership working going on, for example between the Council and Housing Hartlepool. However, the Forum welcomed confirmation of its suspicions that there was still room for improvement with some instances of silo working across agencies, reducing the effectiveness of the multi-agency approach. The Forum learned that whilst there are mechanisms in place for the transmission of information there was concern that:-
- (i) There appeared to be some reliance on the informal networks that rely on individual contacts; and
  - (ii) There was a view that when health information was flagged up it was not always taken forward.
- 9.14 There was also an indication that whilst the CAF was an exceptionally useful document, housing staff and the Police did not use it in its current form as they found it to be too long. Members noted that Housing Hartlepool staff did use the CAF, however, they held similar views to those expressed in terms of its complexity and size.



9.15 In light of the views expressed, the Forum:-

- (i) Welcomed a suggestion that the feasibility and effectiveness of 'mini' CAF should be explored;
- (ii) Reiterated the benefits of a single co-ordinating point for the collection and relaying of information and referrals. The ideal place for this being at the top of the Council organisational structure from where a system could benefit partners who sometimes have to rely on the informal networks; and
- (iii) Supported a suggestion that it would be beneficial for consideration to be given to the development of greater involvement between the Council's Housing Division and the Family Intervention Project (FIP).

9.16 Neighbourhood Services Department – In exploring the relevant areas of work undertaken by the Neighbourhood Services Department, the Forum learned that many of the factors impacting on health inequalities are generational and that efforts were being made to trying to be dealt with them through projects such as the Hartlepool Intervention Project (HIP) and Family Intervention Project (FIP). The Forum looked in some detail at the work being undertaken by the HIP, FIP, Youth Offending Service and the Anti-Social Behaviour Unit. Whilst at first sight seemed like the activities of these groups would be relevant to the issue under investigation, it very quickly became clear that the aims of projects fit perfectly with reaching out to the families that are not currently taking advantage of the services. Examples of this being the FIP's focus on:-

- (i) The most problematic families persistently perpetrating anti social behaviour who are at risk of losing their homes;
- (ii) The implementation of a 'whole family' approach which considers the needs of the whole household and assesses the underlying problems driving the family's behaviour; and
- (iii) The provision of key workers who co-ordinate activity and provide continuity.

9.17 In looking at how these projects could be best used to reach families in need, the Forum welcomed indications that the Common Assessment Framework was already being used and information relayed to other departments. The Forum also:-

- (i) Noted a recurring theme in the evidence provided regarding emphasis on the importance of partnership working and communication. It was, however, clear that communication links could be improved between these projects and the Adult and Community Services Department, although it was noted that work was already ongoing to do this;

- (ii) Expressed its satisfaction with the work of the HIP, FIP. Also the work of the:-
- Youth Offending Service, in terms of its Parenting Programmes in helping addressing health issues, encourage engagement and in particular the Strengthening Families Programme; and
  - Youth Inclusion Project, in its provision of an opportunity to identify families in need through workers home visits.
- (iii) In relation to the work of the Anti-Social Behaviour Unit, was impressed with the level of partnership working and information sharing that was undertaken. It was, however, interesting for the Forum to learn in terms of possible future improvements that there was a view from the Unit that the CAF could be used more and increased use of the Vulnerable Localities Index to better focus resources in areas of most need.

9.18 The Forum supported the ongoing work to improve routes of communication between departments and was encouraged to see that strategies for the future included the continuation of the 'every family are unique' approach and provision of a persistent key worker. In particular the Forum recognised the importance of a recognised key, especially with families in need, and this view was further reinforced by the effectiveness of the work being undertaken through the Connected Care project, as discussed later in the report.

### **Services Provided by Other Agencies / Bodies**

9.19 Housing Hartlepool – The Forum received evidence from Housing Hartlepool at its meeting on the 4 November 2008. The Forum commended the Council's Strategic Housing Division and Housing Hartlepool on the way they worked together to relay information. The Forum was pleased to hear that dealing with families in need was a high priority for Housing Hartlepool and was in the process of developing a strategy for reaching these families that could be rolled out across the town. Attention was, however, drawn to the work being undertaken as part of the Connected Care model, which although in its early stages Housing Hartlepool representatives felt was looking favourable. Members were encouraged to hear positive feedback from an outside organisation in relation to this model and discussed it in more detail as part of the investigation, as shown later in the report.

9.20 Connected Care – The Forum discovered that this jointly funded local authority and PCT programme was established to provide a single point of entry, self referral and assertive outreach, whilst also providing care navigation with advocacy, support and co-ordination. The overall aim of the programme being to integrate health and social care, joining them up with strategies for social inclusion and linking connected care to locality based commissioning.

- 9.21 Members noted with interest the content of a very informative presentation from Connected Care representatives, at their meeting on the 10 February 2009. Following consideration of the information provided, Members were supportive of the programme and its positive effects in helping reach families that would not normally interact with either the council or engage with health services. Whilst it was recognised that there was still a core of hard to reach families that would never voluntarily engage, Members recognised the benefits of having one worker that would stay with a family, directing them through the different service areas that they might need.
- 9.22 Members were open in their support for the rolling out of the programme across other areas of the town and felt that it could have a significant role to play in reaching, engaging and keeping contact with these families. It was, however, recognised that there are funding issues attached to this which at the current time prohibit the expansion of the programme.
- 9.23 Hartlepool Primary Care Trust (PCT) – The Forum received assurances at its meeting on the 8 January 2009, that the PCT was committed to removing barriers to healthcare and to ensure that there is equitable access to these services irrespective of an individual's background.
- 9.24 Members noted with interest the selection of services that the PCT commissions from a wide range of providers, such as Primary Care, Acute Care and Community Services, and learned that whilst the PCT commissions its services primarily on the basis of how a service meets an individual's needs it does also where possible identify and commission services that would benefit from a family approach. Particular note was taken of the work of the PCT's Health Development Team, the purpose of which was to implement initiatives to reduce health inequalities and improve health and wellbeing.
- 9.25 Whilst most of the work of this team takes a universal approach it was noted that where possible geographical areas are targeted to work on health inequalities, with nearly all work done in partnership with statutory or voluntary / community partners. In terms of the identification of families in need, children who are at risk of poor outcomes as defined by 'Every Child Matters' are assessed to help determine their individual needs and promote co-ordinated service provision. Children with more serious needs are given a Child Protection Plan, and whilst the PCT has its own child protection structure there are other processes in place for the referral of safeguarding incidents or concerns to Hartlepool Borough Council's Child Protection procedures.
- 9.26 From the evidence provided it was clear to the Forum that the PCT has well defined arrangements in place to work with its partners i.e. the hospital trust, Cleveland Police, the Youth Service, Housing Services and many others. Members in fact took the opportunity to commend the PCT and the Council on the true nature of partnership working in place, particularly in terms of integrated adult commissioning where there are fully integrated co-located teams working across health and social care services for adults. Members

were impressed with the way in which this would facilitate even further improved information sharing and were encouraged to learn that the objective for 2009 was to develop similar provision for children's services. Members were supportive of this and looked forward to seeing it taken forward further cementing the routes of information transmission and sharing between the PCT and Council.

9.27 In terms of how things could be improved in the future, Members took on board the following suggestions for consideration in the formulation of their recommendations:-

- (i) A single process needed to be developed across all agencies to identify and deal with families, with a clear criteria to ensure the identification of families in need;
- (ii) Further work was required to identify the potential number of families in need;
- (iii) There needs to be better incorporation and use of the CAF to allow for better feedback to commissioning to inform, redesign and develop future services (i.e. work with primary care services to incorporate the CAF);
- (iv) Ways of utilising the vast amount of information retained by GP's needs to be explored, however, it was recognised that there are data protection issues; and
- (v) A full social marketing strategy should be developed to ensure that there can be no stigma in being identified as a family in need. This may facilitate people coming forward rather than organisations having to go looking for these families.

9.28 North Tees and Hartlepool Foundation Trust (FT) – The Forum received evidence at its meeting on the 8 January 2009 from the FT confirming its commitment to ensuring all families receive the healthcare and assistance they require. A family in need defined by them as being 'any family that requires any intervention to enable a child to achieve all aspects of 'Every Child Matters'.

9.29 It was made clear to the Forum that the FT sees that it has a clear role in breaking the spiral of aspirations and health promotion. This being through the implementation of strategies for cross boundary and multi agency working, health promotion in terms of the transmission of advice and information (in the wider sense and through verbal advice at every visit) and accident prevention.

9.30 Members noted with interest that strategies are in place to identify any and deal with families in need. These include the implementation of processes / referral mechanisms, use of the pre CAF, pre-discharge meetings, robust training of staff, good relationships and targeted support. It was, however, apparent that the FT did at times find it difficult to implement these strategies

for cross boundary and multi-agency working given the current processes, although it was made very clear that the multi-agency process for the discharge of patients with complex needs worked well.

- 9.31 Members noted with concern that an example of the problems experienced related to with the use of the CAF, in terms of its complexity and the feeling that it limits the ability to give a complete picture. In light of this multiple forms were still being used and Members were of the view that this needed to be addressed and other agencies consulted and involved in the further development of the CAF and E.CAF.
- 9.32 The Forum asked a very simple question of the FT in terms of how could the co-ordination of activities and approaches be improved to help reach families in need. Members welcomed suggestions that:
- (i) Referral mechanisms through the CAF need to be streamlined;
  - (ii) The gap in transition from child to adult care needs to be examined;
  - (iii) There need to be more defined pathways for complex cases;
  - (iv) The gap in multi-agency training needs to be explored; and
  - (v) Links and communication between agencies need to be strengthened (i.e. a 'one stop shop' telephone number or point of contact).
- 9.33 The Forum took in board the FT's suggestions and was keen to see the (i), (iv) and (v) explored further. In addition to this, the Forum took the opportunity to explore the role of individuals in the reaching families in need and whilst it was recognised that the Council departments have a key role particular attention in terms of the FT was drawn to the role of Health Visitor. Whilst the Forum expressed some concern regarding the number of Health Visitors and workload size, it was clear to Members that the position of trust these individuals have in entering homes would be extremely useful in the identification of families in need. As such, this needed to be looked into further in terms of their use of the CAF or Pre CAF and their inclusion in the reporting mechanism loop.
- 9.34 Other bodies and Groups – The Forum at its meeting on the 20 January 2009 received evidence from a number of other groups with an involvement in the provision of services for families who could fit the definition of a 'family in need'. These groups included Hartlepool NDC, Hartlepool Families First, Hartlepool Patch and Job Centre Plus.
- 9.35 During the course of discussions with representatives for **Hartlepool NDC**, Members were yet again impressed with the level of partnership working that was ongoing. Members were also impressed by the benefits of locating the NDC had found from the location of neighbourhood Management and Community Safety activities in joint premises. As with other instances when multiple services are provided in the locality, greater and easier transmission of information had been facilitated. In line with this, and ways of engaging with families, the Forum took on board the following suggestions from the NDC:-

- (i) That where new buildings / facilities were being provided (i.e. perhaps the new health centre) an option should be put in place for the provision of a place where advice could be provided;
- (ii) That Health Visitors and Midwives are the eyes and ears of the community had have a vital role in identifying and engaging with families in need;
- (iii) That programmes which are not badged as being provided by 'official' bodies tend to be more successful with families that are reluctant to engage. This was also the experience of representatives from Connected Care and as such was something which the Forum felt should be considered as part of a package of measure the reach families in need;
- (iv) That emphasis must be placed on the importance of the role of Voluntary Sector organisations in the delivery of services to families in need; and
- (v) That for partnership working to be truly effective, it was essential to develop joint campaigns and common goals and targets.

9.36 During the course of discussion with representatives from **Job Centre Plus, Hartlepool Families First and Hartlepool Patch**, Members were pleased to find that the general feeling was that there was a good level of partnership working in Hartlepool, however, as with most things there was room for improvement. The issue of reporting mechanisms was also reiterated and whilst it was excellent news that they are well developed inform networks in existence, more formal and clearly defined routes are needed. There were also some issues expressed regarding the smaller organisations awareness of what is out there for the people they deal with (i.e. Hartlepool Families First were unaware of the assistance the Credit Union could be to its users). In response to this, it was suggested that a local authority seminar / event should be organised to showcase and transmit information to the various organisations in the town, raising awareness of what is available and what can be accessed by their service users.

9.37 In addition to this, views were also reiterated that there was still some silo working occurring and this needed to be addressed if a truly integrated approach was to be taken to meeting the needs of families in need. The overarching view, and one that was shared by the Forum, was that it had to be the Local Authority's role and responsibility to co-ordinate activities to reach these families.

9.38 Looking at a number of key questions in relation to the variety of outside bodies involved in the provision of services for families in need, the Forum discovered that in terms of:-

- (i) How different bodies identify families in need with specific and persistent issues or problems – Clear processes are in place to pick up families in need when they come in to take up services. However, encouraging

them to take up services over and above those they had originally presented themselves for was not always easy. In addition to this, there are also those who do not wish to engage at all and it is these families that it is difficult, of not impossible, to identify under current systems;

- (ii) Whether specific strategies are in place for dealing with families in need – As above, strategies are in place;
- (iii) The extent of partnership working – Partnership working is in the forefront of all bodies' minds and every effort is made to make it possible.

## **10 EVIDENCE FROM THE PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR ADULT AND PUBLIC HEALTH AND PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR CHILDRENS SERVICES**

- 10.1 As part of the investigation the Forum was keen to hear the views of the Executive and in line with the cross cutting nature of the 'families in need' issue across multiple Portfolios received evidence from the Portfolio Holder from Adult and Public Health and Portfolio Holder for Children's Services on the 14 October 2008 and 9 December 2008 respectively.
- 10.2 Members were please to find that the Portfolio Holder for Adult and Public Health shared their view that the provision of a multi-agency approach was crucial in addressing the public health agenda, especially in targeting people in need of housing and financial inclusion (both of which were issues explored in greater detail during the course of the investigation). The Forum welcomed the view that the continuous improvement of links between health and social care services would be vital in helping reduce health inequalities, and encourage the take up of health services by 'hard to reach' families. In Forum also shared the view that the identification of any shortfall in provision between health and social care service was imperative, with the parallel running of services through partnerships working to be key in improving health inequalities in Hartlepool in the future.
- 10.3 It was clear to the Forum from the evidence provided that in terms of identifying families in need, and targeting of services, there continued to be a reliance upon people identifying their own need and coming forward to use services. The Forum felt that this further emphasised the importance of ensuring that all services are linked together with clear routes of communication. It also reiterated the importance of the local authority's role in identifying families who are not already engaged and the value of possibly having a single point of contact for local authority service provision and co-ordination.
- 10.4 Linking into this, the issue social inclusion spans multiple departments, as can be seen from the involvement of two Portfolio Holders, in this investigation. Given the importance of this issue and the suggestion that the local authority should take the lead in providing co-ordinated leadership across the different providers (as outlined in Section 9.36) the Forum was of

the view that the creation of a Social Inclusion Portfolio should be explored. This would facilitate the development and implementation of a strategy that could cut across all departments and provide outside organisations with a clear point of contact and accountability. This in turn would see the public sector acting as one under the strategic lead of the Council.

## **11 HOW OTHER LOCAL AUTHORITIES APPROACH THE TARGETING OF INTERVENTION FOR HARD TO REACH FAMILIES**

- 11.1 As indicated in Section 2.6, Government has established a clear and ongoing social inclusion agenda, including the publication of "Think Family: Improving the Life Chances of Families at Risk" in 2008. As part of this agenda, the Department for Children, Schools and Families identified 15 Local Authority Pathfinder. The aim of this Pathfinder Programme being to improve the outcomes for families caught in the cycle of low achievement, particularly those effectively engaged and supported by existing services, exploring what actually works and sharing solutions.
- 11.2 In exploring examples of good practice by other local authorities, the Forum chose to select one of the 15 Pathfinder Authorities. Of the 15 authorities, Westminster City Council was selected Members as being of particular interest, with its overall aim through the Pathfinder Programme being to:-
- (i) Improve outcomes for children;
  - (ii) Reduce disorder and crime in the community;
  - (iii) Strengthen families and improve outcomes for adults; and
  - (iv) Reduce the longer term cost to public Services.
- 11.3 Members recognised that the aims of the Westminster City programme were very ambitious and were keen to see how it was intended to achieve them. In providing information as to how this was being progressed the Forum, at its meeting on the 20 January 2009, received evidence from a Consultant involved in the Westminster Programme.
- 11.4 Members noted with interest that Westminster's services problems mirror those of all other local authorities in that they have long struggled with the following families, often dealing with problems through separate services (with a narrow focus):-
- (i) Families with entrenched multiple problems;
  - (ii) Families where the children do badly at school and get into trouble; and
  - (iii) Families where the parents have drink or alcohol problems and are depressed or violent creating anti-social behaviour issues.
- 11.5 It was encouraging for the Forum to discover that views expressed throughout the investigation, in terms of the need for the development of an integrated service that deals with the whole family and addresses all their problems in a single co-ordinated way, one Lead Professional, one assessment, one care plan and one review, had also come to the forefront in



Westminster City Council's work. Members were also very supportive of the key characteristics of the Think Family approach in that:-

- (i) There is no 'Wrong Door';
- (ii) There needs to be a whole family approach;
- (iii) Family strengths need to be built upon;
- (iv) Tailored support needs to be provided; and
- (v) There needs to be family involvement.

11.6 Members recognised that family focused work and multi-agency work were not new, however, noted that the Westminster approach was ground-breaking in that it aimed to:-

- (i) Enable agencies who normally only work with adults are part of the core team to work alongside agencies who normally focus on children;
- (ii) Ensure that work is based on individual packages of intervention and support, but with consequences for families who do not engage - contracts with consequences;
- (iii) Provide an intensive service with several contacts/sessions per week when families need this; and
- (iv) Ensure that each family (children and adults) has one care plan and that these plans reflects the needs of family members and when relevant the wider community.

11.7 Members were pleased to be able to say that in terms of a lot of the work being undertaken in Hartlepool the underlying principal of these aims was already being explored (i.e. links were already strong between the Adult and Community Services Department and the Children's Services Department. Work was ongoing for PCT integration with children's services as was already in place for adult services, the use of 'contracts' through the FIP and the Anti-Social Behaviour Unit). The Forum, however, took on board the suggestion that as in Westminster there was a need to build on progress in system reform by:-

- (i) Extending the integrated approach of Every Child Matters to all of the services working with families at risk;
- (ii) Ensuring that systems and services have the right incentives to focus their energies on families at risk; and
- (iii) Capitalise on the reach and expertise of the public sector to identify and intervene earlier to better support families at risk.

11.8 The Forum was particularly interested in Westminster's approach to families with very particular needs (i.e. exhibit extreme anti-social and criminal behaviour or where children are suffering or likely to suffer significant harm

leading to the initiation of care proceedings) and their emphasis on early identification. Members were also impressed with their efforts in:-

- (i) Trying to find effective interventions with non-engaging families - Building on the lessons of the Family Intervention Project and contracts with consequences (making clear that positive outcomes need to be achieved or a higher or enforced level of intervention will follow); and
- (ii) Integrating services – To provide a wider perspective of need is shared to make “No Wrong Door” a reality (i.e. Children’s Services being more alert to parents’ individual needs; Adults Social Care Services taking more responsibility for identifying which of their clients are parents and what their children’s needs may be; All services sharing responsibility for addressing benefit dependency / assisting people to return to work; All services sharing responsibility with Community Protection for the impact on neighbourhoods of criminal and anti-social behaviour);
- (iii) Targeting the right families – testing and refining the ‘referral/ screening criteria’ and widening it to encompass different families from other agencies to learn more about which families to accept;
- (iv) The introduction of a Multi-Agency Information Desk – Right at the heart of the team with the purpose of collecting and compiling a comprehensive multi-agency picture of a family and each individual within it. Information comes from social services, police, community protection, housing, youth offending, Action for Children, schools and education, health services amongst others; and
- (v) Use a ‘portal’ to distribute and share information - This includes live ‘alerts’ to inform teams of the key events (i.e. continuous disturbances to neighbours and on-going anti-social behaviour).

11.9 The Forum concluded its consideration of Westminster’s activities by considering the lessons they had learned, as detailed below:-

- (i) Have all agencies involved at all levels directors to practitioners;
- (ii) Use referrals from all partners to access their needs and learn from the families;
- (iii) Referral criteria is hard to define and must be flexible to work with families who might not meet traditional criteria;
- (iv) Action learning to redefine the process;
- (v) The Information Desk is critical to success but resource hungry and has provided invaluable information;
- (vi) Focus on outcomes;
- (vii) Prioritise and phase interventions;
- (viii) Lead professional; and
- (ix) Break the barrier to adult services.

11.10 The Forum was impressed with the work being Members felt strongly that Hartlepool’s approach should be to target services for families based on a

whole system approach, with in an idea world a single lead worker with responsibility for the co-ordination of interventions from the different agencies and professionals involved.

- 11.11 Members were also particularly interested in the undertaken by Westminster and felt that their view in terms of the need to move beyond straightforward partnership working into the more complex and demanding area of service integration was the way forward. The idea that multi-agency teams should be established at a local level, working under an integrated management structure, with shared budgets, programmes and objectives was also accepted as a way forward, however, it was recognised that there are practical / financial restraints to this.
- 11.12 Members were also particularly interested in the concept of a Multi-Agency Information Desk, and whilst it was recognised that the costs associated with a similar information desk in Hartlepool would make it infeasible it was felt that a similar way of gathering and sharing data should be explored.

## 12 CONCLUSIONS

12.1 The Health Scrutiny Forum concluded:-

- (a) That as many of the issues in respect of health do not come under the direct control of traditional health services (i.e. housing), a co-ordinated leadership role is needed across the various different providers, including both the Council and Health Authorities to ensure a systematic approach to tackling health inequalities in the town;
- (b) That in relation to (a) above, the local authority should take the lead in providing a co-ordinated leadership approach across the different providers in order to facilitate a systematic approach to tackling health inequalities in the town, culminating in the creation of a Family In Need Strategy and specifically designated Executive Portfolio with responsibility for Social Inclusion;
- (c) That there will always be a core of hard to reach families that will never voluntarily engage, regardless of the benefits or incentives to them, and the issue of how they are encouraged to engagement is a real problem for which there is no easy answer. It was, however, unacceptable to do nothing, in light of the damage that is done to communities and children's lives, and all partners must be actively committed to identifying a solution;
- (d) That the importance of lead officers / workers in the provision of support and continuity for families in need cannot be underestimated in not only helping them navigate through the various services they may require but also in maintaining engagement;

- (e) That in light of this need to see the development of an assessment framework that can be used by across the board, other agencies / bodies should be consulted and involved in the further development of the CAF in whatever form it takes (Pre CAF, Full CAF or E.CAF);
- (f) That links and communication routes between agencies need to be strengthened (i.e. a 'one stop shop' telephone number or point of contact) reinforcing the 'no wrong door' concept highlighted in section 11.5 of the report;
- (g) That Health Visitors are the eyes and ears of the community with their privileged position in entering the homes of families across the board have vital role in identifying families in need and collecting / relaying information to the relevant service areas. As such, their use of the CAF or Pre CAF and their inclusion in the reporting mechanism loop needs to be explored further;
- (h) That, over and above Health Visitors, all those who come into contact with families in need during the course of their duties need to be provided with appropriate training to enable them collect and rely information to appropriate bodies to ensure that the needs of these families are fully identified and met. This should include training on the completion of CAF's in whatever form they take;
- (i) That Hartlepool's approach to reaching families in need should be to target services for families based on a whole system approach, within an ideal world a single lead worker with responsibility for the co-ordination of interventions from the different agencies and professionals involved;
- (j) That poor health, inadequate housing, crime & anti-social behaviour, poverty, substance abuse and education / truancy are all linked both in their shared causal factors and their negative outcomes. Therefore, any strategy that seeks to deal with such problems but be similarly joined up, else it is designed to fail;
- (k) That whilst it is recognised that the cost of a Multi-Agency Information Desk approach (as implemented by Westminster Council) would be prohibitive, a similar way of gathering and sharing data in Hartlepool should be explored;
- (l) That all forms of the CAF, whether that is the Pre CAF, Full CAF or E.CAF to be able to be used together and the development of an Adult CAF supported;
- (m) That the Connected Care Programme should be supported as a positive way of helping reach families that would not normally interact with either the council or engage with health services and the Forum was open in their support for the rolling out of the programme across other areas of the town;

- (n) That ways of providing and promoting programmes, including those run by the Voluntary Sector, that are not 'badged' as being run by official bodies should be explored as a way of reaching families that are reluctant to engage;
- (o) That where new buildings / facilities were being provided (i.e. the new health centre) the possibility of including an option whereby a place is provided where advice could be provided should be looked explored;
- (p) That for partnership working to be truly effective, it was essential to develop joint campaigns and common goals and targets and that the Local Authority is the most logical and appropriate body to co-ordinate activities to reach these families, from the top down;
- (q) That whilst the practicalities of identifying families in need and facilitating the delivery of services is complex, it is imperative that the implementation of an overarching strategy must be simple at the point of delivery and top level management; and
- (r) That it must be clear in all activities undertaken or strategies implemented that there is no stigma attached to being identified as a family in need or in the take up of services.

### 13 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 13.1 The Health Scrutiny Forum has taken evidence from a wide range of sources to assist in the formulation of a balanced range of recommendations. The Forum's key recommendations to the Cabinet are as outlined below:-
- (a) That the local authority take the lead in providing a co-ordinated leadership approach across the different providers in order to facilitate a systematic approach to tackling health inequalities in the town, culminating in the creation of a Family In Need Strategy and specifically designated Executive Portfolio with responsibility for Social Inclusion;
  - (b) That subject to the implementation of recommendation (a) above, the local authority, acting as strategic leader, enter into formal arrangements with partner organisations (i.e. Police, PCT, FT, Housing Hartlepool and the Voluntary Sector);
  - (c) That the FIP Project be expanded in light of its effectiveness thus far in targeting hard to reach families;
  - (d) That the Connected Care Programme be rolled out across the town as a positive way of helping reach families that would not normally interact with either the council or engage with health services;
  - (e) That the use of the model of intervention implemented through the FIP Project and Connected Care Project be explored as a basis for a more

far reaching Families in Need Strategy, bringing together the activities of all partners / stakeholders with a dedicated Portfolio Holder taking the co-ordinating role;

- (f) That other agencies / bodies be consulted and involved in the further development of the various forms of CAF (Pre CAF, Full CAF or E.CAF) in order to ensure the creation of an assessment framework that can be used by across the board;
- (g) That in order to strengthen links and communication routes between agencies, the establishment of a co-ordinated, single point of contact for the referral of information and referrals from any source be explored (i.e. a 'one stop shop' telephone number or point of contact);
- (h) That the feasibility of introducing a similar way of gathering and sharing data in Hartlepool, as has been implemented by Westminster Council (i.e. a Multi-Agency Information Desk) be explored;
- (i) That ways of providing and promoting programmes that are not badged as being run by official bodies, including those run by the Voluntary Sector, should be explored as a way of reaching families that are reluctant to engage the Council, PCT, FT or other partner bodies; and
- (j) That a system be put in place to ensure that where new public buildings / facilities are constructed (i.e. the new health centre) the inclusion of a place where advice / assistance and other integrated services can be provided is explored.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Forum is grateful to all those who have presented evidence during the course of our investigation. We would like to place on record our appreciation, in particular of the willingness and co-operation we have received from the below named:-

### Hartlepool Borough Council:

- (i) Ian Merritt, Head of Commissioning and the Children's Partnership;
- (ii) Keith Munro, Common Assessment Framework Systems Manager;
- (iii) Geraldine Martin, Head of Adult Services;
- (iv) Danielle Swainston, Sure Start, Extended Schools and Early Year Manager;
- (v) John Robinson, Children's Fund Manager;
- (vi) Jill Harrison, Assistant Director of Commissioning;
- (vii) Sally Forth, Anti-social Behaviour Unit, Anti-social Behaviour Co-ordinator;
- (viii) Nicola Dunleavy, Anti-social Behaviour Unit, Interventions Co-ordinator;
- (ix) Louise Hurst, Youth Offending Team, Youth Offending Service Manager;
- (x) Jacquie Gofton, Youth Offending Team, Prevention Manager; and
- (xi) Penny Garner-Carpenter, Strategic Housing Manager.

External Representatives:

- (i) Paul Thompson, Hartlepool Families First;
- (ii) Sheila Tailorson, Hartlepool Patch;
- (iii) Judith Hall, Advisory Services Manager, Job Centre Plus
- (iv) Kevin McAuley, Connected Care;
- (v) Paul Magee, Connected Care;
- (vi) Ian Worthy, New Deal for Communities;
- (vii) Carole Jones, New Deal for Communities;
- (viii) Richard Harrety, Practice Based Commissioning Account Manager;
- (ix) Bev Caswell, General Manager (Family Services);
- (x) Anne Carey, Acting General Manager Emergency Care Services;
- (xi) Inspector Knights, Cleveland Constabulary;
- (xii) Andy Powell, Director of Housing Services, Housing Hartlepool; and
- (xiii) Madeline Johnson, Acting Director of Public Health.

**COUNCILLOR JONATHAN BRASH  
CHAIR OF THE HEALTH SCRUTINY FORUM**

**April 2008**

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**BACKGROUND PAPERS**

The following background papers were consulted or referred to in the preparation of this report:-

- (i) "Think Family: Improving the Life Chances of Families at Risk";
- (ii) Cabinet Office Social Inclusion Task Force. 'Reaching Out: Think Family ([http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/~media/assets/www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/social\\_exclusion\\_task\\_force/think\\_families/think\\_families\\_full\\_report%20pdf.ashx](http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/~media/assets/www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/social_exclusion_task_force/think_families/think_families_full_report%20pdf.ashx));
- (iii) Cabinet Office Social Inclusion Task Force. 'Think Families: Improving the Life Chances of Families at Risk' ([http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/~media/assets/www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/social\\_exclusion\\_task\\_force/think\\_families/think\\_family\\_life\\_chances\\_report%20pdf.ashx](http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/~media/assets/www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/social_exclusion_task_force/think_families/think_family_life_chances_report%20pdf.ashx));
- (iv) <http://www.westminster.gov.uk/onecity/families.cfm>;

- (v) Report of the Scrutiny Support Officer entitled 'Reaching Families in Need – Scoping Report' Presented to the Health Scrutiny Forum on 9 September 2008;
- (vi) Minutes from the Health Scrutiny Forum meetings held on the:
  - 9 September 2008;
  - 14 October 2008;
  - 4 November 2008;
  - 9 December 2008;
  - 8 January 2008;
  - 20 January 2009; and
  - 10 February 2008.



# SCRUTINY CO-ORDINATING COMMITTEE

24 April 2009



**Report of:** Regeneration and Planning Services Scrutiny Forum

**Subject:** THE MARKETING OF HARTLEPOOL – FINAL REPORT

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## 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To present the findings of the Regeneration and Planning Services Scrutiny Forum following its investigation into 'The Marketing of Hartlepool'.

## 2. SETTING THE SCENE

2.1 At the meeting of this Forum on 19 June 2008 Members determined their Work Programme for the 2008/09 Municipal Year. The topic of 'The Marketing of Hartlepool' was agreed to form a major in-depth Scrutiny Inquiry for the Forum's 2008/09 Work Programme.

2.2 Responsibility for the marketing and promotion of Hartlepool falls under the remit of the Economic Development Section which is part of the Regeneration and Planning Services Department of the Council.

2.3 Marketing and promotion are generally aimed at two particular audiences:

(i) potential visitors; and

(ii) potential business investors interested in developing and / or establishing businesses.

2.4 With respect to the visitor market, STEAM (Scarborough Tourism Economic Activity Monitor) provides local authorities with the best evidence of the overall impact that visitors can make to a local economy as shown overleaf in Table1:-

Table 1: STEAM Statistics for Hartlepool

	1997	2003	2005*
<b>Economic Impact</b>	<b>£22,839,000</b>	<b>£30,198,000</b>	<b>£43,647,000</b>
Accommodation	£1,137,000	£2,171,000	£2,685,000
Food and Drink	£5,221,000	£6,599,000	£13,685,000
Recreation	£2,871,000	£3,683,000	£2,646,000
Shopping	£3,505,000	£4,355,000	£4,518,000
Transport	£552,000	£695,000	£1,800,000
Indirect Expenditure and VAT	£9,552,000	£12,694,000	£18,313,000

\* Figures are currently draft

2.5 The Tall Ships' Races provides a particular marketing / promotional opportunity. For the first time from 7-10 August 2010 the Tall Ships' Races will be hosted by Hartlepool. It is estimated that over 1 million people<sup>1</sup> visited Liverpool during the weekend of 18-21 July 2008 to see the Tall Ships' Races injecting £30 million<sup>1</sup> into the local economy. As Hartlepool's Mayor said, the arrival of the Tall Ships' Races in 2010 gives Hartlepool a "tremendous opportunity to showcase the town"<sup>2</sup>

### 3. OVERALL AIM OF THE SCRUTINY INVESTIGATION

3.1 To gain an understanding of how Hartlepool is marketed in terms of tourism and business and identify ways of further raising the profile of the Town.

### 4. TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE SCRUTINY INVESTIGATION

4.1 The following Terms of Reference for the investigation were agreed by the Regeneration and Planning Services Scrutiny Forum on 4 September 2009:-

- (a) To gain an understanding of the role and responsibility that Hartlepool Borough Council has towards the marketing of Hartlepool to attract visitors and encourage businesses to the town;
- (b) To review the role of Hartlepool at a local, sub-regional and regional basis in relation to its profile and ensuring that at each level the requirements of the Town are being represented;
- (c) To examine the marketing and promotion of Tall Ships 2010 and ensure that the Town continues to benefit from the exposure post-2010;
- (d) To identify key partner bodies who engage and are responsible for helping to raise the profile of Hartlepool as a place to work and visit; and

<sup>1</sup> Liverpool Daily Post, 22 July 2008

<sup>2</sup> Hartlepool Borough Council, 28 June 2008

- (e) To examine the changes in the provision of information used in the marketing to new businesses and visitors in light of the development of information technology.

## **5. MEMBERSHIP OF THE REGENERATION AND PLANNING SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM**

- 5.1 The membership of the Regeneration and Planning Services Scrutiny Forum for the 2008/09 Municipal Year was as detailed below:-

Councillors R Cook, S Cook (Chair), Gibbon, London, A Marshall, Morris, Richardson, Wright (Vice Chair), and Young

Resident Representatives:

John Lynch, Brian McBean and Iris Ryder

## **6. METHODS OF INVESTIGATION**

- 6.1 Members of the Regeneration and Planning Services Scrutiny Forum met formally from 4 September 2008 to 9 April 2009 to discuss and receive evidence relating to this investigation. A detailed record of the issues raised during these meetings is available from the Council's Democratic Services.

- 6.2 A brief summary of the methods of investigation are outlined below:-

- (a) Detailed presentations and reports from Hartlepool Borough Council Officers which was enhanced with verbal evidence;
- (b) Verbal evidence from the Authority's Elected Mayor in his role as Mayor and Portfolio Holder for Regeneration and Liveability;
- (c) Verbal evidence from the Authority's Portfolio Holder for Culture, Leisure and Tourism;
- (d) Verbal Evidence from key partners from Middleton Grange Shopping Centre, Cream Restaurants, York House Hotel, Tees Valley Regeneration and the HMS Trincomalee Trust; and
- (e) Site visit by Members to South Tyneside Council to examine another local authority's marketing strategy.

**FINDINGS****7. HARTLEPOOL BOROUGH COUNCIL'S ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITY IN MARKETING THE TOWN TO TOURISTS AND BUSINESSES**

- 7.1 On the 3 October Members of the Regeneration and Planning Services Scrutiny Forum received detailed evidence from officers from the Regeneration and Planning Services Department into the role and responsibility that Hartlepool Borough Council has towards the marketing of the Town to tourists and businesses. Members learnt that the marketing activity is aimed at three distinct audiences and promoted in different ways as detailed below:-

**Marketing to Potential Visitors**

- 7.2 Potential Visitors can be classified as three groups, those people who are either the traditional tourist coming on a day visit or overnight stay to visit the attractions or facilities that Hartlepool has to offer, business and the contract market who are either staying or visiting the Town.
- 7.3 Members noted that in order to attract the leisure visitor, it was important that the Council promoted the attractions that Hartlepool had to offer. With its coastal outlook Hartlepool's attractions are focussed on the Marina, the Maritime Experience (including the HMS Trincomalee and the PS Wingfield Castle) and Seaton Carew beach, however, the historical nature of the Headland also drew people to the area as did the variety of eating establishments in Hartlepool, the Town Hall Theatre, the Heugh Battery, the Town's connection to the cartoon strip character Andy Capp and Hartlepool's military and religious history.
- 7.4 Business and contract workers were slightly different in that they were often drawn into the area due to circumstances surrounding their work. Members recognised that business and contract workers may well be influenced to return to Hartlepool due to the range of visitor facilities that draw the traditional tourist, however, visitor accommodation was an important commodity to these two groups as was the provision of shops and restaurants.
- 7.5 In order to attract potential visitors to Hartlepool, Members learnt that the Council's Regeneration and Planning Services Department had a dedicated Tourism Team, comprising of two members of staff, who utilised various marketing tools as detailed below:-
- (i) Managing the [www.destinationhartlepool.com](http://www.destinationhartlepool.com) website;
  - (ii) Production of the Hartlepool Mini Guide;
  - (ii) Production of the Eat in Hartlepool guide;

- (iv) Production of the Hartlepool Town Map;
- (v) Support for individual marketing projects, such as the Maritime Festival;
- (vi) Promotion of the Redcar, Saltburn & Hartlepool Golf Week;
- (vii) Production of an annual newsletter to businesses;
- (viii) Managing the three network groups (Passport, Hotels and Restaurants); which involve the key providers across Hartlepool and provide these providers with information to support their business and encouraging them to engage with each other; and
- (ix) Input to Tees Valley wide marketing activity and support the North East Tourism Network.

Members were interested that the annual cost of promoting Hartlepool to potential visitors totalled £21,012 during 2007/08, although Members were pleased that this budget had been increased through advertisements and sponsorship by local businesses.

### **Marketing to Potential Property Investors and Developers**

- 7.6 Members of the Regeneration and Planning Services Scrutiny Forum were acutely aware that potential property investors and developers were an important group of people who were vital in further developing Hartlepool for both manufacturing and service sector employers. This audience was drawn to Hartlepool by what property was currently available in the Town, the value of property and the level of service availability. The example of Queens Meadow was acknowledged by Members to be an excellent project that had drawn investors and developers into Hartlepool.
- 7.7 Members were informed that this area of marketing was very much a partnership approach by Hartlepool Borough Council and Tees Valley Regeneration (TVR). TVR maintained an up to date business directory that Hartlepool Borough Council could use when target marketing specific investors or developers via e-marketing, direct mail campaigns and property or development exhibitions. The Forum was particularly impressed by the Queens Meadow brochure produced through this partnership relationship.

### **Marketing to Potential Incoming Businesses**

- 7.8 The audience of potential incoming businesses was reflective of the influences that drew property investors and developers to Hartlepool, but they had additional interests relating to the labour market available in Hartlepool, supply chain accessibility and the availability of appropriate accommodation to house both their workers and their potential management.

- 7.9 As with the potential investors and developers, the Forum noted that a partnership approach with TVR was necessary for Hartlepool to achieve fully its goal of attracting incoming businesses to the Town. When and where specific sites or property offers became available, these were emailed to a list of over 10,000 clients on a quarterly basis, however, for international business attraction this was handled by the Invest in Britain Bureau through One North East (ONE) and TVR.
- 7.10 With the closure of a number of high street stores such as Woolworths, Greenwoods and Adams there was concern amongst Members about the number of empty units in the Middleton Grange Shopping Centre. Members were advised at their meeting on 20 February 2009 that marketing activity was a commercial consideration between operators and traders, but that officers did liaise with the shopping centre management over measures to seek to support the centre. Discussions had taken place on how to encourage more shoppers and it had recently been agreed that car parking charges would be lifted at certain times of the day.

### **Evidence from the Authority's Elected Mayor**

- 7.11 At the meeting of the Forum of 3 October 2008, the Mayor provided Members with his evidence as both Mayor and Portfolio Holder for Regeneration and Planning. The Mayor highlighted his concerns over the marketing budget that had been 'salami sliced' through the years and that marketing of Hartlepool's attractions and visitor facilities was vitally important in encouraging visitors and ensuring investment in the businesses in Hartlepool, leading to a more prosperous Town. The Mayor surprised Members when he revealed that survey work indicated that 70% of Hartlepudlians had not visited Hartlepool's Maritime Experience.

## **8. ENSURING THE REQUIREMENTS OF HARTLEPOOL ARE REPRESENTED THROUGH ITS PROFILE AT A LOCAL, SUB-REGIONAL AND REGIONAL BASIS**

- 8.1 Members had already noted in evidence on attracting businesses and investors to Hartlepool that at times a partnership approach was required and this meant Hartlepool engaging at a Tees Valley level, however, there were also circumstances that gave Hartlepool a role to play at a North East regional level. Members of the Forum were keen to learn more about how Hartlepool was positioned to market itself within these differing level and the evidence gathered is as follows:-

### **Marketing to Potential Visitors**

- 8.2 At the meeting of the Forum on 3 October 2008, Members were heard evidence on how potential visitors were drawn into Hartlepool at a local level as detailed in sections 7.2-7.5, however, in addition to this potential visitors were also attracted to Hartlepool in its role that it played at a sub-regional and regional basis.

- 8.3 At a sub-regional basis potential visitors were drawn to the Tees Valley region through the work of the Area Tourism Partnership (ATP) known collectively as visitTeesvalley. This enabled all authorities within the Tees Valley region to work collectively together to attract potential visitors to the sub-region and ensure that the highlights of each town are broadcast to all visitors. Members were encouraged that this was the most effective and efficient use of the budgetary resources of the Tourism Team and enabled Hartlepool to be have a profile represented by visitTeesvalley that worked at a much higher level than would have been achievable through the current resources at the Team's disposal. In working through visitTeesvalley, Hartlepool Borough Council's Tourism Team's activity has targeted markets which could not have been reached effectively within their current budgets.
- 8.4 It was noted by Members of the Forum that the lack of accommodation in the Town was something that discouraged overnight visitors so, therefore, it was important to ensure that Hartlepool was networked at a Tees Valley level so it could tap into the broader range of accommodation in its neighbouring local authorities.
- 8.5 The cost of TV and Newspaper advertising was recognised by Members of the Forum at their meeting of 3 October 2008 as being an extremely costly method of marketing Hartlepool. Although visitTeesvalley had some influence in this arena, it was the work carried out by ONE that gave Hartlepool a national and international voice in attracting potential visitors. The 'Passionate People Passionate Places' TV advertising campaign, run since 2005 by ONE, has included Hartlepool as part of a wider campaign to attract visitors to the North East region as a whole.

### **Marketing to Potential Property Investors and Developers**

- 8.6 Members of the Regeneration and Planning Services Scrutiny Forum acknowledged that they had already received evidence on the key role that TVR played alongside Hartlepool Borough Council in attracting potential property investors and developers into Hartlepool as detailed in sections 7.6-7.7. At their meeting of the 3 October 2008, Members were learnt that when a property investor or developer logs an interest in being sited in Hartlepool, a joint meeting is arranged between TVR and Hartlepool Borough Council. With the involvement of TVR, potential investors and developers can be offered bespoke solutions to their needs as well as offers of help for grant applications.
- 8.7 At their meeting of the 2 February 2009, Members were concerned about Hartlepool's peripheral position in comparison with many other parts of the Tees Valley and the importance of marketing Hartlepool individually to assist with economic issues, however, the Forum was reassured by the Head of Business Investment from TVR, that the focus of TVR was to promote the area as a whole and to encourage businesses to set up in the area.

## Marketing to Potential Incoming Businesses

- 8.8 Sections 7.8-7.9 detail the evidence gathered by the Regeneration and Planning Services Forum into not only the profile of Hartlepool at a North East regional level, but also the need for it to have a profile at an international level. However, when the Forum met on the 2 February 2009, Members queried why the marketing of Hartlepool to incoming businesses was handled by ONE and not Hartlepool Borough Council. The Assistant Director, Planning and Economic Development advised Members that the current mechanism worked well and there were many difficulties in accessing worldwide markets, not least the current budget provision which did not lend itself to solo marketing from the Authority.
- 8.9 The Head of Business Investment (TVR) indicated to Members on the 2 February 2009 that the role of TVR was to ensure that information for the Tees Valley as a whole was provided to potential developers and there was no emphasis on any particular location. The aim was to attract investment to the Tees Valley in the first instance and then offer the best property options in light of the needs of the particular enquiry.
- 8.10 Members questioned the Head of Business Investment (TVR) at their meeting of the 2 February 2009 about the types of skills data available for the area. The Forum was advised that skills data was available to national and international markets on a sector basis, for example the process and chemical industry labour supply offer.

## Visit to South Tyneside Council

- 8.11 On 5 March 2009, Members of the Regeneration and Planning Services Scrutiny Forum visited South Tyneside Council to gather evidence about how a local authority similar in its amenities and size ensured that it marketed its assets in an effective and efficient manner. South Tyneside has a population of roughly 150,000 people and covers the areas of Hebbum, Jarrow, Boldon, Whitburn and its administrative centre in South Shields. The evidence gathered by Members who undertook the visit is detailed as follows:-
- (i) That 5 million tourists (STEAM research) visit South Tyneside each year, which includes those who stop in the area when the Great North Run occurs. Members were interested to learn that the Great North Run also has a positive impact on accommodation providers in Hartlepool;
  - (ii) Similarities exist between the two Towns, in that the majority of visitors (95%) to South Shields were day trippers and the aim of the Council is to convert these day trippers into overnight stays. The problem that both Towns' share is the small number and range of accommodation provision which is available to potential visitors, although the current number does meet current needs;



- (iii) The marketing budget for South Tyneside is £90,000 per year, with £25,000 being spent on advertising campaigns. Although Hartlepool's figure is only £15,000 per year with £9,000 spent on printed materials supplemented through income generation of £3,000, it was noted by Members that Hartlepool had a smaller population, smaller overall Council budget and that despite a higher budget businesses in Hartlepool have better one-to-one contact with officers; and
- (iv) Members also compared the roles and positions of Hartlepool within their respective ATPs, recognising that Hartlepool is prominently featured within the Tees Valley ATP's work.

## 9. MARKETING AND PROMOTING THE TALL SHIPS' RACES 2010

- 9.1 Members in choosing the topic of the Marketing of Hartlepool had stressed the importance of ensuring that Hartlepool was making the most of the assets that it had to offer to potential visitors. In ensuring that Hartlepool was marketed appropriately and best represented the needs of the Town, so it would be ideally placed to tap into the potential bonanza of new visitors drawn to Hartlepool by The Tall Ships' Races in 2010. Members felt that it was important that new visitors drawn in by The Tall Ships' Races were encouraged to return and seek out other places of interest that Hartlepool had to offer. In order to focus on such a momentous event for Hartlepool, Members dedicated their meeting of the 31 October 2008 to gather evidence on the promotion and marketing of the Tall Ships Races' 2010. The evidence gathered from the 31 October 2008 meeting is detailed below:-
- 9.2 Members were informed that visitTeesvalley were chairing the Marketing and Communications Workstream for The Tall Ships Races and that representatives of visitTeesvalley had been given a specific presentation highlighting the areas of interest that The Tall Ships' Races would bring to the Tees Valley and Hartlepool in particular. To ensure that Hartlepool was prepared in relation to the marketing of the event to potential visitors, captains and crew, links had been built and good practice shared with past and future host ports in Aalborg, Antwerp, Kristiansand, Belfast, Liverpool, Newcastle and Gateshead.
- 9.3 Members were pleased to learn that a number of marketing and promotional activities had already taken place, although the Forum accepted that this would increase once the calendar year moved onto 2009 and the Council's PR Team was complemented with an officer dedicated for the PR of the Tall Ships' Races 2010. Details of the marketing and promotional activities undertaken or planned were detailed to Members as follows:-
- (i) Production of a distinct event brand;
  - (ii) Key businesses using event branding;
  - (iii) [www.hartlepooltallships2010](http://www.hartlepooltallships2010) website launched;

- (iv) Promotional letterhead templates to be produced;
  - (v) Using current marketing materials to promote the event in a cost effective manner; and
  - (vi) Future production of an e-newsletter.
- 9.4 In addition to the planned activities under section 9.3, Members suggested additional marketing proposals including the following:-
- (i) Turn the map promoting vantage points and car parking into disposable restaurant place mats;
  - (ii) Utilisation of the event graphic / logo on all Council stationery and emails; and
  - (iii) The signposting of attendees to the races of the other attractions in the Town.
- 9.5 Although excited by the event, Members of the Forum were keen to ensure that The Tall Ships' Races resulted in repeat visitors. The Assistant Director, Planning and Economic Development reassured Members that visitors to the event would have their data captured to encourage them to revisit Hartlepool at a later date. The Public Relations Manager informed Members that local train operators had been approached to carry leaflets detailing what Hartlepool has to offer in addition to The Tall Ships' Races before, during and after the event.
- 9.6 The Assistant Director, Planning and Economic Development indicated to Members that a Council budget had been specifically earmarked for the event that could be drawn from to market the event. The Forum were also informed that additional funding was being sought from ONE, along with other external funders, potential sponsorship opportunities and in-kind contributions.
- 10. KEY PARTNERS WHO ENGAGE WITH HARTLEPOOL BOROUGH COUNCIL TO RAISE THE PROFILE OF THE TOWN**
- 10.1 At their meeting of 3 October 2008, Members had heard from the Portfolio Holder for Culture, Leisure and Tourism who had highlighted one of the key partners in raising the profile of the Town, as being the people who lived in Hartlepool. The Portfolio Holder for Culture, Leisure and Tourism informed Members of a recent encounter with some Australian tourists visiting the town who had made very encouraging remarks about Hartlepool. However, the Portfolio Holder for Culture, Leisure and Tourism highlighted the importance of residents taking responsibility for their Town in not only ensuring that littering didn't become a problem, but that they assist in the promotion of the excellent facilities that the town had to offer

10.2 Broader than the public of Hartlepool, the success of the marketing of Hartlepool often involved key partners such as ONE, TVR and visitTeesvalley. However at the Regeneration and Planning Services Scrutiny Forum meeting of 3 October 2008, Members were informed by the Principal Economic Development Officer (Tourism) that three key network groups existed in the Town to help market Hartlepool as a visitor destination and significant support from businesses was key to this approach as highlighted below:-

- (i) Passport Group;  
Set up to look at the overall strategic tourist activities that can benefit local businesses.
- (ii) Hotels Group;  
Involving the accommodation providers in Hartlepool, the Hotels Group have developed a tourism map, email loop service, visitor survey and facilities sheets.
- (iii) Restaurant Group.  
Involves some of the restaurants in Hartlepool and has been instrumental in the development of the Eat Guide, as well as co-ordinating Taste Events with Hartlepool College.

10.2 Members felt that it was important to hear from these key partners and when the Forum met on the 2 February 2009 a number of key business representatives were invited to provide their evidence as detailed below:-

#### **Evidence from Cream Restaurants Ltd**

10.3 The Managing Director, Cream Restaurants Ltd reported to Members of the Regeneration and Planning Services Scrutiny Forum that as a visitTeesvalley Board Member he was fully aware of the marketing activities in the town and throughout the Tees Valley. The efforts by the Economic Development Team to promote the Passport Group and Hartlepool were widely recognised. The improvements in the town were something to be proud of and the value of these improvements in terms of marketing were emphasised. However, it was acknowledged that there were further improvements that could be made and that businesses had an important part to play in relation to the quality of the visitor experience which they provide.

10.4 The thoughts of Members were inspired when the Managing Director stressed the view that tourists visiting family or friends were an invaluable form of marketing and were likely to promote and share their experiences of the town. The issue of public perception was a major factor in terms of marketing the town. The Forum recognised that the businesses played a part in the visitor experience and it was important that they provided the right quality of experience in order to encourage repeat and new visitors. An increase in visitor numbers could not be left solely to the role of a marketing activity.

### **Evidence from Middleton Grange Shopping Centre**

- 10.5 As a key partner and focal point of the Town centre, the Centre Manager endorsed the comments made by the Managing Director from Cream Restaurants (section 10.4) in relation to the fantastic efforts of the Council's Economic Development Team. The Town Centre Manager informed Members that the marketing material produced by the Authority was extremely good, but the rationale behind a repeat visit was reflected more in the experience the visitor had once they were in the Town. It was considered that the marketing material was good and pointed out that marketing was very much about people's experiences when visiting the town.

### **Evidence from HMS Trincomalee Trust**

- 10.6 The General Manager from the HMS Trincomalee Trust informed the Forum that as a Board Member of visitTeesvalley there were some issues in relation to marketing that were as a result of funding. The advantages of the Passport Group and the valid contribution of the local authority which enabled contributors from the business, voluntary and public sectors to come together were invaluable, but the importance of promoting the right image for visitors with good signage and no litter problems were highlighted as well as the need to promote localised awareness of what the town has to offer.

### **Evidence from York House Hotel**

- 10.7 The General Manager from the York Hotel commented on the excellent amenities the town had to offer and the importance of promoting localised awareness to encourage residents to explore their local environment rather than travel to other areas.

## **11. THE CHANGES IN THE PROVISION OF MARKETING INFORMATION**

- 11.1 When the Regeneration and Planning Services Scrutiny Forum met on the 3 October 2008, Members received information on the current methods of marketing Hartlepool. There had been major changes to the way marketing material had been produced, with an emphasis away from the printed media into electronic methods of marketing. Members were interested to learn that the level of budget required for a marketing campaign was very much dependent on the subject matter and media used for different marketing campaigns.
- 11.2 The Principal Economic Development Officer (Tourism) highlighted to Members at their meeting of 3 October 2008 that the destinationhartlepool website was a dual site that housed information for both visitors and businesses. Rather than confusing the message to both distinct audiences, the site allowed a choice of whether to examine opportunities for leisure or business and follow those choices through into sub-sites. This enabled the Team to manage one website and promote both sub-sites at the same time.

- 11.3 The Forum also heard evidence about the vital role played by the regional Destination Management System (DMS), called desti.ne, which populates all the key tourism websites both locally and nationally, allowing businesses to be visible to a global audience. The DMS has also provided opportunities for businesses in Hartlepool to include online bookability through a service called frontdesk, promotion on nationally recognised websites such as lastminute.com and expedia.com, the management of their own business information online and the opportunity to tap into key marketing opportunities across the region.

## 12. CONCLUSIONS

- 12.1 The Regeneration and Planning Services Scrutiny Forum concluded:-
- (a) That the support provided by officers to the businesses in Hartlepool is greatly welcomed by those businesses in the Town;
  - (b) That the marketing budget whilst not being well resourced, is utilised to its fullest potential;
  - (c) That businesses can and are working in partnership to market Hartlepool;
  - (d) That The Tall Ships' Races 2010 gives Hartlepool the opportunity to attract a sizeable increase in visitor numbers in the long-term;
  - (e) That Hartlepool's places of interest are not well known enough both externally and within the Town;
  - (f) That the current transport system in Hartlepool does not encourage visitors into the Town, particularly through the delays in the development of the Hartlepool Transport Interchange;
  - (g) That unique selling points, such as the newly authorised horse drawn carriages, should be encouraged to enhance the experience of visiting Hartlepool;
  - (h) That Hartlepool and the Tees Valley as a whole has an external perception that is discouraging visitors from coming into the area, although Members agreed that there had been many improvements in both the product and general awareness and perceptions of the business and visitor market;
  - (i) That the geographical position of Hartlepool as not being a major thoroughfare to other larger cities and visitor attractions, does not help encourage passing visitors; and

- (j) That signage into and around the Town does not help direct visitors towards attractions.

### 13. RECOMMENDATIONS

13.1 The Regeneration and Planning Services Scrutiny Forum has taken evidence from a wide range of sources to assist in the formulation of a balanced range of recommendations. The Forum's key recommendations to the Cabinet are as outlined below:-

- (a) That the residents and businesses of Hartlepool be encouraged to celebrate the visitor and business attractions that Hartlepool has to offer;
- (b) That the destinationhartlepool website should feature video footage of the visitors attractions in Hartlepool;
- (c) That residents within Tees Valley be encouraged to visit Hartlepool and that tourism officers from the region are given a guided tour of the attractions that Hartlepool has to offer;
- (d) That the signage into and around Hartlepool be:-
  - (i) Reviewed, with particular reference to interpretation signage; and
  - (ii) Re-examined in relation to the use of an intermediary company who charges the Council for signage on roundabouts in Hartlepool with consideration about bringing 'in-house'.
- (e) That there be continued encouragement and incentives for new businesses to settle in the Town on existing sites and where these sites no longer meet the incoming needs, new business sites be developed.

### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Committee is grateful to all those who have presented evidence during the course of our investigation. We would like to place on record our appreciation, in particular of the willingness and co-operation we have received from the below named:-

Hartlepool Borough Council:

The Mayor, Stuart Drummond – Portfolio Holder for Regeneration and Liveability;

Councillor Victor Tumilty – Portfolio Holder for Culture, Leisure and Tourism;

Stuart Green – Assistant Director, Planning and Economic Development;

Antony Steinberg – Economic Development Manager;

Jo Cole – Principal Economic Development Officer (Tourism);

John Mennear – Assistant Director, Adult and Community Services;

Michelle Daurat – Tall Ships Project Manager;

Alastair Rae – Public Relations Manager.

External Representatives:

Krimo Bouabda – Managing Director, Cream Restaurants Ltd;

Bryn Hughes – General Manager, HMS Trincomalee Trust;

John Leer – Head of Business Investment, Tees Valley Regeneration;

Daniel Raudin – General Manager, York House Hotel;

Mark Rycraft – Centre Manager, Middleton Grange Shopping Centre;

Gillian Quinn – Assistant Tourism Officer, South Tyneside Council.

**COUNCILLOR SHAUN COOK  
CHAIR OF THE REGENERATION AND PLANNING SERVICES SCRUTINY  
FORUM**

**April 2009**

**Contact Officer:** James Walsh – Scrutiny Support Officer  
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**BACKGROUND PAPERS**

The following background papers were consulted or referred to in the preparation of this report:-

- (a) Heward, J. (2008) ‘Hartlepool to Host Tall Ships’, *Hartlepool Borough Council*, 28 June, [online] Available from [http://www.hartlepool.gov.uk/site/scripts/news\\_article.php?newsID=233](http://www.hartlepool.gov.uk/site/scripts/news_article.php?newsID=233) (Accessed 19 August 2008).

- (b) Sharpe, L. (2008) 'Liverpool Waves of the Tall Ships', *Liverpool Daily Post*, 22 July, [online] Available from <http://www.liverpooldailypost.co.uk/liverpool-news/regional-news/2008/07/22/liverpool-waves-off-the-tall-ships-64375-21380424/2/> (Accessed 19 August 2008).
- (c) Report of the Scrutiny Support Officer entitled 'Scrutiny Investigation into the Marketing of Hartlepool – Scoping Report' presented to the Regeneration and Planning Services Scrutiny Forum of 4 September 2008.
- (d) Report of the Director of Regeneration and Planning Services entitled 'Scrutiny Investigation into the Marketing of Hartlepool: Setting the Scene' presented to the Regeneration and Planning Services Scrutiny Forum of 3 October 2008.
- (e) Report of the Scrutiny Support Officer entitled 'Scrutiny Investigation into the Marketing of Hartlepool – Evidence from the Authority's Portfolio Holder for Regeneration and Liveability and Portfolio Holder for Culture, Leisure and Tourism – Covering Report' presented to the Regeneration and Planning Services Scrutiny Forum of 3 October 2008.
- (f) Report of the Director of Regeneration and Planning Services entitled 'Scrutiny Investigation into the Marketing of Hartlepool: The Tall Ship[s] Races 2010' presented to the Regeneration and Planning Services Scrutiny Forum of 31 October 2008.
- (g) Report of the Scrutiny Support Officer entitled 'Scrutiny Investigation into the Marketing of Hartlepool – Evidence from Key Partners – Covering Report' presented to the Regeneration and Planning Services Scrutiny Forum of 20 February 2009.
- (h) Report of the Scrutiny Support Officer entitled 'Scrutiny Investigation into the Marketing of Hartlepool: Feedback from Site Visit – Covering Report' presented to the Regeneration and Planning Services Scrutiny Forum of 6 March 2009.
- (i) Minutes of the Regeneration and Planning Services Scrutiny Forum of 4 September 2008, 3 October 2008, 31 October 2008, 20 February 2009 and 6 March 2009.



# SCRUTINY CO-ORDINATING COMMITTEE

24 April 2009



**Report of:** Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum

**Subject:** COASTAL DEFENCES AND SHORELINE  
MANAGEMENT IN HARTLEPOOL – FINAL REPORT

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## 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To present the findings of the Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum following its investigation into Coastal Defences and Shoreline Management in Hartlepool.

## 2. SETTING THE SCENE

- 2.1 At the meeting of the Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum of 11 July 2008, Members determined their Work Programme for the 2008/09 Municipal Year. The topic of 'Coastal Defences and Shoreline Management in Hartlepool' was agreed as the second topic for investigation for the Forum's 2008/09 work programme. This investigation was conducted over a shorter period of time than usual; hence the approach adopted gathered evidence from key stakeholders only.
- 2.2 Hartlepool has 9.6km (6 miles) of coast line which is made up of both Council land and privately owned land with one length of coast protection structure in shared ownership with PD Ports who make a contribution to the maintenance and repair of the structure. The basic structure of the coast determines the use of the coast, the interest in the coast and the associated risks and therefore this all influences the management of the shoreline. The geology of the coastline provides the opportunity for education, awareness and scientific research as to how the environment has changed. This awareness underpins the understanding of how the coast works and how it may develop in the future.
- 2.3 The Coast Protection Act 1949, established the regulatory framework for England's coastline and the Coast Protection Authorities all around the coast. Hartlepool Borough Council is the designated Coast Protection Authority which "shall have such powers and perform such duties in

connection with the protection of land” to ensure the adequate ‘coast protection’ of the Borough.

- 2.4 By way of background information, Shoreline Management is a broad term used for the subject areas of coastal processes and sea defences. Shoreline management is an essential element of coastal protection and development.
- 2.5 A coast protection structure is a structure that protects the land from eroding due to the action of the sea. This happens where the natural land form is higher than high tide levels and if left unprotected would erode and wash away over a period of time. The statutory duty for coast protection rests with the Local Authority who also has permissive powers to deal with privately owned structures.
- 2.6 A sea defence is defined as a barrier between the sea and the land, which acts as a defence from flooding of land where the natural land form is below the high tide levels and would flood from the sea if left undefended. For example, rock armour or a sea wall. Natural formations can also act as sea defences, for example, sand dunes and salt marshes, which have now become more widely recognised. The statutory duty for sea defence rests with the Environment Agency, not the local authority. However, there are not many sea defence structures in Hartlepool.
- 2.7 A coast defence structure provides protection against both flooding and erosion. Most of the structures that Hartlepool Borough Council are responsible for are of this type. Historically, where there is this dual role, the Council has led on project / maintenance issues to ensure that the requirements and priorities of Hartlepool were best met.

### **3. OVERALL AIM OF THE SCRUTINY INVESTIGATION**

- 3.1 The overall aim of the scrutiny investigation was to investigate the problems caused by coastal erosion to Hartlepool’s coastline and assess the long term viability of the existing sea defences evaluating how shoreline management and strategy studies can help prevent future coastal erosion.

### **4. TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE SCRUTINY INVESTIGATION**

- 4.1 The following Terms of Reference for the investigation were as outlined below:-
- (a) To identify areas of coastal erosion along Hartlepool’s coastline;
  - (b) To identify the problems and risks associated with coastal erosion along Hartlepool’s coastline;
  - (c) To examine the existing coastal defences to assess their effectiveness and long term viability;

- (d) To examine the financial implications to Hartlepool Borough Council of maintaining its coast protection / defence structures;
- (e) To examine local plans / strategies of relevance to evaluate the Council's approach to shoreline management and how these, along with risk management can prevent future coastal erosion;
- (f) To compare Hartlepool's approach to shoreline management with other local authorities / organisations by consulting to seek good practice; and
- (g) To consult with key stakeholders on the Council's approach to shoreline management.

## **5. MEMBERSHIP OF THE NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM**

### **5.1 Membership of the Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum for the 2008/9 Municipal Year was as outlined below:-**

Councillors Akers-Belcher (Chair), Barker, R W Cook, Coward, Cranney, Fleming, McKenna (Vice – Chair), Worthy and Wright

Resident Representatives: Mary Green, John Cambridge and Brenda Loynes

## **6. METHODS OF INVESTIGATION**

### **6.1 The Members of the Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum met formally from the 19 January 2009 to 14 April 2009 to discuss and receive evidence directly relating to their investigation into Coastal Defences and Shoreline Management in Hartlepool. A detailed record of these meetings is available from the Council's Democratic Services or via the Hartlepool Borough Council website.**

### **6.2 A brief summary of the methods of investigation are outlined below:-**

- (a) Presentations and reports from Hartlepool Borough Council Officers;
- (b) Evidence from the Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhoods and Communities;
- (c) Evidence from the Environment Agency;
- (d) Evidence from Scarborough Borough Council;
- (e) Evidence from Scott Wilson Consultancy Firm; and
- (f) Site visit by Members to a selection of coastal defences in Hartlepool.

**FINDINGS****7. COUNCIL'S CURRENT APPROACH TO COASTAL PROTECTION AND SHORELINE MANAGEMENT**

7.1 In relation to the issues associated with the current approach to coastal protection and shoreline management, Members received evidence from a variety of sources as outlined below:

**Evidence from the Authority's Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhoods and Communities**

7.2 The Forum was pleased to receive evidence from the Authority's Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhoods and Communities relating to the Council's approach to the protection of Hartlepool's coastline, his views are summarised below:

- (a) Hartlepool Borough Council is the Coast Protection Authority and has responsibility for all coast protection work along with the responsibility for the maintenance / repair of all coast protection structures that the Council owns. All lengths of coastline also have to be inspected in line with the Environment Agency's High Level Targets.
- (b) Hartlepool's current approach to coastal protection and shoreline management is dictated by the Environment Agency's hierarchical approach that starts with a broad based strategy document called the Shoreline Management Plan (SMP). This is followed by more focused documents called Strategy Studies which can lead onto more detailed Project Appraisals if certain criteria are met. This process can be very lengthy but indicates which projects are eligible for grant aid. The outputs of the Headland Strategy Study identified the strategy for the coast protection structures over the next 100 years. However, only one project met the criteria for grant aid, this was the Town Wall project. Members raised concerns that the Headland has life expired assets which need maintaining but there are no prospects of external funding. A conservative estimate for the replacement of these structures is £24m. Members were informed that in response to this position, the Council's coast protection budget, that was £70k, has been increased by £250k per annum and a project strategy will soon be put in place to renew the structures on a gradual basis over a number of years. Although, it will take almost a hundred years to complete.
- (c) In order to prevent the future erosion of Hartlepool's coastline the need to be both proactive and innovative is essential to ensure that grant aid from the Environment Agency is maximised. The Council would have to continue to commit as much funding as it can into the area of coast protection in order to carry out maintenance work in the worst areas before major breaches occur. Members were informed that there are two pieces of major legislation out for consultation that will affect coast protection and coastal flooding. These propose transferring powers to local authorities and increasing their responsibilities. However, it is not

known whether additional central government funding would be available in order to implement the legislation. Therefore, there is a real possibility that this would place even greater financial pressure on local authorities.

- 7.3 Members questioned the Portfolio Holder about how money is made available for urgent works. The Portfolio Holder indicated that funding is sought by applications for grant aid along with any available Council funding. However, Members noted that there are limited projects that can be funded under the banner of grant aid.
- 7.4 The Forum asked the Portfolio Holder to clarify whether there is a Risk Management Strategy in place should the necessary coastal protection improvements not be undertaken. Members were informed that there is a Strategy in place but by not improving the coastal protection would increase the risk.

### **Evidence from Elected Members of the Scrutiny Forum – Site Visit to Coastal Sites / Defences in Hartlepool**

- 7.5 Members of the Forum thought it would be beneficial to the undertaking of their investigation if they visited a selection of coastal defences in Hartlepool to gain an understanding of coastal erosion. During the course of the site visit Members were shown a variety of sites including the Town Moor Twin Ramps, the Heugh Breakwater, South Pier, Newburn Bridge and Seaton Beacon steps / North Shelter
- 7.6 The site visit took place on 02 March 2009 and the feedback from Members can be summarised as follows:-
- (a) That historical sites, such as the Town Wall cannot be lost and it is therefore essential that they are protected;
  - (b) That the loss of infrastructures, such as the Heugh Breakwater would be disastrous;
  - (c) Members were astonished by the cost of coastal defences; and
  - (d) That some of Hartlepool's coastline is in serious disrepair.

## **8. COASTAL EROSION ALONG HARTLEPOOL'S COASTLINE AND THE EFFECTIVENESS AND LONG TERM VIABILITY OF EXISTING COASTAL STRUCTURES / DEFENCES**

- 8.1 Members of the Forum were keen to examine the extent of the erosion along Hartlepool's coastline and the effectiveness and viability of the existing structures / defences. The Forum welcomed evidence from the Director of Neighbourhood Services and the Engineering Manager on the extent of the erosion along the coastline.

## Evidence from Hartlepool Borough Council

- 8.2 The Forum was informed that in terms of erosion the coastline is in major need of repair, with the rising sea levels and loss of sand from the town's beaches leaving sections of the coast in serious danger of collapse. The erosion of Hartlepool's coastline has really deteriorated over the past 5 years.
- 8.3 Members heard that the North Pier is in danger of suffering a serious collapse and the highest priority for repairs. The Pier needs another £400 - £500k worth of repairs just to stop it disintegrating and placing the Marina infrastructure at risk.

8.4 *Photograph 1: North Pier Inner Wall*



- 8.5 The Forum was also concerned to hear that if no repair work is carried out to the Town Moor area, then this would lead to the eventual loss of the Town Moor over a 40 to 50 year period. However, if a major breach is to occur, the Town Moor would disappear very quickly.
- 8.6 Likewise, the Forum was concerned that if no repair work is carried out to the Cemetery area, the coastline up to and including the Cemetery area will continue to erode and over a 50 to 100 year period will disappear.
- 8.7 The Promenade area in Seaton Carew including the ramps and steps will see a quick closure of assets, unsightly fences and loss of access to beaches if no repair work is carried out to this area.

8.8 *Photograph 2: The Collapse of a Section of the Seaton Carew Promenade*

8.9 The above photograph illustrates the serious consequences that can occur as a result of natural causes of coastal erosion. A member of the public walking their dog along the promenade was injured as she stood on the path which suddenly opened beneath her.

## 9. LOCAL PLANS AND STRATEGIES OF RELEVANCE

9.1 Members of the Forum heard evidence from the Director of Neighbourhood Services and the Engineering Manager on how local plans and strategies can help prevent the future erosion of Hartlepool's coastline.

### Evidence from Hartlepool Borough Council

9.2 Members were informed that the Council has to carry out statutory inspections in line with the Environment Agency's High Level Targets. The Environment Agency has a hierarchy of plans and strategies, starting with the Shoreline Management Plan (SMP), followed by Strategy Studies, Scheme Appraisals and Scheme Construction.

9.3 The SMP is a 'living' document which is used by all operating authorities and other organisations, for example, the Environment Agency, Natural England, North York Moors National Park, Durham Heritage Coast and others. The SMP covers a long length of coast line; in Hartlepool's case this covers the coastline from Tynemouth to the Humber. The document considers the planning and implementation of coast protection / sea defences and other maritime works. The SMP investigates the overall coastal processes and assesses the impacts of these for up to a hundred years. Usually an SMP has a series of outputs and this will include the recommendation for a Strategy Study covering a much smaller length of coastline.

- 9.4 Members were informed that an SMP also focuses on other significant influences such as environmental processes and on the Nature Conservation designated coastal areas, which are special protection areas and Ramsar sites; sites of special scientific interest; sites of nature conservation interest; and regionally important geological sites. These designations severely limit the options that are available for replacement of coast protection works
- 9.5 The current SMP II was adopted by the Council in April 2007 and will be reviewed five years from this date. The SMP splits up the coastline into smaller lengths called management units and the SMP outputs a series of recommendations for each management unit.
- 9.6 For most management units, the SMP output is the recommendation that a Strategy Study be carried out. This study investigates a much smaller length of coastline, typically one or two management units in length. The study looks in detail at the coast line, it can include intrusive testing of existing structures and builds up a complete condition survey and translates this into a life expectancy of all existing structures.
- 9.7 The Strategy Study formulates potential solutions in line with the Environment Agency's criteria for grant aid providing costs over the hundred year period for renewing / repairing existing structures prioritising the highest risk structures. Where a potential scheme meets the Environment Agency's funding criteria, it can recommend seeking funding for a specific scheme appraisal.
- 9.8 Members of the Forum heard that the Headland Strategy Study was an example of a study which was adopted by the Council in February 2006. This had been an output of the first SMP. Following the outputs of the Headland Strategy Study, the only length of coastline that met this cost / benefit criteria on the Headland was the Town Wall. This is now subject to a Scheme Appraisal by Scott Wilson Consultancy and if successful it will be submitted to the Environment Agency for grant aid to construct a protection structure. The current SMP has also recommended a Strategy Study covering Seaton Carew and this is currently being carried out.
- 9.9 After the completion of a Strategy Study, a Scheme Appraisal takes the output of that study and progresses the outline solution into a full cost effective engineering design that can be constructed. Sometimes this type of appraisal will need a hydraulic model. There is a great deal of consultation / agreement with statutory bodies and the design information is formatted in line with the Environment Agency's requirements so that it can be submitted for grant aid.
- 9.10 In order to bid for funds at each of these three stages, officers must put together a formal application document and go to the Environment Agency's Regional headquarters in Leeds. They must make a presentation to a Project Appraisal Board and then be subjected to vigorous questioning by the assembled regional experts. Following this, they are advised if their submission has been successful. Members were pleased to hear that the



Council was the first local authority in the country to go through this process and be successful in the award of monies for the Town Wall Project.

- 9.11 The output of a Scheme Appraisal is a submission to the Environment Agency for grant aid called Scheme Construction. If grant aid is approved in principle, then it is a case of waiting for a funding stream provision and waiting until finance is made available. The design and construction details then go out to tender and the preferred tenders are forwarded to the Environment Agency. The Environment Agency will then formally approve the tender price. The grant aid is then confirmed and a contractor is appointed. Construction starts typically up to 5 years after the project is identified and this is based upon a positive response at each stage of the process.
- 9.12 In order to gain approval to all Strategy Studies and Appraisals for schemes over £2m in value, it is necessary to send the submissions to the Environment Agency's national headquarters' in London. Officers will then provide a presentation in London to the National Review Group and as above, be subjected to vigorous questioning by the assembled national experts.
- 9.13 The Forum was updated of the current position in Hartlepool, as outlined below:
- (a) The SMP was approved in 1999;
  - (b) The Headland Strategy Study was approved in February 2006;
  - (c) The SMP II was approved in April 2007;
  - (d) The Seaton Carew Strategy Study commenced in August 2008; and
  - (e) The Town Wall Scheme Appraisal Study commenced in October 2008.

## **10. THE FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF MAINTAINING THE COUNCIL'S COASTAL PROTECTION / DEFENCE STRUCTURES**

- 10.1 Members of the Forum were keen to explore the financial implications that the Council face in maintaining the existing structures and whether additional Government funding can be secured.

### **Evidence from Hartlepool Borough Council**

- 10.2 The current revenue budget for maintenance of the Council's coastal defences is £320k but this has to also clean and maintain becks and watercourses and fulfil the Council's obligations under the Land Drainage Act. This budget also pays for promenade and fencing repairs.
- 10.3 The Forum was informed that the estimated cost to carry out the major work that will secure the long-term future of certain sections of the coastline is

almost £41 million. Members expressed serious concerns about this amount and also that if the repairs are not carried out then some of the Town's historical areas would be lost.

10.4 In addition to planned maintenance, there has in recent years been an increase in incidences of coast protection breaches that have needed emergency repairs. These have occurred both on the Headland and at Seaton Carew. These breaches typically cost £90k to repair although the one at Seaton Carew did in fact cost approximately £200k including the placement of protective rock armour.

10.5 The Forum was informed that there is a real financial burden on the Council that cannot be fully met and in the near future, it is very likely that the Council will suffer a major breach of the coast protection structures that will threaten the stability of land behind them. The favoured and cheapest method of protecting the six miles of coastline that the Council is responsible for is by installing rock armour. However, Members were informed that it costs £10,000 for every 3ft of rock armour.

10.6 The cost of repairing certain coastal structures was outlined to the Forum and is detailed below:

(a) North Pier:

- £600k repair - Stabilise fabric of the structure
- £2,500k repair – Stabilise plus prevent wave overtopping
- £17,000k repair – Complete repair and open to the public

(b) Cemetery Area:

- £120k – Appoint a specialist consultant to consider innovative solutions

(c) Town Moor Area:

- £2,600k – Short term repairs, stabilise for 5 to 10 years
- £21,000k – Reconstruction of structures, protection for 100 years

(d) Seaton Carew Promenade / Ramps / Steps :

- £1,100k – gradual repairs, lifespan of assets increased to approximately 8 – 10 years
- £2,800k – reconstruction and repair, lifespan of assets increased by approximately 25 years

## 11. GOOD PRACTICE EVIDENCE FROM SCARBOROUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL

11.1 Members of the Forum were very interested in hearing evidence from a good practice Local Authority in order to gain an insight into how they effectively protect their coastline. On this basis, Members of the Forum received evidence from Scarborough Borough Council (SBC) as they have been seen

for many years as a lead authority on coastal protection issues, both regionally and nationally, with officers from the Council sitting on many influential groups with concern for coastal issues both at home and abroad.

- 11.2 Scarborough lies along a coastline of approximately 42 miles stretching from Skaithes in the north to Speeton Cliffs in the south, of which 9.5 miles of this coastline is defended by either natural or man-made structures to protect it from the sea. Members were informed that for the original SMP, the north east coastline was split into three units and the length of coastline including Easington / Hartlepool / Redcar and Cleveland was led by Hartlepool. Sunderland led in the north and Scarborough led in the south. These three units were combined for the SMP II and SBC led on this combined project.
- 11.3 SBC confirmed that all coastal authorities are in the same position as the Council regarding the difficulties when trying to access funding as there is only a small national pot of grant funding available for a significant amount of need across the Country. SBC, over the past few years has been successful in attracting grant aid to fund major coastal protection schemes, such as the East Pier, Castle Headland and the Holms, Scarborough, which was completed in 2005 at a cost of £51 million. At the time it was the largest coastal protection scheme underway in Europe.
- 11.4 It was emphasised by SBC that it is important to work from an understanding of how the coast may evolve and make decisions led by objectives working within what may be technically achieved, what may be realistically afforded, and what is environmentally acceptable and sustainable. Coastal protection is about reducing the threat to people and property through long term investment.

## **12. RESPONSIBILITIES OF KEY STAKEHOLDERS TO COASTAL DEFENCES AND SHORELINE MANAGEMENT IN HARTLEPOOL**

- 12.1 Members agreed that a number of important stakeholders should be invited to provide evidence, in relation to the Forum's investigation into Coastal Defences and Shoreline Management in Hartlepool. The evidence of key stakeholders is outlined below.

### **Evidence from the Environment Agency**

- 12.2 A representative from the Environment Agency clarified to Members that the Agency is a public body, with around 60 percent of its funding coming from Central Government, (The Department for Food and Rural Affairs) and the remainder coming from various charging schemes. The Agency is independent of the Government but does work closely with them to get the best possible results for the environment.
- 12.3 In April 2008, the Agency was given coastal supervisory oversight powers and became the lead organisation for all flood and erosion risk management around the coastline of England. The Agency's primary role is to work closely with coastal authorities to develop strategic plans and support the

delivery of the plans through grant aid funding and oversee the work carried out.

- 12.4 The national funding allocation from the Agency for all coastal authorities in England is as follows; £53.6m for 2009/10, £49.6m for 2010/11 and £55.7m for 2011/12. Members were informed that the priority system for grant aid operates across 5 outcome measurements and bids are prioritised in accordance with this criteria. Members raised concerns that this amount is not sufficient to satisfy the needs of all coastal authorities in England.

### **Evidence from Scott Wilson Consultancy Firm**

- 12.5 Scott Wilson is an international consultancy group providing expert, sustainable, integrated solutions to meet the planning, engineering, management and environmental needs across the transportation, property, environment and natural resources market sectors. Scott Wilson are currently acting as consultants for the Council conducting two coastal studies, these are the Seaton Carew Coastal Strategy and the Town Wall Coastal Model Study.
- 12.6 Members were informed that the Seaton Carew Strategy was recommended by the SMP and is required for the strategic management of the coastal defences in the future and to implement solutions for the recent damage to the coastline. The study is being carried out from Newburn Bridge to the Tees Estuary and the current coastal defences in place are rock revetment, vertical seawalls, sand dunes, breakwater and reinforced sand dunes.
- 12.7 The problems that the Council are faced with along the Seaton front are the increased pressure on the existing defences as a result of climate change; the reducing beach levels potentially causing future instability of the coastal defences; future erosion of the dunes; and the maintenance of the existing defences.
- 12.8 The Study will be carried out in three stages, A to C. Stage A is an assessment of the existing condition and performance of the coastal defences. Stage B is a technical and environmental assessment to develop options for the future management of the defences and Stage C is a report which forms the basis of a funding application to Government for grant aid. Currently, the study is at stage A, where the condition of the coastline and performance of the existing defences is being assessed through a range of site investigations and coastal process studies including data reviews, ground investigations and coastal processes modelling. This study will cost £720k and commenced in August 2008 and should take 15 months to complete.
- 12.9 The other study which Scott Wilson is conducting is the Town Wall Coastal Model Study with the hope that the study will lead to a scheme to improve the existing coastal protection provided by the Town Wall. The study is a recommended output from both the Headland Coastal Strategy Study carried out in 2006 and the SMP in 2007. The Town Wall provides protection to the highway and residential properties behind the Wall from coastal erosion and coastal flooding but is itself at risk from coastal erosion.

- 12.10 Members were informed that the Town Wall is currently in reasonable condition, however, reducing beach levels are leading to stretches of the wall's foundations becoming exposed potentially causing future instability of the wall and wave overtopping during storms, which is likely to become worse in the future with climate change leading to rising sea levels. The Town Wall Study commenced in October 2008 and is currently in Stage A. It will take approximately 24 months to complete with a cost of £470k.
- 12.11 The Forum was pleased to hear that the public and interested organisations have the opportunity to comment and provide input at all stages of the studies. Examples of engagement include:
- (a) Questionnaires at the start of studies requesting information and feedback about issues of concern;
  - (b) Public exhibitions to present work on stage A and collect feedback;
  - (c) Public exhibitions to present work on Stage B (the preferred options), the report will be revised following the exhibition to take account of the feedback; and
  - (d) Public exhibitions to provide information on the outcome of the study.
- 12.12 The Forum noted that over 500 questionnaires had been issued to individuals and organisations for the Town Wall Coastal Model Study and 75 had been returned at the end of February 2009.

### 13. CONCLUSIONS

- 13.1 The Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum concluded:-
- (a) That it is becoming increasingly difficult for the Council to obtain grant aid for capital projects;
  - (b) That it is impossible for the Council to maintain coast protection assets and public access to the coast without grant aid from the Environment Agency;
  - (c) That the process to try and secure grant aid from the Environment Agency is complex and prolonged;
  - (d) That even if funding is made available, there is still a very lengthy and prescribed process to actually construct a new structure;
  - (e) That there is money available from the Environment Agency but it does not equate to a large amount when all coastal authorities in England can apply for the funding;
  - (f) That the coastline needs to be protected to ensure that it is safe for the public to use today but also to ensure that it can still be enjoyed by future generations; and

- (g) That the Officers from the Engineering Department within the Council have a wealth of knowledge on the subject area and are dedicated to their role.

## 14. RECOMMENDATIONS

14.1 The Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum has taken evidence from a range of sources to assist in the formulation of a balanced range of recommendations. The Forum's key recommendations to the Cabinet are as outlined below:

- (a) That the Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhoods and Communities lobby the Government to increase the funding available for coastal protection works;
- (b) That the Council undertakes a further assessment of the potential funding streams available for coastal protection works and considers whether further funding can be obtained from other sources;
- (c) That the Council continues to promote climate change and involves local residents in raising awareness of the effects it has on Hartlepool's coastline;
- (d) That the Council establishes the potential risks and implications associated with the loss of the Heugh Breakwater infrastructure and communicates this to members of the public to alleviate concerns;
- (e) That the Council continues to evaluate the risks of developing on sites which could potentially be at risk of coastal erosion in order to ensure the sustainability of future building developments and establishes the potential loss of funding in areas where erosion is occurring; and
- (f) That the Council continues to consult extensively with local residents on current / future coastal studies and where appropriate holds such consultation events in the locations covered by the relevant study.

## 15. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

15.1 The Forum is grateful to all those who have presented evidence during the course of the Scrutiny Inquiry. We would like to place on record our appreciation for all those witnesses who attended the Forum. In particular the Forum would like to thank the following for their co-operation during the Scrutiny Investigation:-

### Hartlepool Borough Council:

Councillor Peter Jackson – Cabinet Member Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhoods and Communities.

Dave Stubbs – Director of Neighbourhood Services

Alastair Smith – Head of Technical Services

Alan Coulson – Engineering Manager

Dave Thompson - Principal Engineer

Dennis Hancock – Senior Engineer

Resident Representatives

External Representatives:

Ian Hodge - Area Flood Risk & Operations Delivery Manager, Environment Agency

Stewart Rowe - Principal Coastal Officer, Scarborough Borough Council

Sally Atkinson – Principal Engineer, Scott Wilson Consultancy Firm

Members of the Public

**COUNCILLOR STEPHEN AKERS-BELCHER  
CHAIR OF THE NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM**

**Contact Officer:-** Laura Starrs – Scrutiny Support Officer  
Chief Executive’s Department - Corporate Strategy  
Hartlepool Borough Council  
Tel: 01429 523 647  
Email: laura.starrs@hartlepool.gov.uk

**BACKGROUND PAPERS**

The following background papers were used in preparation of this report:-

- (a) Report of the Scrutiny Support Officer entitled ‘Scrutiny Investigation into Coastal Defences and Shoreline Management in Hartlepool – Scoping Paper’ presented to the Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum of 19 January 2009.
- (b) Report of the Scrutiny Support Officer entitled ‘Coastal Defences and Shoreline Management – Setting the Scene Presentation – Covering Report’ presented to the Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum of 19 January 2009.

- (c) Presentation of the Director of Neighbourhood Services entitled 'Coastal Defences and Shoreline Management in Hartlepool – Setting the Scene' Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum of 19 January 2009.
- (d) Report of the Scrutiny Support Officer entitled 'Condition of the Highways in Hartlepool – Verbal Evidence from the Authority's Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhoods and Communities – Covering Report' presented to the Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum of 02 March 2009.
- (e) Report of the Scrutiny Support Officer entitled 'Coastal Defences and Shoreline Management in Hartlepool – Feedback from Site Visit – Covering Report' presented to the Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum of 02 March 2009.
- (f) Report of the Scrutiny Support Officer entitled 'Coastal Defences and Shoreline Management in Hartlepool – Evidence from Scarborough Borough Council – Covering Report' presented to the Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum of 02 March 2009.
- (g) Report of the Scrutiny Support Officer entitled 'Coastal Defences and Shoreline Management in Hartlepool – Evidence from the Neighbourhood Services Department' presented to the Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum of 02 March 2009.
- (h) Report of the Scrutiny Support Officer entitled 'Coastal Defences and Shoreline Management in Hartlepool – Evidence from Scott Wilson Consultancy Firm' presented to the Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum of 02 March 2009.
- (i) Minutes of the Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum of 19 January 2009, 02 March 2009 and 14 April 2009.



# SCRUTINY CO-ORDINATING COMMITTEE

24 April 2009



**Report of:** Children’s Services Scrutiny Forum

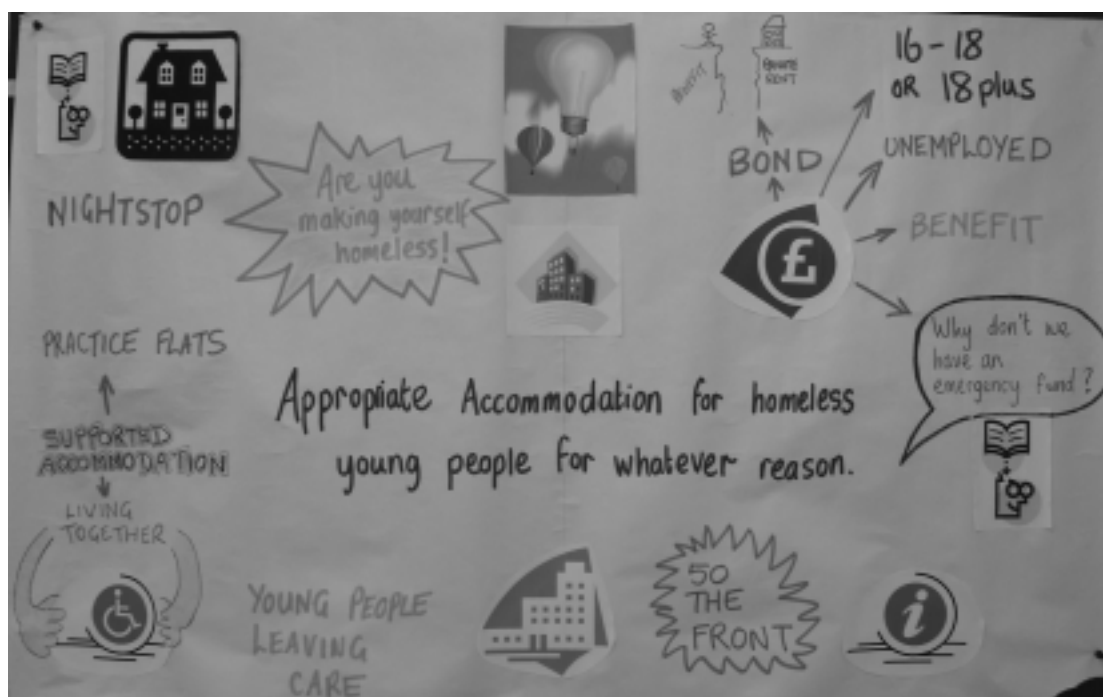
**Subject:** APPROPRIATE ACCOMMODATION FOR HOMELESS YOUNG PEOPLE – FINAL REPORT

## 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To present the findings of the Children’s Services Scrutiny Forum following its investigation into ‘Appropriate Accommodation for Homeless Young People for Whatever Reason’.

## 2. SETTING THE SCENE

2.1 At the meeting of this Forum on 16 June 2008, Members agreed that two work programme items would be selected for the 2008/09 Municipal Year. During discussions Members agreed that their second work programme item would be selected by the Young People’s Representatives co-opted onto the Forum.



Young Peoples Representatives Presentation.

- 2.2 Subsequently at the meeting of the Children’s Services Scrutiny Forum of 21 July 2008, Members received a presentation from the Young Peoples Representatives on the topic of ‘Appropriate Accommodation for Homeless Young People’.
- 2.3 The Homelessness Code of Guidance for Local Authorities defines homelessness as being where someone does not have “accommodation that they have a legal right to occupy, which is accessible and physically available to them (and their household) and which it would be reasonable for them to continue to live in”<sup>1</sup>
- 2.4 Under the Housing Act 1997, Local Authority Housing Departments have a statutory duty to tackle homelessness and ensure that information about homelessness and the prevention of homelessness is available free of charge. This legislation underpins the Homeless Act 2002, which placed greater responsibility on Local Authorities in ensuring that they accepted “homeless 16 and 17 year olds as priority cases for rehousing”<sup>2</sup>, although the responsibility for finding suitable accommodation for homeless young people under the age of 18 lies with the Local Authority’s Children’s Services Department.
- 2.5 For those young people who find themselves homeless over the age of 18 the responsibility for finding suitable accommodation falls to the Local Authority’s Housing Department, or for those with complex needs Adult and Community Services Department. However, for young people in care the Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000 made provision that the Local Authority should ensure that all those preparing and leaving care should have a pathway plan, which included an element relating to accommodation and support. The Children and Young Persons Act 2008 reaffirms that it is the “general duty of local authority to secure sufficient accommodation for looked after children”<sup>3</sup>.

### **3. OVERALL AIM OF THE SCRUTINY INVESTIGATION**

- 3.1 To review the role and responsibility of Hartlepool Borough Council in tackling youth homelessness, with reference to all young people and the information and provision of appropriate accommodation available to them.

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<sup>1</sup> Department for Communities and Local Government - Homelessness Code of Guidance for Local Authorities, 2006

<sup>2</sup> Joseph Rowntree Foundation – Housing Choices and Issues for Young People in the UK, 2008

<sup>3</sup> Children and Young Persons Act 2008

#### **4. TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE SCRUTINY INVESTIGATION**

4.1 The following Terms of Reference for the investigation were agreed by the Children's Services Scrutiny Forum on 13 January 2009:-

- (a) To examine the different circumstances and outcomes that can lead to youth homelessness;
- (b) To gain an understanding of the role and responsibility that Hartlepool Borough Council has towards tackling youth homelessness, including the provision of relevant information and appropriate accommodation;
- (c) To examine the range of accommodation options used and available for young people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness for whatever reason;
- (d) To gain an understanding of the Benefits and other sources of financial support currently available to young people to help tackle youth homelessness;
- (e) To review Hartlepool Borough Council's policy, procedure and practice in relation to Care Leavers, with reference to supported accommodation and other appropriate accommodation; and
- (f) To examine good practice examples of Youth Homelessness strategies at other Local Authorities.

#### **5. MEMBERSHIP OF THE CHILDREN'S SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM**

5.1 The membership of the Children's Services Scrutiny Forum for the 2008/09 Municipal Year was as detailed below:-

Councillors Aiken, Fleet, Griffin, Kaiser, London (Vice Chair), McKenna, Preece, Shaw (Chair) and Simmons.

Co-opted Member: David Relton

Resident Representatives: Christopher Akers-Belcher, Joan Steel and Sally Vokes

Young Peoples Representatives: Michael Burford, Arran Frame, Dean Jeffries, Chris Lund, Gillian Pounder and Graham Skinner.

## 6. METHODS OF INVESTIGATION

6.1 Members of the Children's Services Scrutiny Forum met formally from 13 January 2009 to 21 April 2009 to discuss and receive evidence relating to this investigation. A detailed record of the issues raised during these meetings is available from the Council's Democratic Services.

6.2 A brief summary of the methods of investigation are outlined below:-

- (a) Detailed presentations and reports from Hartlepool Borough Council Officers which was enhanced with verbal evidence;
- (b) Verbal evidence from Members visiting the Right Honourable Iain Wright's Ministerial Department as Member of Parliament (MP) for Hartlepool;
- (c) Verbal evidence from the Authority's Elected Mayor in his role as Mayor and Portfolio Holder for Regeneration and Liveability;
- (d) Verbal evidence from the Authority's Portfolio Holder for Children's Services;
- (e) Verbal evidence from Members attending the Children's Services Network Good Practice Seminar on 28 November 2008;
- (f) Verbal evidence from Nightstop Teesside in Hartlepool;
- (g) Site visit by Members to see Supported Accommodation in Hartlepool on 11 March 2009;
- (h) Detailed Presentation supported by verbal evidence from Stockton Borough Council; and
- (i) Detailed Presentation supported by verbal evidence from Housing Hartlepool.

**FINDINGS****7. CIRCUMSTANCES AND OUTCOMES THAT CAN LEAD TO YOUTH HOMELESSNESS**

- 7.1 Members of the Children's Services Scrutiny Forum were keen to learn about the circumstances and outcomes that can lead to young people becoming homeless. As well as looking at national trends, Members sought evidence from the members of Hartlepool Young Voices who had brought the topic of homeless young people to their attention. Evidence gathered by Members is detailed below:-

**National Evidence on the Circumstances and Outcomes Behind Youth Homelessness**

- 7.2 At the meeting of the Forum on 27 January 2009 Members received evidence on the national circumstances and outcomes that can lead to youth homelessness. Based on the number of young people (aged 16-24) presenting themselves to various support services, it is estimated that nationally during 2006/07 75,000<sup>1</sup> young people experienced homelessness.

- 7.3 The reasons behind youth homelessness are complex in nature and prevention of homelessness is not just a matter of the provision of appropriate housing. In many cases it is the support mechanisms (or lack of them) when young people move into independent living that can result in homelessness. This was highlighted in the study carried out by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation into housing choices for young people, where they noted that:

*“Transitions to independence among care leavers occur at a relatively young age, and in the absence of supportive social networks, are often characterised by crises and youth homelessness”<sup>2</sup>*

Although through the Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000 care leavers have a greater level of extended support from various agencies including the Local Authority, the problem is that sometimes the social networks that young people surround themselves with whilst living independently can result in young people becoming homeless through, for example, acts of anti-social behaviour.

- 7.4 Some young people find themselves at a higher risk of homelessness as a result of unplanned movements out of family / supported accommodation. The YMCA noted that:

*“The breakdown of family units has been identified as the main trigger for homelessness amongst 16- and 17-year-olds.”<sup>3</sup>*

<sup>1</sup> Joseph Rowntree Foundation – Youth Homelessness in the UK: A Decade of Progress?, 2008

<sup>2</sup> Joseph Rowntree Foundation – Housing Choices and Issues for Young People in the UK, 2008

<sup>3</sup> YMCA – Breaking it Down: Developing Whole-Family Approaches to Youth Homelessness, 2008

This is supported by the research carried out by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation who argued that young people who are ‘pushed’ out of their family / supported accommodation have a higher risk of homelessness, as these situations are often:

*“Unplanned, unsupported and hurried...Circumstances such as these are particularly associated with those who leave home in their teens, those from lower socio-economic groups and those who have experienced disruption in family life”<sup>1</sup>*

- 7.5 In 2002 Ford, J. et al., examined the transition of young people into independent living. They argued that the movement of young people into independent living could be categorised under five distinct pathways, these being; chaotic, unplanned, planned (non-student) and student pathways. The most likely pathway to lead to youth homelessness was the chaotic pathway, where the circumstances leading to homelessness for the young person surrounded an:

*“Absence of planning, substantial constraints (both economic and in relation to housing eligibility) and an absence of family support”<sup>1</sup>*

- 7.6 In their study of youth homelessness the Joseph Rowntree Foundation presented the following survey carried out nationally by the Communities and Local Government. Table1 (overleaf) lists the main reason behind youth homelessness for 350 16-17-year olds surveyed in 2006/07:

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<sup>1</sup> Ford et al – Conceptualising the Contemporary Role of Housing in the Transition to Adult Life in England, 2002

**Table1: Main reason for youth homelessness, CLG Survey<sup>1</sup>**

Reasons Behind Homelessness	Reason for 16-17-year-old Young People Being Homeless	
	All Reasons (%) #	Main Reason (%)
Relationship Breakdown with someone lived with*	70	65
Housing was overcrowded	13	10
Overstayed welcome or could no longer be accommodated	19	10
Eviction of threatened with eviction	3	2
Applying as homeless was the only way to be rehoused	5	2
Problems with paying the mortgage or rent	Less than 1	Less than 1
Applying as homeless was quickest way to get rehoused	3	2
Tenancy came to an end	1	1
Housing was in poor condition	1	Less than 1
Harassment, anti-social behaviour or crime	2	1
Mental or physical health problems	2	Less than 1
Drug or alcohol problems	2	1
Had to leave National Asylum Support Service accommodation	2	1
Other	6	4

# Where more than one reason applies

\* Includes both parental and partner relationships

### **Evidence on the Circumstances and Outcomes Behind Youth Homelessness in Hartlepool**

7.7 Members of Hartlepool Young Voices were in attendance at the meeting of the Forum of 27 January 2009 to present to Members their findings relating to the evidence on youth homelessness in Hartlepool. The young people stated to Members that from 1 April – 31 December 2008 Hartlepool Borough Council had 438 housing advice enquiries from 16-25 year olds, of these 438 enquiries:-

- (i) 70 were from 16-17 year olds;
- (ii) 22 enquiries resulted in housing applications being made as the young people were deemed to be homeless;
- (iii) 12 of the 22 young people deemed to be homeless were of priority status; and
- (iv) 1 of the priority cases was for a young person under 17.

<sup>1</sup> Joseph Rowntree Foundation – Youth Homelessness in the UK: A Decade of Progress?, 2008

7.8 Members of Hartlepool Young Voices highlighted to Members that there were often some reasons why young people did not make a housing advice enquiry at the Civic Centre and that this often meant that ‘official’ figures did not represent the ‘bigger-picture’. The members of Hartlepool Young Voices pointed out that from the evidence they had gathered, they discovered that:-

- (i) Not every young person who is having housing issues seeks help at the Civic Centre;
- (ii) There are some young people who sleep on people’s sofas and floors each night, the so called ‘sofa-surfers’; and
- (iii) Often young people are discouraged from taking on tenancies as they would be unable to cope, which may count against them in the future when they require a tenancy.

7.9 The Council’s Housing Advice Team attended the Children’s Services Scrutiny Forum on 27 January 2009 to provide evidence in relation to the statistical evidence that they had behind homelessness prevention. Table2 (below) was presented to Members highlighting the reasons behind homelessness in Hartlepool during 2007/08 and Table3 (overleaf) for the same figures in 2008/09.

**Table2: Reasons for Homelessness 2007/08**

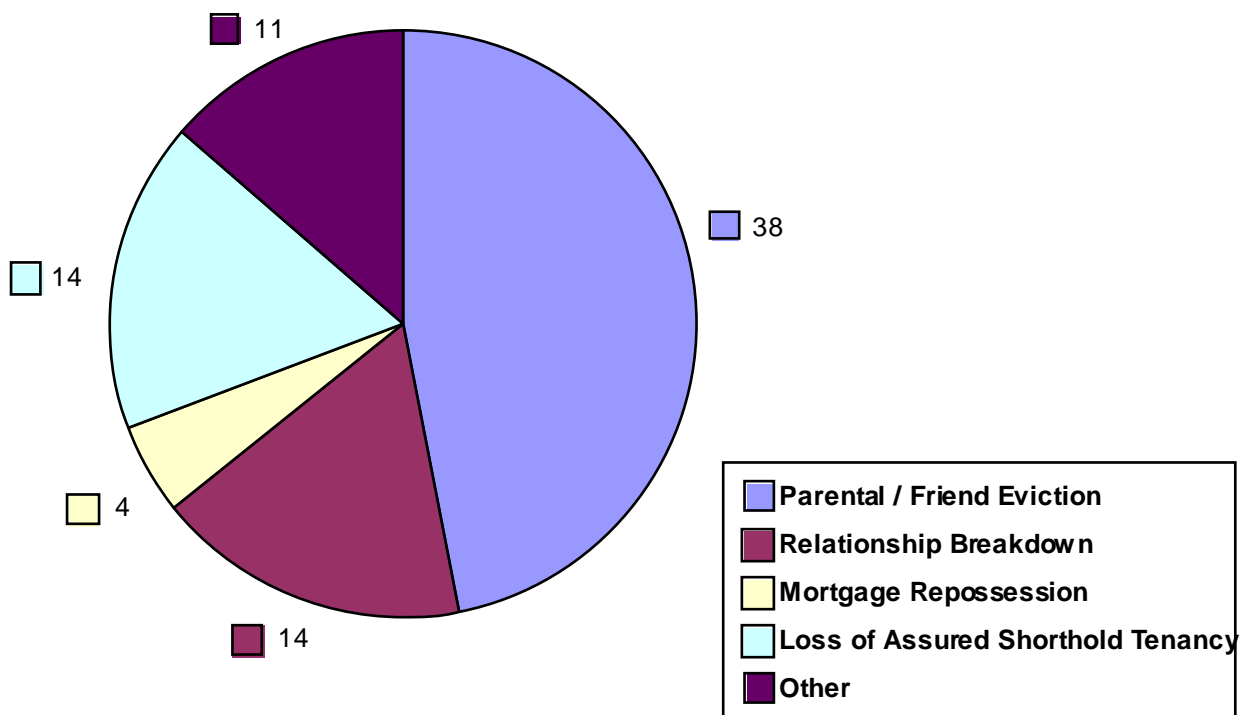
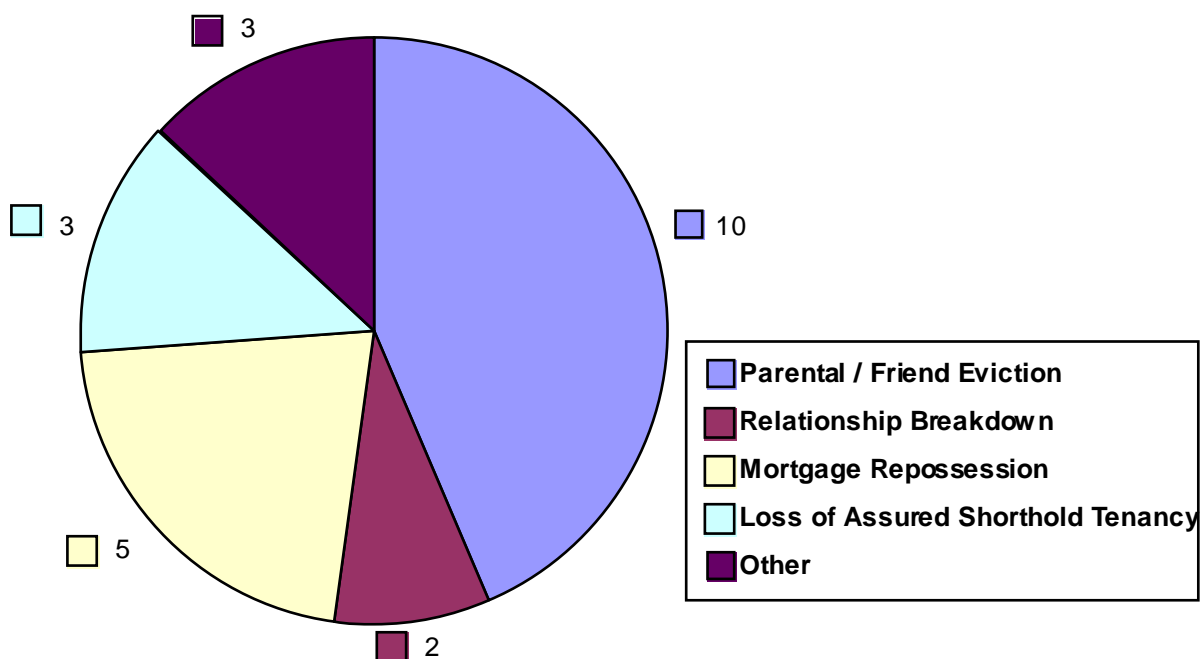




Table2: Reasons for Homelessness 2008/08 up to Quarter 3



7.10 Members were interested to learn that during 2007/08 the Housing Advice Team prevented 103 applicants under the age of 25 from becoming homeless and up to quarter three of 2008/09 they had prevented 60 young people becoming homeless.

7.11 It was noted by Members on 27 January 2009 that the Authority's Mayor had received verbal evidence relating to a number of young people sleeping rough in Hartlepool. The Mayor expressed some surprise at this claim and this was supported by statistical evidence. The Principal Housing Advice Officer informed Members that an external consultant had been employed by the Council to undertake 'street walks', visiting the places that people were likely to sleep rough. The study was on-going, and while it did show some evidence of people sleeping rough, the consultants view was that Hartlepool didn't have a particular problem.

## 8. HARTLEPOOL BOROUGH COUNCIL'S ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITY TOWARDS TACKLING YOUTH HOMELESSNESS

8.1 Members of the Children's Services Scrutiny Forum were interested in learning the roles and responsibilities that the Local Authority had in relation to the issue of tackling youth homelessness. Members were also eager to learn how this responsibility was reflected in the provision of relevant information and appropriate accommodation.

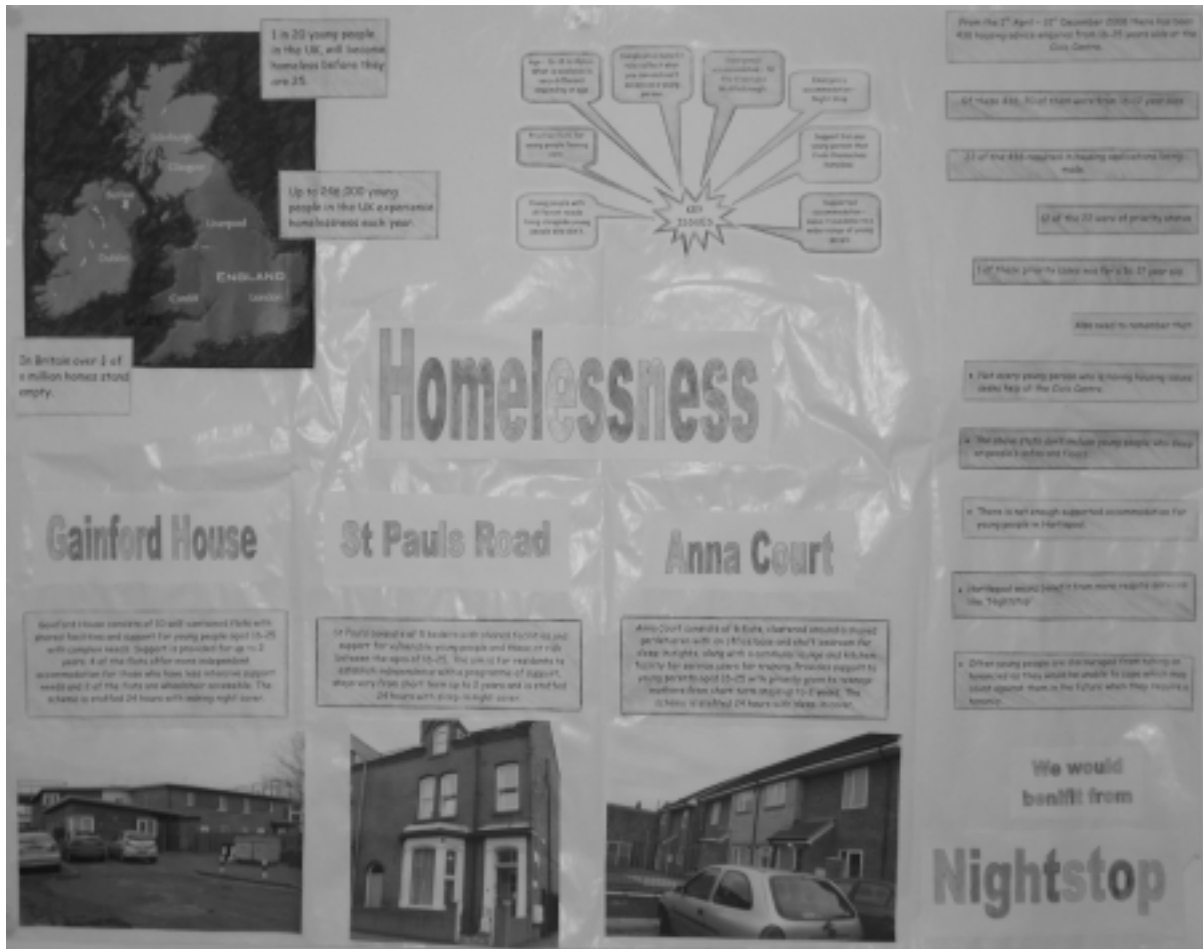
8.2 The Portfolio Holders for Regeneration and Liveability and Children's Services were present at the meeting of the Forum on 27 January 2009 to highlight to Members the split responsibility for youth homelessness between

the Council's Regeneration and Planning Department and Children's Services Departments.

- 8.3 The Principal Housing Advice Officer highlighted to Members on 27 January 2009 that legal framework that ensured that the Council met its responsibility around youth homelessness and this was encapsulated in the Homelessness Strategy that had three major aims:-
- (i) Prevention of homelessness;
  - (ii) Ensuring that there is sufficient accommodation available for people who are or may become homeless; and
  - (iii) Ensuring that there is satisfactory support for people who are, or may become homeless, or who need support to prevent them from becoming homeless again.
- 8.4 Underpinning the three major aims of the Homelessness Strategy were eight specific objectives these being:-
- (i) To improve access to advice and information;
  - (ii) To improve access into social housing;
  - (iii) To provide support and assistance to sustain tenancies;
  - (iv) To encourage the development of further supported accommodation;
  - (v) To improve information sharing and joint working between agencies;
  - (vi) To improve services for people with complex needs;
  - (vii) To tackle homelessness amongst substance mis-users; and
  - (viii) To improve monitoring and evaluation of services.
- 8.5 The Forum were interested to learn that the Council only had a main homelessness duty to those young people who were unintentionally homeless, Members were advised that those young people who intentionally left their previous tenancy; whether that was family, foster care or other suitable accommodation; and where there were no barriers preventing their return, were considered to be intentionally homeless. In addition, those young people who had failed or asked to leave their tenancy due to unreasonable behaviour were also considered to be intentionally homeless, although Members welcomed that there were strategies designed to help counteract tenancy failures.
- 8.6 Members of the Children's Services Scrutiny Forum were pleased to hear that the Council had access to a number of accommodation units in Hartlepool, with 21 being made available specifically for young people. To

supplement this coverage Members acknowledged that a number of ‘floating’ support workers helped young people who were living in other tenancy arrangements. The fact that the Homeless Act 2002 was making it illegal for the use of Bed and Breakfast establishments for longer than 6 weeks by 2010, unless in emergency circumstances, was warmly welcomed by the Forum.

**9. RANGE OF ACCOMMODATION OPTIONS AVAILABLE FOR HOMELESS YOUNG PEOPLE IN HARTLEPOOL**



Hartlepool Young Voices Presentation.

9.1 The Children’s Services Scrutiny Forum were very keen to examine in greater detail the provision of accommodation options available and used by young people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. Members of Hartlepool Young Voices had presented to the Forum on 27 January 2009 that many young people who find themselves homeless, eventually find accommodation at the many accommodation providers throughout the Town including Gainford House, St Paul’s, Anna Court and 50 The Front. Gainford House was geared towards any homeless young person between the ages of 16 to 25, St Paul’s catered for the 16 to 18 year old age groups and Anna Court provided accommodation for teenage parents. With the Government emphasis on reducing the usage of Bed and Breakfasts by 2010 Members

were pleased to learn that there was a movement away from using 50 The Front. The evidence gathered by Members in relation to accommodation support and provision in Hartlepool is detailed below:-

### **Evidence from Nightstop Teesside in Hartlepool**

- 9.2 Members were interested to learn from the members of Hartlepool Young Voices about the emergence of a Nightstop facility in Hartlepool. Nightstop Teesside had been operating for a number of years and the young people saw it as a facility that worked well in order areas and should be available in Hartlepool. Members were informed that Nightstop had applied for funding through the Supporting People Fund, but had been unsuccessful, although this had not stopped Nightstop Teesside from continuing to expand their remit into Hartlepool. Members were interested to learn more about Nightstop and at their meeting of 3 March 2009 Members received verbal evidence from HVDA's Project Development Officer who is helping the setup of Nightstop Teesside in Hartlepool.
- 9.3 Nightstop, Members learnt, provides safe and secure emergency accommodation for single 16-25 years olds in the homes of approved volunteers. All volunteers receive ongoing training and have a Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) check before a young person can be placed with them. Members were informed that Hartlepool currently had three volunteers who were in a position to accept young people through the Nightstop scheme in Hartlepool, although there had yet to be an official launch.
- 9.4 The Project Development Officer informed Members that after forming a steering group those members had persuaded Nightstop Teesside to help set up the scheme in Hartlepool. Funding had been required to cover administrative and staff costs and Members were pleased to learn that Nightstop had been successful in achieving initial funding from Hartlepool Churches Together.
- 9.5 The Forum learnt that the Nightstop scheme worked on volunteers providing a bed for the night for homeless young people. All volunteers involved in the project would be subject to Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) checks. Hosts would be able to reject those they considered were under the influence of drink or drugs if they were concerned, which was reflective of an ethos of a duty of care to the host as well as the young person.
- 9.6 Members were curious to learn how many young people Nightstop were anticipating would present themselves to Nightstop's recognised referral agencies. The Project Development Officer indicated that Nightstop were estimating as many as four or five young people homeless at any one time in Hartlepool, with around sixty to seventy 'sofa surfers' staying with friends or extended family. Members were also concerned as to how young people would access the scheme.

**Evidence from Site Visit to Supported Accommodation in Hartlepool**

**Supported Accommodation in Hartlepool - Shared Kitchen.**

9.7 In order to fully appreciate the range of facilities in Hartlepool, Members embarked on a site visit on 11 March 2009 to experience for themselves the Supported Accommodation available in the Town. Members who took part in the visit experienced accommodation provision at Scott Grange, St Paul's Project and Gainford House, the evidence gathered from these visits is detailed below:-

**Scott Grange**

- (a) Scott Grange is operated by Stonham Housing and has 11 self contained flats each with their own kitchen. There is a communal kitchen which is used by residents for social / cooking training activities;
- (b) The majority of residents are aged 18-25, although the scheme can accept referrals up to the age of 65. All residents are male and the scheme is primarily aimed at ex-offenders or those at the risk of offending. Residents normally stay for two year, with outreach support available for an addition two years once they have left Scott Grange;
- (c) The scheme has been operating for over 20 years and the building itself had been in use for a range of social housing / hostels for longer. Neighbours are very accommodating and there have been no complaints about the behaviour of residents of Scott Grange;

- (d) Before being accepted at Scott Grange, residents have to undergo risk assessment and interview. Unsuccessful applicants are returned to homeless team at Hartlepool Borough Council; and
- (e) The flats are almost always at 100% capacity with a current waiting list of roughly 5-7 people, with 4-5 of these having been definitely accepted and waiting for current residents to move on.

Whilst at Scott Grange, Members of the Forum heard evidence from one of the residents and this is detailed below:-

- (f) The young person informed Members that they had a background of offending, but had recently been on remand for a conviction that was dropped due to wrongful identification. Without the accommodation at Scott Grange, the resident informed Members that they would have been on the street and possibly even dead; and
- (g) There had been delays in payment of benefits, but Scott Grange has managed to provide supervised finance and a loan until benefit came through. Went to support worker at Scott Grange who helped with temporary finances, as resident was concerned that they may steal to raise enough money for food. Without this level of support, the resident would have been on the streets, hungry and at a high risk of offending.

### **St Paul's Project**

- (a) The scheme accepts young people aged 16-18 who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. St Paul's has 5 self contained flats with shared kitchen and bathroom facilities. There are four members of staff providing intensive 24 hour support to all residents;
- (b) Minimum length of stay is six months to one year and the current waiting list is six who have all been accepted. There are another two young people waiting to be interviewed. Some young people can be on the waiting list so long that they never actually achieve a placement at St Paul's; and
- (c) The scheme at St Paul's has been operating since 1984 and there have been no formal complaints from neighbours about St Paul's residents. The Manager periodically visits local residents to check that they have no concerns.

### **Gainford House**

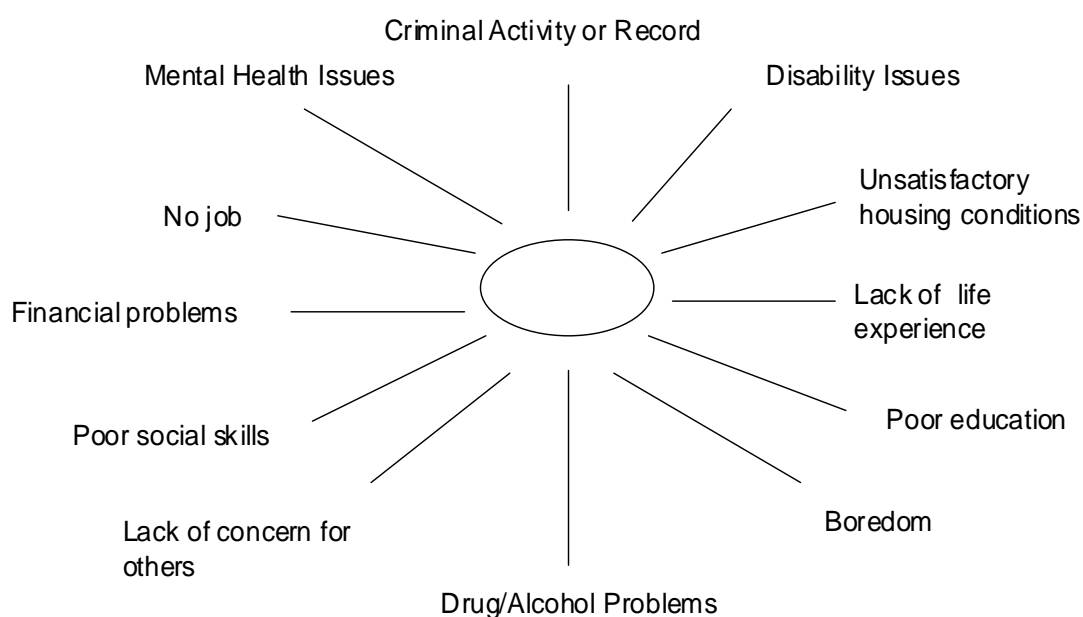
- (a) Operated by Stonham Housing, with ten units available for young people aged 16-25. The ten units are split into six higher dependency units and four 'move on' units. The majority of referrals are at lower age range of 16-17, with the young people staying from six months up to two years, with an average of around ten months;

- (b) The facility has been operational since 2006, but faced major planning controversy and objections over the building. However, currently there have been no complaints from neighbours about residents in Gainford House. The residents and staff at Gainfords House are currently investigating improving the surrounding area, waste ground and building an enclosed area for their bins;
- (c) There is currently 100% occupancy of the ten units, with the waiting list varying at anyone time between two and nine young people; and
- (d) There is a current development to create an emergency bed provision to open in April 2009. The facility will initially operate as weekday on-call service with plans to expand to 7 days a week, once facility can be properly tested.

### Evidence from Housing Hartlepool

9.8 The Children's Services Scrutiny Forum met on 24 March 2009 and received evidence from Housing Hartlepool, in its role as a Registered Social Landlord in Hartlepool. The Supported Living Manager informed Members that Housing Hartlepool were very concerned about solving the problems associated with tenancy failures and had discovered a number of issues that were faced by applicants under 25 that could cause tenancy failures. Diagram1 (below) highlights the issues faced by applicants presenting themselves to Housing Hartlepool:-

**Diagram1: Issues Faced by Applicants (under age of 25) Presenting Themselves to Housing Hartlepool that can Lead to Tenancy Failures**



- 9.9 In order to help solve the problems that applicants faced, Members were informed that Housing Hartlepool worked with a number of service providers, including DISC, Norcare and Stonham, to help tackle the potential barriers to becoming a tenant and to avert the opportunity for tenancy failure. The Forum approved of the provision of Skills for Life training by Housing Hartlepool at school aged young people, along with the assistance provided to acquire furnishings through assistance with grant applications and referrals to Settlement Furnishings. Members were also pleased to learn that a Supporting People grant had been made available to enable Housing Hartlepool to run pre-tenancy training courses called Keys to Success, which could be accepted as part of the Good Tenancy Scheme that is recognised inside and outside of Housing Hartlepool.

## **10. FINANCIAL SUPPORT AVAILABLE TO YOUNG PEOPLE**

- 10.1 When the Children's Services Scrutiny Forum met to agree their Work Programme for the 2008/09 Municipal Year on 21 July 2008, Members received a presentation from the members of Hartlepool Young Voices which highlighted some of the financial difficulties facing young people in Hartlepool. Members received evidence that one young person who earned £1000 per month, was potentially being charged almost their entire monthly income for a private landlords bond, four weeks advanced rent, administrative costs and a reference fee.
- 10.2 In the absence of a representative from the Department for Work and Pensions, the Benefits Liaison Officer gave a presentation to Members on 3 March 2009 in relation to the benefits available to young people. Members were disappointed to learn that there was limited scope to make payments to young people who were under 18 and homeless.
- 10.3 The Forum recognised that young people could, dependent on their circumstances, qualify for a range of benefits including Income Support, Job Seeker's Allowance, Job Seeker's Severe Hardship or Education Maintenance Allowance. These benefits were accessible through the Department for Work and Pensions and there were no restrictions on what those benefits could be spent on.
- 10.4 The Local Authority managed the other benefits accessible to young people and these surrounded the cost of housing, either through the provision of Housing Benefit, Council Tax Benefit or Discretionary Housing Payments. Young people particularly benefited from Council Tax Benefit, as they were not eligible to pay any Council Tax until they turned 18 years old.
- 10.5 Members learnt from the Benefits Liaison Officer that Housing Benefit was payable to those young people on low income and with savings of less than £16,000. The amount that a young person qualified for through Housing Benefit was commensurate to the applicable amount; that is the minimum amount of income that the young person needs to live on each week. In addition to Housing Benefit, some young people qualified for Discretionary



Housing Benefit, which was limited funding available to a Local Authority to help those tenants who find themselves with a shortfall between the Housing Benefit awarded and the rent being charged. For those older tenants who paid Council Tax, Discretionary Housing Benefit could be awarded to help with the shortfall between the Council Tax and any calculated Council Tax Benefit.

## **11. HARTLEPOOL BOROUGH COUNCIL'S STATUTORY RESPONSIBILITY IN RELATION TO CARE LEAVERS**

- 11.1 The Children's Services Scrutiny Forum felt it was important to understand the statutory responsibility that the Council had towards care leavers as this related directly to the provision of supported living or support for the transition into independent living. Members sought a evidence from a number of sources that are detailed below:-

### **Evidence from Children's Services Network Conference**

- 11.2 On 28 November 2008, the Chair of the Children's Services Forum and the Participation Officer, Barnardos attended the Children's Services Network Conference on 'Accommodation and Care Leavers – Pulling Together', the findings of those Members attending the conference was presented to the Children's Services Forum on 24 March 2009 and are detailed as follows:-
- (a) Every year around 8,000 young people leave care with varying levels of need and support to help them live independently. The key to providing the most appropriate supported accommodation is not to ask 'what would you like' as this can be unrealistic, it is more sensible to concentrate on what is available;
  - (b) Pre-tenancy programmes that introduce young people to independent living are extremely beneficial in reducing tenancy failures. 'Training Flats' can not only enhance pre-tenancy programmes, but can allow young people in a secure environment to realise, that independent living maybe is not for them just yet, how they can budget more effectively and the pitfalls that can result in tenancy failures;
  - (c) That Pathway Plans for young people should be constantly monitored and evidenced by all groups involved with the young person, including the young person themselves; and
  - (d) At the moment the definition of 'suitable housing' is varied and guidance does not make implicit what would constitute as suitable. Although the Government's definition of suitable housing is not clear, there is an increasing demand nationally for sufficient suitable accommodation for young people.

**Evidence from the Children's Services Department**

- 11.3 At the meeting of the Forum on 27 January 2009, the Head of the Business Unit (Young Persons) informed Members that the Council had a responsibility for those young people leaving care until they reached 21 years of age. Members were interested to learn that accommodation provision continued until the young people reached 18 and support continued until they turned 21.
- 11.4 When the Forum met on 24 March 2009, Members received a detailed report supplemented by verbal evidence on the statutory responsibilities that the Council had towards accommodation provision for care leavers. The Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000 had placed a responsibility on Local Authorities to ensure that no young person should leave care under the age of 18 and they do leave, they should be prepared for and able to cope with the transition to independent or supported living.
- 11.5 The Forum were notified that the 60 young people who were eligible for leaving care services were supported by the Leaving Care Team which constituted four members of staff. Members were delighted to learn that not only were there no young people in unsuitable accommodation, but that the Council's constantly exceeded the national average when it came to placing care leavers in suitable accommodation by the time they had turned 19. Members were provided with a detailed list of the accommodation on offer in Hartlepool and potentially accessible by the Leaving Care Team and these are detailed as follows:-
- (a) Housing Hartlepool – 1 / 2 bedroom houses / flats;
  - (b) Tees Valley Housing Association – 6 flats at Anna Court, 5 beds at St Paul's;
  - (c) Stonham Housing Group – 11 flats at Avondene, 11 flats at Scott Grange, 6 rooms and 4 flats at Gainford House;
  - (d) Richmond Fellowship – number of flats for young people with mental health needs;
  - (e) Endeavour Housing – 12 flats split between two properties;
  - (f) Accent Homes – 1 bedroom flat, although not necessarily for care leavers;
  - (g) Guinness Trust – 1 / 2 bedroom properties;
  - (h) Three Rivers – 1 / 2 self contained bedroom flats; and
  - (i) Nightstop – 3 providers (see sections 9.29.5).

## 12. EVIDENCE FROM IAIN WRIGHT, MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT FOR HARTLEPOOL



**Members of Hartlepool Young Voices, Councillor Jane Shaw and Iain Wright MP at the Houses of Parliament 24 March 2009.**

12.1 As part of the evidence gathering process, members of Hartlepool Young Voices supported by the Chair of the Children's Services Scrutiny Forum were invited to London to meet with Iain Wright MP on 18 March 2009 in his capacity as MP for Hartlepool, as part of this Forum's investigation into 'Appropriate Accommodation for Homeless Young People for Whatever Reason'. The findings of those young people and the Chair who attended the site visit were fed back to the Children's Services Scrutiny Forum on 24 March 2009 and are as follows:-

- (a) The MP felt that the topic was very important and was directly related to his role as Parliamentary under Secretary of State in the Department for Communities and Local Government; which covers homelessness. This had resulted in the publication of the strategic document 'No One Left Out' which aimed to put an end to rough sleeping by 2012;
- (b) There was a feeling by the MP that there was a wider issue about housing, where more suitable homes needed to be built for everyone, this included the elderly, families and young people (particularly those young people just leaving home). Certainly the message of securing 'appropriate accommodation' was an issue that the Prime Minister was also very interested in, but that Central Government cannot do this alone and needs to work together with local authorities to achieve changes. We need to work together to be stronger was a message that came out of 'No One Left Out';
- (c) The MP believed that there were three strands to solving the homelessness issue Prevent; Partnership; and Personalisation.

Personalisation related to the needs of the individual, including both their health and employment needs. In the MP's opinion, Hartlepool had a shortage of appropriate homes for the needs of the people in Hartlepool. The MP had a desire for the young people to have input into the shaping of the housing policy in the Town. With an aging population and an aging Hartlepool, so it was important that young people felt that the accommodation available in the Town was appropriate to them. Without this appropriate accommodation the MP felt that there was a danger that young people would leave Hartlepool, set up families elsewhere and their talents would be lost to Hartlepool; and

- (d) The MP touched on the subject of opposition from within to new housing developments, support accommodation and other social housing. The MP voiced this question to people who raised these objections "Where do you want your children and grandchildren to live?"

### **13. EVIDENCE FROM A NEIGHBOURING LOCAL AUTHORITY**

- 13.1 In order to further enhance their investigation into 'Appropriate Accommodation for Homeless Young People for Whatever Reason', Members sought evidence from another local authority that was considered to be demonstrating good practice. Evidence gathered by Members from this source is detailed below:-

#### **Evidence from Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council**

- 13.2 The Children's Services Scrutiny Forum met on 24 March 2009 and in attendance at their meeting were the Housing Options Manager and Modernisation Manager from Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council. Members were interested to learn that Stockton had been recognised as a Centre of Excellence in the North East for tackling youth homelessness by the Department for Communities and Local Government in 2008 and 2009.
- 13.3 The Modernisation Manager reported to Members that Stockton had decided on a desktop evaluation exercise to determine if there was a problem, where there was a problem and once this baseline had been achieved Stockton then moved forward onto how to solve the problems of youth homelessness.
- 13.4 Members of the Forum were particularly interested to hear about the development of a young people's group called Homeless on Teesside, which enabled those young people to have direct engagement with the Local Authority to influence the homelessness strategy.
- 13.5 The Children's Services Scrutiny Forum heard that the biggest barrier to solving youth homelessness was the change in attitude towards the classification of the young people. Instead of considering homeless young people as statutorily belonging to one particular support group, such as youth or probation service, and by adopting a partnership approach Stockton

now find a solution for the needs of that individual young person with the idea that someone within the partnership will have a responsibility for them. This has led to the Children's Services Department taking the lead role for the development and continuation of the youth homelessness strategy in Stockton.

- 13.6 Members asked a question about solving the problem of NIMBY (Not In My Back Yard) attitudes towards the creation of new supported accommodation. The representatives from Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council informed the Forum that their solution was to hold meetings in the community with resident associations, where homeless young people could talk to these groups about the benefits of supported accommodation. There had also been provision of community facilities within the supported accommodation, which helped dispel community fears.

## 14. CONCLUSIONS

- 14.1 The Children's Services Scrutiny Forum concluded:-

- (a) That the supported accommodation on offer in Hartlepool is of extremely high quality, but young people suffer from waiting lists that can result in them not securing a residency at the most appropriate supported accommodation for themselves;
- (b) That despite the superb supported accommodation on offer in Hartlepool and the lack of associated problems, there exists NIMBY (Not In My Back Yard) attitudes towards the creation of new accommodation;
- (c) That before new supported accommodation is set up, the fears of local residents opposed to the creation of the accommodation needs to be addressed. Information that is upfront and proactive is required to dispel concerns and that maybe the introduction of smaller three or four bed accommodation may reduce some of the 'real' fears that local residents have;
- (d) That when resources are pooled, there are no real financial restraints stopping the creation of more supported accommodation in Hartlepool;
- (e) That there is no real evidence of habitual rough sleeping amongst young people in Hartlepool, although unsubstantiated anecdotal evidence does contradict this statement;
- (f) That it is extremely difficult to quantify the number of young people who are 'sofa surfing' in Hartlepool and therefore being unsuitably housed;
- (g) That there is a demand for emergency accommodation in Hartlepool that is currently not being adequately met;

- (h) That appropriate accommodation for young people, may actually be one of the most important factors in tackling youth homelessness;
- (i) That skills for life training and training flats are extremely useful in enabling young people to adapt to independent living and can be a solution in reducing tenancy failures;
- (j) That support for young people moving into independent living is vital to stop the causes of tenancy failure; and
- (k) That in order to tackle youth homelessness and assist with the transition into independent living the Local Authority needs to ensure that partnership working is at the centre of any strategic plan.

## 15. RECOMMENDATIONS

15.1 The Children's Services Scrutiny Forum has taken evidence from a wide range of sources to assist in the formulation of a balanced range of recommendations. The Forum's key recommendations to the Cabinet are as outlined below:-

- (a) That supported accommodation providers be encouraged to set up more facilities in the Town, although before this occurs:-
  - (i) Residents in an area where a scheme is planned be properly consulted and reassured that supported accommodation is not only beneficial, but is to be encouraged;
  - (ii) Any scheme should include the provision of at least one if not two emergency beds or 'crash pads'.
- (b) That support is given to assist young people in the transition into independent living;
- (c) That the Children's Services and the Regeneration and Planning Services Departments examine Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council's 'Homelessness Strategy 2008-2011' and:-
  - (i) Adopt those examples of good practice which can assist the tackling of youth homelessness in Hartlepool; and
  - (ii) Where partnership funding is insufficient for the creation of supported accommodation in Hartlepool, that the Council allocates additional resources.

- (d) That during the planning stages for new housing developments in Hartlepool:-
- (i) Consideration be given to appropriate accommodation for young people; and
  - (ii) Young people are consulted about accommodation that would be appropriate for their needs.

### **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

The Committee is grateful to all those who have presented evidence during the course of our investigation. We would like to place on record our appreciation, in particular of the willingness and co-operation we have received from the below named:-

#### Hartlepool Borough Council:

The Mayor, Stuart Drummond – Portfolio Holder for Regeneration and Liveability;

Councillor Cath Hill – Portfolio Holder for Children’s Services;

Lynda Igoe – Principal Housing Advice Officer;

Siobhan Rafferty – Supported Housing Co-ordinator;

Jim Murdoch – Head of Business Unit (Young Persons);

John Robinson – Children’s Fund Manager;

Tracey Rudd – Benefits Liaison Officer;

Ian Wakefield – Team Manager.

#### External Representatives:

Iain Wright – Member of Parliament for Hartlepool;

Kelly Goulding – Participation Officer, Barnardos;

Leigh Bradley – Participation Officer, Barnardos;

Judith Kelsey – Hartlepool Young Voices;

Beth Hawkrige – DCSM (Participation), Barnardos;

Jill Bousfield – Hartlepool Young Voices;

Lindsey Holmes – Hartlepool Young Voices;

Peter Gowland – Project Development Officer, HVDA;

Michelle Summersgill – Supported Living Manager, Housing Hartlepool;

Caroline Wood – Housing Options Manager, Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council;

Lynn Sparrey – Modernisation Manager, Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council;

Derek Brown – Manager, St Paul’s Project;

Sylvia Tiplady – St Paul’s Project;

John Brunetti – Manager, Gainford House;

Nicola Dent – Project Worker, Gainford House;

Anthony Preston – Client Representative, Gainford House;

The staff and residents from Scott Grange, St Paul’s and Gainford House who welcomed Members and provided evidence during the site visits held on 11 March 2009.

**COUNCILLOR JANE SHAW  
CHAIR OF THE CHILDREN’S SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM**

**April 2009**

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**BACKGROUND PAPERS**

The following background papers were consulted or referred to in the preparation of this report:-

- (a) Department for Communities and Local Government (2006) *Homelessness Code of Guidance for Local Authorities*, Available from: <http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/housing/pdf/152056.pdf> (Accessed 4 December 2008).
- (b) Joseph Rowntree Foundation (2008) *Housing Choices and Issues for Young People in the UK*, Available from: <http://www.jrf.org.uk/bookshop/eBooks/2220-homelessness-young-people.pdf> (Accessed 20 November 2008).



- (c) Children and Young Persons Act 2008 (c. 23), Available from: [http://www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts2008/ukpga\\_20080023\\_en\\_1](http://www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts2008/ukpga_20080023_en_1) (Accessed 3 December 2008).
- (d) Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000 (c. 35), Available from: [http://www.opsi.gov.uk/Acts/acts2000/ukpga\\_20000035\\_en\\_1](http://www.opsi.gov.uk/Acts/acts2000/ukpga_20000035_en_1) (Accessed 3 December 2008).
- (e) Report of the Scrutiny Support Officer entitled 'Scrutiny Investigation into Appropriate Accommodation for Homeless Young People for Whatever Reason – Scoping Report,' presented at the meeting of the Children's Services Scrutiny Forum of 13 January 2009.
- (f) Written evidence of Hartlepool Young Voices entitled 'Appropriate Accommodation for Homeless Young People for Whatever Reason,' presented at the meeting of the Children's Services Scrutiny Forum of 13 January 2009.
- (g) YMCA (2008) *Breaking it Down: Developing Whole-Family Approaches to Youth Homelessness*, Available from: [http://www.ymca.org.uk/SITE/UPLOAD/DOCUMENT/Breaking\\_it\\_Down.pdf](http://www.ymca.org.uk/SITE/UPLOAD/DOCUMENT/Breaking_it_Down.pdf) (Accessed 5 January 2009).
- (h) Ford, J., Rugg, J., Burrows, R. (2002) 'Conceptualising the Contemporary Role of Housing in the Transition to Adult Life in England', *Urban Studies*, Volume 39, Number 13, 2002, pages 2455-2467.
- (i) Joseph Rowntree Foundation (2008) *Youth Homelessness in the UK: A Decade of Progress?*, Available from: <http://www.jrf.org.uk/bookshop/eBooks/2220-homelessness-young-people.pdf> (Accessed 3 December 2008).
- (j) Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000 (c. 35), Available from: [http://www.opsi.gov.uk/Acts/acts2000/ukpga\\_20000035\\_en\\_1](http://www.opsi.gov.uk/Acts/acts2000/ukpga_20000035_en_1) (Accessed 3 December 2008).
- (k) Report of the Scrutiny Support Officer entitled 'Scrutiny Investigation into Appropriate Accommodation for Homeless Young People for Whatever Reason – Setting the Scene – Covering Report,' presented at the meeting of the Children's Services Scrutiny Forum of 27 January 2009.
- (l) Report of the Scrutiny Support Officer entitled 'Scrutiny Investigation into Appropriate Accommodation for Homeless Young People for Whatever Reason – Evidence from the Authority's Portfolio Holder for Regeneration and Liveability and Portfolio Holder for Children's Services – Covering Report,' presented at the meeting of the Children's Services Scrutiny Forum of 27 January 2009.
- (m) Report of the Scrutiny Support Officer entitled 'Scrutiny Investigation into Appropriate Accommodation for Homeless Young People for Whatever

- Reason – Evidence on the Reasons Behind Youth Homelessness – Covering Report,’ presented at the meeting of the Children’s Services Scrutiny Forum of 27 January 2009.
- (n) Report of the Scrutiny Support Officer entitled ‘Scrutiny Investigation into Appropriate Accommodation for Homeless Young People for Whatever Reason – Evidence from Housing Hartlepool and Nightstop Hartlepool – Covering Report,’ presented at the meeting of the Children’s Services Scrutiny Forum of 3 March 2009.
  - (o) Report of the Scrutiny Support Officer entitled ‘Scrutiny Investigation into Appropriate Accommodation for Homeless Young People for Whatever Reason – Evidence on the Benefits and Financial Support Available for Young People – Covering Report,’ presented at the meeting of the Children’s Services Scrutiny Forum of 3 March 2009.
  - (p) Report of the Scrutiny Support Officer entitled ‘Scrutiny Investigation into Appropriate Accommodation for Homeless Young People for Whatever Reason – Evidence from Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council – Covering Report,’ presented at the meeting of the Children’s Services Scrutiny Forum of 24 March 2009.
  - (q) Report of the Scrutiny Support Officer entitled ‘Scrutiny Investigation into Appropriate Accommodation for Homeless Young People for Whatever Reason – Evidence from Housing Hartlepool – Covering Report,’ presented at the meeting of the Children’s Services Scrutiny Forum of 24 March 2009.
  - (r) Report of the Scrutiny Support Officer entitled ‘Scrutiny Investigation into Appropriate Accommodation for Homeless Young People for Whatever Reason – Evidence on Supported Accommodation – Covering Report,’ presented at the meeting of the Children’s Services Scrutiny Forum of 24 March 2009.
  - (s) Report of the Head of Business Unit (Young Persons) entitled ‘Homeless Young People,’ presented at the meeting of the Children’s Services Scrutiny Forum of 24 March 2009.
  - (t) Department for Communities and Local Government (2008), *No one Left Out: Communities Ending Rough Sleeping*, Available from: <http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/housing/pdf/endingroughsleeping> (Accessed 1 April 2009).
  - (u) Minutes of the Children’s Services Scrutiny Forum of 21 July 2008, 13 January 2009, 27 January 2009, 3 March 2009 and 24 March 2009.

## SCRUTINY CO-ORDINATING COMMITTEE

24 April 2009



**Report of:** Scrutiny Manager

**Subject:** EXTENDING YOUNG PEOPLE'S INVOLVEMENT IN THE COUNCIL'S OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY ARRANGEMENTS

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### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To inform Members of the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee of the proposal to extend young people's involvement in the Council's Overview and Scrutiny arrangements for the 2009/10 Municipal Year.

### 2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 In September 2006 six young people were co-opted onto the membership of the Children's Services Scrutiny Forum with the aim of increasing community involvement / engagement. The engagement of young people has been a major asset to the work of the Children's Services Scrutiny Forum and resulted in the young people being shortlisted for the Children and Young People's Services Awards in 2007 and the young people choosing the Children's Services Scrutiny Forum's second work programme item for the 2008/09 Municipal Year.
- 2.2 On 7 November 2008 the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee engaged young people in their Kerbside Recycling Referral as part of the Council's involvement in the 11 Million Takeover Day. Feedback from the involvement of young people from Members of the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee focussed on a desire to extend the involvement of young people in the Council's Overview and Scrutiny arrangements.
- 2.3 Subsequently, during the Informal Meeting of Scrutiny Chairs on 26 January 2009 and again on 11 March 2009, Members considered evidence on the practicalities of increasing the engagement of young people in the Council's Overview and Scrutiny arrangements.

- 2.4 During the Informal Meeting of Scrutiny Chairs, Members were informed of an opportunity for engagement with the School Council Forum. The School Council Forum is representative of all the Secondary Schools in Hartlepool including Catcote School, meeting once every six weeks and once every half term. Members were pleased to hear that the School Council Forum are very interested in becoming more involved in the democratic process in Hartlepool and this may aid the engagement of the more interested and politically minded young people in the Town.
- 2.5 The Scrutiny Chairs agreed that for the 2009/10 Municipal Year that:-
- (i) The Annual Work Programme be discussed with the School Council Forum collectively by Scrutiny Chairs;
  - (ii) Where it is felt appropriate, the Chair of each of the Scrutiny Forums attends the School Council Forum to seek involvement on the topic under investigation; and
  - (iii) Any interested members of the School Council Forum who wished to be involved in a particular scrutiny investigation are invited to attend meetings of the relevant Scrutiny Forum.

### 3. RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 That Members note the content of this report and endorse the proposal for extending young people's involvement in the Council's Overview and Scrutiny arrangements for the 2009/10 Municipal Year as highlighted in section 2.5.

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### BACKGROUND PAPERS

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

## SCRUTINY CO-ORDINATING COMMITTEE

24 April 2009



**Report of:** Scrutiny Manager

**Subject:** DRAFT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY ANNUAL REPORT 2008/09

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### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To provide the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee (SCC) the opportunity to consider the Draft Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report for 2008/09.

### 2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 As outlined in the Authority's Constitution, it is a requirement of the Overview and Scrutiny Function to produce an Annual Report, detailing the work of the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee and the five standing Scrutiny Forums that has been undertaken during the last 12 months together with suggested developments etc for the forthcoming year.
- 2.2 Last year was the third year an Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report was produced, which was also very well received by Full Council, partners and members of the public.
- 2.3 Given the extremely tight timescales for the production of the Draft Annual Report for 2008/09, together with allowing the Chair of the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee and the Chairs of the five standing Scrutiny Forums the opportunity to comment on the relevant pages that relate to the work of their Committee/Forum, a copy of the Draft Annual Report will be circulated during this meeting.
- 2.4 Following the views of this Committee in relation to its content, the Annual Report will be presented to the first meeting of Council in the new Municipal Year and will also be despatched to key stakeholders and public buildings for information.

### 3. RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1 It is recommended that the Scrutiny Coordinating Committee:-

- (a) Notes the content of this report;
- (b) Considers the content of the Draft Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report for 2008/09, to be circulated at this meeting; and
- (c) Notes that the Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report for 2008/09 will be presented to the first meeting of Council in the Municipal Year 2009/10 and despatched to key stakeholders and public places for information.

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### BACKGROUND PAPERS

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