

# FINANCE AND POLICY COMMITTEE

## AGENDA



**Monday 16 September 2024**

**at 5.00 pm**

**in the Council Chamber,  
Civic Centre, Hartlepool.**

MEMBERS: FINANCE AND POLICY COMMITTEE

Councillors Allen, Creevy, Feeney, Hargreaves, Harrison, Lindridge, Little, Nelson, Oliver, Reeve and Young.

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

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

**3. MINUTES**

- 3.1 To receive the minutes of the meeting of the Finance and Policy Committee held on 25 June 2024 (*previously published and circulated*)
- 3.2 To receive the minutes of the meetings of the Safer Hartlepool Partnership held on 26 February 2024
- 3.3 To receive the minutes of the meeting of the Health and Wellbeing Board held on 11 March 2024

**4. BUDGET AND POLICY FRAMEWORK ITEMS**

- 4.1 Strategic Financial Management Report – as at 30 June 2024 – *Director of Finance, IT and Digital*
- 4.2 Draft Community Safety Plan 2024-2027 – *Executive Director, Development, Neighbourhoods and Regulatory Services*

**CIVIC CENTRE EVACUATION AND ASSEMBLY PROCEDURE**

In the event of a fire alarm or a bomb alarm, please leave by the nearest emergency exit as directed by Council Officers. A Fire Alarm is a continuous ringing. A Bomb Alarm is a continuous tone. The Assembly Point for everyone is Victory Square by the Cenotaph. If the meeting has to be evacuated, please proceed to the Assembly Point so that you can be safely accounted for.

## **5. KEY DECISIONS**

- 5.1 Hartlepool Housing Allocations Policy – *Executive Director of Children’s and Joint Commissioning Services*
- 5.2 Permission to Direct Award for the Delivery of Drug and Alcohol Services – *Director of Public Health*

## **6. OTHER ITEMS REQUIRING DECISION**

No items

## **7. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION**

- 7.1 Annual Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Update – *Director of Legal, Governance and HR*
- 7.2 Corporate Complaints Monitoring Report for 2023/24 – *Monitoring Officer*

## **8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS WHICH THE CHAIR CONSIDERS URGENT**

FOR INFORMATION

Date of next meeting - Monday 25 November, 2024 at 10.00 am in the Civic Centre, Hartlepool



# **SAFER HARTLEPOOL PARTNERSHIP**

## **MINUTES AND DECISION RECORD**

26 FEBRUARY 2024

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

**Present:**

**Responsible Authority Members:**

Councillor Little, Elected Member, Hartlepool Borough Council  
Tony Hanson, Director of Neighbourhoods and Regulatory Services  
Hartlepool Borough Council  
Sylvia Pinkney, Assistant Director, Regulatory Services, Hartlepool Borough  
Council  
Superintendent Martin Hopps, Hartlepool District, Cleveland Police  
Carl Pattison, Cleveland Fire Authority

**Other Members:**

Sarah Wilson, Office of Police and Crime Commissioner for Cleveland  
Angela Corner, Head of Community Resilience, Thirteen Group  
Sally Robinson, Director of Children’s and Joint Commissioning Services,  
Hartlepool Borough Council

**Also Present:**

Anna Waddington, Cleveland Violence Reduction Unit (CURV)

**Officers:**

Rachel Parker, Community Safety Team Leader  
David Cosgrove, Democratic Services Team

## **27. Apologies for Absence**

Denise McGuckin, Managing Director, Hartlepool Borough Council  
Karen Hawkins, Director of Commissioning, Strategy and Delivery, NHS  
Tees Valley Clinical Commissioning Group  
Jo Heaney, Chair of Youth Offending Board  
Ann Powell, Head of Stockton and Hartlepool Probation Delivery Unit  
Craig Blundred, Director of Public Health, Hartlepool Borough Council  
Joanne Hodgkinson, Hartlepool Voluntary and Community Sector  
Representative, Chief Executive, Safer Communities

Jill Harrison, Director of Adult and Community Based Services, Hartlepool Borough Council

## 28. Chair

Subsequent to the meeting of Council on 22 February 2024, there was no appointed Chair of the Partnership. Nomination for a Chair for this meeting only was sought and Councillor Little was nominated and agreed.

**Councillor Little in the Chair.**

## 29. Declarations of Interest

None.

## 30. Minutes of the meeting held on 2 October 2023

Confirmed.

## 31. Right Care, Right Person (*District Commander, Cleveland Police*)

### **Purpose of report**

The purpose of the report was to inform members of the Safer Hartlepool Partnership of the Right Care, Right Person approach, an initiative to ensure that vulnerable people get the right type of support from the police and other services to assist with their needs.

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

The Hartlepool District Commander, Cleveland Police provided an update on the roll-out of the Right Care, Right Person approach which would assist police in making decisions about when it is appropriate for them to respond to incidents. The threshold for a police response to a mental health-related incident was:

- to investigate a crime that has occurred or is occurring.
- to protect people, when there is a real and immediate risk to the life, or of a person being subject to or at risk of serious harm.

While some incidents do require police powers there were many which involve no crime or significant risk. If a police response was not lawfully or proportionately required it may, in some cases, cause further distress. For each incident, the most appropriate service to respond would be identified. This may be to manage the risk, or to provide care and support to the person and ensure vulnerable people were signposted to the right help and support for their needs.

There were risks involved that all partners, including the Police, needed to be fully aware of. The police should not assume, directly or indirectly, responsibility for all forms of risk. It should be considered whether it was appropriate for them to accept, or to continue to accept, responsibility for a risk when there were more appropriate agencies to deal with the situation.

The Chair welcomed the Right Care, Right Person approach which was to be rolled out across the force area. People suffering mental health issues needed to be dealt with by the most appropriate agency.

### **Decision**

That the report be noted.

## **32. General Neighbourhood Policing Update** (*District Commander, Cleveland Police*)

### **Purpose of report**

The purpose of the report was to provide members of the Safer Hartlepool Partnership an update in respect of general policing duties within Hartlepool.

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

The Hartlepool District Commander, Cleveland Police provided an policing update for the Partnership.

Response Policing had reduced from five reliefs to four to accommodate a new shift pattern. The new shift pattern, typically a four-on-four-off pattern, was voted in by officers late last year following a period of staff consultation. The shift pattern has been tested against demand modelling and found to be an effective way to meet demand at peak times.

Two additional vacancies had been filled within Neighbourhood Policing with the addition of Sergeant Chris Phelan and the return of Police Community Support Officer Julie Dobson. PCSO Dobson would return to her original posting covering the Seaton Ward.

The District Commander updated Members on crime figures for Violence without injury, Violence with injury, Stalking and Harassment, Shoplifting, Vehicle related crime, Burglary – Residential, Theft from person, Criminal Damage, Robbery, Anti-Social Behaviour and Hate Crime.

The Neighbourhood Policing Team continued to manage several problem-solving plans (16). One example of this approach occurred around Easington Road and King Oswy Drive where youths had been damaging vehicles by throwing stones at them. High visibility patrols, engagement with staff at Dimensions Care Home and working closely with the council assisted in reducing ASB jobs between October and December to 0. Usually, there would be a spike in ASB over Halloween / bonfire night,

however, this had not been the case. Youths involved with ASB were identified and dealt with quickly, ensuring the clear message was passed that poor behaviour would not be tolerated. The ward PCSO would continue to engage with staff, providing them with reassurance and support moving forward.

Also within the update provided, the District Commander referred to the launch of the Cleveland Police Matrix team to demonstrate to the public how we are tackling criminals and protecting communities. The Matrix team would employ a new way of working to reduce and eradicate emerging threats of serious and organised crime. The Matrix team consisted of Tactical Disruption Team (previously known as the Operational Support Unit); Firearms; the Dog Unit; Roads Policing; Casualty Reduction and Road Safety; Camera Enforcement; Football; Public Order; Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear (CBRN); Search; as well as Operational and Emergency Planning. Vehicles within the fleet have been rebranded; and the Tactical Disruption Team vehicles will also be bright yellow.

The Chair welcomed the report and the return of PCSO Dobson to Seaton Carew.

#### **Decision**

That the report be noted.

### **33. MUGA – Verbal Update** *(Cleveland Fire Brigade Representative)*

#### **Purpose of report**

To seek the Partnership's guidance on the future of the Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA) equipment purchased by the Partnership some years ago.

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

The Fire Brigade representative reported that the MUGA equipment was stored at the Stranton Fire Station for a number of years but the garage building it was in required maintenance and was to be out of use for quite a period of time. The Fire Brigade were looking for a local voluntary group that could take the equipment on and put it to good use. Should this not be possible, then it was suggested that the equipment be auctioned with any monies gained being returned to the Partnership.

The Chair stated that she could provide storage for the equipment in the interim. It was suggested that it may be prudent to advertise for a community group to take the equipment on initially and then review the situation if that was not successful.

#### **Decision**

That the MUGA equipment be advertised to Hartlepool community groups for future management and use.

### **34. Fire Brigade Update – Verbal Update** (*Cleveland Fire Brigade Representative*)

#### **Purpose of report**

To provide a Fire update to the Partnership.

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

The Fire Brigade representative reported that a new shift pattern had been introduced for Fire staff which allowed for better management of staff during peak times. It was reported that all Fire incidents were up 6% against the five year target and the Brigade had been focussing on accidents that didn't lead to a 'full' fire in residential dwellings. Since September 2023, these incidents had increased 91% with the majority being in sheltered housing schemes. Each Fire Watch had been designated two such residential schemes in the town to visit on a regular monthly basis to build up a relationship with the residents in the sheltered housing scheme and provide regular fire guidance.

Set fires involving fly-tipping were another issue the Brigade was proposing to address through a free skips programme in hotspot areas to encourage people to dispose of their waste properly. There would also be stickers issued for residents to use on their wheelie bins showing what days they need to be put out and brought back in. Wheelie bin fires were a particular concern. There would be a social media campaign and work with local schools as well.

Deliberately set fires were 84% of all the incidents attended by the Brigade and a major issue with Cleveland being the worst Fire Authority area in the country for such incidents. Wards with the highest incidents, Manor House, Rossmere, Headland and Harbour, De Brus and Burn Valley would be targeted in a new campaign to reduce these. This would also be discussed through the Deliberate Fires Group.

Members welcomed the report and the proposals around tackling fires of fly-tipped materials. Elected Members asked if Ward Councillors could be included in the information on the skips programme. Members also noted the work with people in sheltered accommodation communities to reduce accidental fires. A member of the public commented on fly-tipping in and around allotment sites and the frequency with which this waste was set alight risking damage to sheds and fences.

#### **Decision**

That the update report be noted.

### **35. Strategic Assessment 2022-2023** (*Executive Director, Development, Neighbourhoods and Regulatory Services*)

**Purpose of report**

To receive the Strategic Assessment for October 2022 to September 2023.

**Issue(s) for consideration**

The Assistant Director, Regulatory Services reported that the findings from the Strategic Assessment would inform the development of the next Safer Hartlepool Partnership's statutory Community Safety Plan due in April 2024. The key findings of the assessment identify that the current Community Safety Plan priorities of Anti-social Behaviour, Drugs and Alcohol and Domestic Violence and Abuse remain relevant and, with the addition of Serious Violence, should be retained as priorities in the next Community Safety Plan, due for implementation in April 2024.

The Chair asked of the issues around shop lifting were in the town centre only or across the community. The Police District Commander stated that the issues were across the town, though there were certain hotspots. The Chair asked if there needed to be a set monetary value to shop lifting incidents before the Police would take action. The Police District Commander was clear in stating this was not the case and all incidents should be reported to the Police. While only small in value, an incident could be due to a prolific shop lifter and intelligence would help the Police target and prosecute such offenders.

It was also reported that while there were increases in the numbers of crimes reported, there were now many more ways to report incidents and greater confidence among the public that reports did eventually lead to action, sometime high profile, being taken.

In light of the lengthy period before the next meeting of the partnership, it was suggested that all Partner organisations considered that Strategic Assessment and submit any comments to the Assistant Director in the next four weeks.

**Decision**

1. Members of the Safer Hartlepool Partnership are asked to consider key findings of the strategic assessment and submit any comments on the contents to the Assistant Director, Regulatory Services.
2. That a draft Community Safety Plan 2024 – 2027 be presented to the next meeting of the Safer Hartlepool Partnership for approval.

**36. Safer Hartlepool Partnership Action Plan** (*Assistant Director, Regulatory Services*)**Purpose of report**

To provide a Safer Hartlepool Partnership Action Plan in which partners report their performance against the priorities outlined in the Community Safety Plan 2024/2027.

**Issue(s) for consideration**

The Assistant Director, Regulatory Services reported on the draft Safer Hartlepool Partnership Action Plan which outlined activities carried out by partners across the priorities of the 2024/2027 plan. Some partners were already producing action plans to accompany strategies such as Domestic Abuse and Drugs and Alcohol which were already being presented to the Partnership. Details from these plans were included in the action plan to ensure that all partners are contributing and including work they are carrying out.

**Decision**

That the action plan be noted and approved.

**37. Draft Community Safety Plan 2024 - 2027** (*Executive Director of Development, Neighbourhoods and Regulatory Services*)

**Purpose of report**

To consider and agree a draft Community Safety Plan for 2024 – 2027

**Issue(s) for consideration**

The Assistant Director, Regulatory Services reported that the Community Safety Plan 2024-27 will provide an overview of some of the recent activities undertaken to improve community safety in Hartlepool, along with key findings from the Partnership's Strategic Assessment and consultation with the public. The draft Community Safety Plan will be subject to an eight week consultation period following its approval by the Finance and Policy Committee early in the new Municipal Year.

The Executive Director of Development, Neighbourhoods and Regulatory Services suggested that all partners be requested to consider and comment on the draft in the interim period ahead of approval by Finance and Policy Committee and the public consultation period so that any comments could be incorporated into the consultation draft. This was supported by the Partnership.

The role of the sub groups around drugs and alcohol, health and anti-social behaviour were clarified in the meeting. The Executive Director of Development, Neighbourhoods and Regulatory Services stated that the membership and role of the neighbourhood safety group should be refreshed as part of this process.

**Decision**

1. That the partner organisations consider the proposed draft plan prior to the commencement of the consultation period and submit any comments to the Assistant Director, Regulatory Services.
2. That the establishment of sub group / task groups to deliver the Community Safety Plan priorities be supported.

### **38 Any Other Items which the Chairman Considers are Urgent**

None.

The meeting concluded at 11.00 am.

CHAIR

# HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD

## MINUTES AND DECISION RECORD

11 March 2024

The meeting commenced at 10.30 am in the Civic Centre, Hartlepool

Present:

Representative of NHS North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board, Karen Hawkins (In the Chair)

**Prescribed Members:**

Elected Members, Hartlepool Borough Council - Councillors Allen, Harrison and Darby

Director of Public Health, Hartlepool Borough Council – Craig Blundred  
Executive Director of Adult and Community Based Services, Hartlepool Borough Council - Jill Harrison

Representatives of Healthwatch - Margaret Wrenn and Christopher Akers-Belcher

**Other Members:**

Representative of Hartlepool Voluntary and Community Sector – Carl Jorgeson

Representative of Tees, Esk and Wear Valley NHS Trust – Patrick Scott (as substitute for Brent Kilmurray)

Representative of GP Federation - Fiona Adamson

Also in attendance:-

Philippa Walters, Pharmacy Lead

Officers: Claire Robinson, Public Health Principal  
Joan Stevens, Statutory Scrutiny Manager  
Amanda Whitaker, Democratic Services Team

### 76. Apologies for Absence

Elected Members, Hartlepool Borough Council, Councillor Young  
Observer – Statutory Scrutiny Representative, Hartlepool Borough Council – Councillor Creevy

Representative of North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Trust - Linda Hunter  
Executive Director of Children's and Joint Commissioning Services, Hartlepool Borough Council - Sally Robinson

Managing Director, Hartlepool Borough Council – Denise McGuckin  
Representative of Hartlepool Voluntary and Community Sector – Christine Fewster

Representative of NHS North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board - David Gallagher

Representative of Headteachers - Sonya Black

## 77. Declarations of interest by Members

None

## 78. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 4 December 2023 were confirmed

The minutes of the Tees Valley Area Integrated Care Partnership Meeting held on 24 November 2023 were received

## 79. Drug and Alcohol Strategy Update Report *(Director of Public Health)*

Further to minute 51 of the meeting of the Board held on 10 July 2023, an update on progress against the Drug and Alcohol Strategy Action Plan was submitted. A copy of the Action Plan was appended to the report and a summary of the key deliverables between July 2023 and March 2024 was set out in the report.

### Decision

The report was noted.

## 80. Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment (PNA) 2022 – Maintenance Report *(Director of Public Health)*

The Board was updated in accordance with the process for statutory maintenance of the Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment 2022. Board Members received notification of applications, decisions and other notice of changes to pharmaceutical services in Hartlepool from the ICB NENC or Primary Care Support England (PCSE) since the date of the last Health and Wellbeing Board Maintenance Report.

It was highlighted that there was no requirement to publish a Supplementary Statement to the PNA 2022 for the changes. The changes of ownership would be published on the Board's PNA website for information and the key to the map would be updated, though no change was required to the map itself.

Elected Members debated issues arising from the report with particular reference to the promotion and support of the 'Pharmacy First' service. A Healthwatch representative offered to assist with promotion of the scheme.

## Decision

The Board noted the following:

- i) That no other supplementary statements to the Hartlepool PNA 2022 have been issued since the last report of changes on 4<sup>th</sup> December 2024.
- ii) The change to opening hours (and thereby availability of necessary pharmaceutical services) at Clayfields Pharmacy on Saturday afternoon.
- iii) The approval of a new distance selling pharmacy located in Hartlepool, the date of opening to be confirmed.
- iv) Change of ownership of two pharmacies at Seaton Carew and at Park Road as set out in report.

## 81. Measles Update *(Director of Public Health)*

The Board was updated on the current measles situation and assurance was given about preparedness should there be an increase in measles cases in Hartlepool. The report set out Measles, Mumps and Rubella (MMR) vaccination data which showed more needed to be done to increase the uptake of vaccinations. A national and regional communications campaign was underway to raise awareness of the need for vaccination and which was being supported through NHS /UKHSA and local authority communications

Board Members were advised that as there was a likelihood of cases emerging in Hartlepool, the Health Protection Board for Hartlepool provides an opportunity for people to share plans and processes to give assurance to the Director of Public Health. An interim Health Protection Board had been held in February and organisations had shared their plans for responding to an outbreak.

The Director of Public Health undertook to follow up on issues raised by Board Members in relation to connection with the community and voluntary sector and the availability of more accessible clinics for vaccinations. An offer from a Healthwatch representative to assist in the promotion of the vaccination was also noted by the Director.

## Decision

The board noted the report.

## **82. Director of Public Health Annual Report** (*Director of Public Health*)

Elected Members were referred to the requirement for the Director of Public Health to write an Annual Report on the health status of the town, and the Local Authority duty to publish it, as specified in the Health and Social Care Act 2012. The 2023 Annual Report looked at people of working age and focused on work, skills and health looking at economic opportunities in the town, employment opportunities and focusing on work we are doing to improve health and wellbeing in workplaces. Following the success of utilising an electronic format and videos in recent years, the report was again accessed via a link included in the report with a copy of the Director's report also appended to the report. The Director of Public Health showed two videos to the meeting from the Annual Report.

Elected Members debated issues arising from the Annual report including how the Board could influence themes included in future Annual Reports and factors which had an impact on the health of employees with the success of involvement in the Better Health at Work Awards highlighted at the meeting.

### **Decision**

The Board noted the report and its conclusions.

Meeting concluded at 11.15 am

CHAIR

**FINANCE AND POLICY COMMITTEE**  
**16<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2024**



**Subject:** STRATEGIC FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT REPORT - AS AT 30TH JUNE 2024

**Report of:** Director of Finance, IT and Digital

**Decision Type:** Budget and Policy Framework

**1. COUNCIL PLAN PRIORITY**

<b>Hartlepool will be a place:</b>
- where people are enabled to live healthy, independent and prosperous lives.
- where those who are vulnerable will be safe and protected from harm.
- of resilient and resourceful communities with opportunities for all.
- that is sustainable, clean, safe and green.
- that has an inclusive and growing economy.
- with a Council that is ambitious, fit for purpose and reflects the diversity of its community.

**2. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

2.1 The purpose of this report is to inform Members of:

- i) Forecast General Fund outturn for 2024/25;
- ii) Reserves forecasts;
- iii) Forecast Housing Revenue Account outturn for 2024/25;
- iv) Corporate Income Collection Performance; and
- v) Capital Programme Monitoring 2024/25.

### 3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The cost pressures reported to Finance and Policy Committee throughout 2023/24 have largely continued in to 2024/25. The significant financial pressures being experienced by the Council are from the recent high period of general price inflation and on-going increased demand and significant cost rises for Children's Social Care external placements. The latter increasing significantly in quarter 1 of 2024/25.
- 3.2 General inflationary pressures have eased back to around 2% in recent months but the profound impact of the now permanent inflation increases of the last 12 to 18 months continue to be felt. The Bank of England continue to set their policy approach to support their objective of maintaining inflation at their 2% target.
- 3.3 These pressures in conjunction with the inadequate funding settlement issued by Government for 2024/25, means the number of Councils issuing warnings on the sustainability of their financial position continues to grow. Hartlepool's officers continue to engage with MHCLG finance officials and Ministers within the new government, to outline the growing sustainability issues of the Council's finances as evidenced by the current years forecast overspend and reported Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) funding shortfall.
- 3.4 The new government have indicated that they will seek to review local government funding but the extent and timeframes for this are currently unclear.
- 3.5 The latest 2024/25 budget forecast position for the Council is outlined below.

### 4. GENERAL FUND REVENUE OUTTURN 2024/25

- 4.1 The current forecast outturn position is a forecast overspend of £2.900m. The position is detailed in **Appendices A to E**, with a summary position set out from section 4.3 onwards.
- 4.2 Given the identification of on-going financial pressures early in the financial year, the Managing Director issued an all-staff communication in June 2024, requesting that spend should only incurred where deemed absolutely necessary. On-going budget manager and staff efforts throughout the financial year will support the minimising of the current forecast overspend position.

<b>Summary of 2024/25 Forecast General Fund Outturn</b>	
	<b>Q1 Forecast Outturn - Overspend/ (Underspend)</b>
	<b>£'000</b>
<b>Departmental Budgets</b>	
Adult & Community Based Services	275
Children's & Joint Commissioning	4,790
Finance, IT and Digital	(300)
Legal, Governance and HR	(65)
Development, Neighbourhoods & Regulatory Services	200
Corporate	(2,000)
<b>Total Forecast Budget Overspend</b>	<b>2,900</b>

### **Adult and Community Based Services**

- 4.3 The forecast outturn is a net departmental overspend of £0.275m, consisting of a projected £0.560m overspend within Preventative & Community Based Services, offset by a projected £0.285m underspend within Adult Social Care. The projected departmental overspend of £0.275m represents less than 1% of the department's overall net budget.
- 4.4 The forecast underspend within Adult Social Care includes the use of some one-off grant funding and is based on current client numbers and costs. However, it is still early in the year, with the winter period to come, so these projections will be closely monitored and updated as the year progresses. This underspend offsets the anticipated pressure from the forecast reduced income arising from delaying the implementation of charging for Telecare until 1st October 2024.
- 4.5 The forecast overspend within Preventative & Community Based Services mainly relates to reduced income across the following areas; Cemeteries and Crematoria, arising from the capital works impacting on the operating days/hours of the chapel, the Borough Hall/Town Hall Theatre temporary closures and the temporary cessation of activities at Carlton Adventure.

### **Children and Joint Commissioning Services**

- 4.6 The current forecast outturn is an overspend of £4.790m. This mainly relates to increases in the number of children in our care requiring external residential and independent fostering agency placements. This reflects the increasing complexity of their needs and the significant fees being charged by the external care market. These increases also have associated adverse impacts on social work staffing budgets.

- 4.7 This area continues to be a risk for all councils owing to a range of external factors and the budget position will continue to be monitored closely during 2024/25 as demand continues to increase. As such, at this stage, there is a real risk that the budget position could deteriorate further. The council is investing in increased “Edge of Care” provision through the transformation fund and this initiative will increase in capacity over the coming months.
- 4.8 A number of ‘one-off’ and time limited temporary grants are helping to offset some of these budget pressures in the current financial year however the majority are due to end in March 2025.

### **Development, Neighbourhoods and Regulatory Services**

- 4.9 The current forecast outturn for the department is an overspend of £0.200m. This is as a result of a number of factors including inflationary pressures on goods and materials and shortfalls in fee income.
- 4.10 In particular car parking income is showing an adverse variance of £0.180m. The variance is a result of a reduction in car parking income which reflects parking concessions and the post pandemic impact of reduced visitor numbers and hybrid working. The reduction in car park usage is a national trend.
- 4.11 There is an adverse variance in relation to planning income of £0.150m, this is a volatile area and the number of large planning applications is down compared to previous years.
- 4.12 There is a forecast adverse variance of £0.215m in relation to Strategic Asset Management as a result of a number of factors including shortfalls in fee income and a one-off unforeseen costs in relation to the property portfolio.
- 4.13 However there are a number of favourable variances offsetting the adverse position, in particular £0.590m in relation to Concessionary Fares owing to favourable contract negotiations with bus companies.
- 4.14 The department will continue to monitor the position closely and action will be taken to attempt to mitigate the forecast overspend position.

### **Finance, IT and Digital**

- 4.15 The current forecast outturn is an underspend of £0.300m. This is owing to favourable variances from staffing vacancies and staff not being at the top of their grade, which is offsetting a pressure in income generation and additional printing and postage costs.

### **Legal, Governance and HR**

- 4.16 The current forecast outturn is an underspend of £0.065m which mainly relates to vacant posts and staff not being at the top of their grade, offsetting reductions in income generation.

### Corporate Areas

- 4.17 The current forecast is an underspend of £2.000m, which is predominantly as a result of the proactive investment of reserves. These investment returns are providing a welcome revenue stream to support the current budget position, but this will not be achievable in to future years as reserve cash balances reduce and capital programme under-borrowing continues, coupled with a downwards trend on interest rates.
- 4.18 A national pay offer for 2024/25 was made by employers on the 16 May 2024. The offer equated to £1,290 per employee regardless of grade, up to spinal point 43. This increase would equate to a 5.77% increase at spinal point 2 and 2.50% at point 43. As at the time of writing, GMB has accepted the pay offer, whilst Unison and Unite trade unions are balloting their members on potential strike action, with ballots taking place during September and October. The emerging position is being closely monitored.

### Budget Savings Monitoring

- 4.19 Progress is being made in the implementation of the £1.885m approved savings plans for 2024/25. The position is positive given the demands and pressures services are experiencing. Directors continue to take the necessary action to mitigate any delays or issues with implementation.
- £1.457m (77%) of the savings have been fully realised to date.
  - £0.035m (2%) of savings where good progress is being made, with a good prospect that full savings will be achieved.
  - £0.393m (21%) is in respect of areas where delays and issues have been encountered, and at this stage it is deemed unlikely they will be delivered as planned. For budget monitoring purposes these are included as a forecast outturn pressure and further information noted below.
- 4.20 The implementation of charging for the Telecare service has been delayed until 1<sup>st</sup> October 2024. As such only £0.200m of the £0.400m forecast saving is anticipated to be achieved in 2024/25 and is categorised as red in the above monitoring.
- 4.21 A partnership arrangement for the block booking of children's social care provision with a local provider has recently ceased due to the provider not accepting HBC referrals. Two children are still living in the 3 bedroom home, but the forecast saving of £0.312m has now reduced to £0.130m. The £0.182m reduction is categorised as red in the above monitoring.
- 4.22 Property holding costs pending the transfer of Bevan House continue to be incurred, impacting on the forecast saving for 2024/25. The forecast £0.011m savings reduction is categorised as red in the above monitoring.

### **Dedicated School Grant**

- 4.23 Up until 2022/23, the Council had successfully managed High Needs Block (HNB) costs within the available annual grant allocation and HNB reserves. This has been achieved despite a significant increase in demands on this service, including the impacts arising from the pandemic.
- 4.24 The 2023/24 outturn was an overspend of £2.348m. This overspend was considered necessary to invest in Hartlepool provision and so avoid placement of pupils with SEND outside the town, wherever possible. In time, this approach will reduce costs for independent and out of town provision and provide an improved outcome for Hartlepool children.
- 4.25 Applying all DSG reserves, the final DSG outturn for 2023/24 was an overspend of £1.589m. Accounting regulations covering the period up to 31 March 2026 do not allow this balance to be included in the General Fund. In accordance with accounting regulations this balance was transferred to the Dedicated Schools Grant Adjustment Account which is an unusable reserve.
- 4.26 Owing to this deficit position the Council must now consider and produce a DSG Management Plan for submission to the Education Skills and Funding Agency. This is a complex spend, demand and demographics data exercise, which when complete will document 4 years of actual data, the current years budgeted data and 6 years predicted data. This plan will be presented to a future meeting of the Children's and Joint Commissioning Services Committee.
- 4.27 The 2024/25 High Needs Budget exceeded the funding allocation by £3.115m. A one year recovery plan, which included; limiting inflation on Top Up Funding and Special Schools funding, putting in place a target to reduce the Out of Area and Independent School places by meeting need in Hartlepool provision and the transfer of the Growth Fund from the Schools Block to the High Needs Block was agreed by Children's Services Committee. These measures reduced the budget requirement by £0.944m, resulting in a funding shortfall of £2.171m for 2024/25.
- 4.28 The current outturn projection is an overspend of c£3.500m (i.e. c£1.329m beyond the originally identified 2024/25 shortfall), owing to increases in children being educated in independent or out of town provision, overspends on Individual Pupil Support payments, the cost of exclusions and the lag in funding for the Free School which opens in September 2024.

### **Reserves**

- 4.28 The current reserves position and the forecast usage of reserves by year is summarised in the table below, with a more detailed analysis included at **Appendix M**.

Reserve Area	Current Reserves 31/03/24	Forecast Usage		Forecast Balance 31/3/28
		2024/25	2025/26 to 2026/28	
		£'000	£'000	
Unearmarked General Fund	5,501	0	0	5,501
Budget Support Fund	7,947	(6,066)	0	1,881
Budget Support – Transformation and Invest to Save	3,000	(1,500)	(1,500)	0
Other Revenue Reserves	23,306	(7,315)	(8,412)	7,579
<b>Revenue Reserves Total</b>	<b>39,754</b>	<b>(14,881)</b>	<b>(9,912)</b>	<b>14,961</b>
Capital Reserves	25,917	(17,750)	(2,705)	5,462
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>65,671</b>	<b>(32,631)</b>	<b>(12,617)</b>	<b>20,423</b>

4.29 Please note the information provided excludes any ring-fenced School, HRA and unusable reserves given their restricted nature.

## 5. HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT (HRA)

5.1 There is a forecast nil outturn variance in relation to the HRA. The position is summarised below with further details provided at **Appendix F**.

5.2 Rental income is forecast to be lower than budgeted as new Afghan Resettlement properties have not come on line as quickly as anticipated at budget build. This is because of the presence of some asbestos detected in the properties that require additional works.

5.3 The adverse variance can be mitigated through a combination of the following:

- Reduction in contribution to Right to Buy Reserve;
- Reduction in voluntary contribution to the Major Repairs Reserve (MRR); and
- Favourable variance in relation to interest payable on borrowing costs.

5.4 The Capital position is outlined in **Appendix G**. Members are asked to approve two budget amendments in relation to capital schemes:

- Increase in S106 Affordable Housing of £0.351m to reflect receipt of additional S106 monies.
- Transfer of £0.100m from the Major Repairs budget to HRA disabled adaptations. HRA disabled adaptations are funded through the MRR but for management and monitoring purposes are shown as a separate scheme.

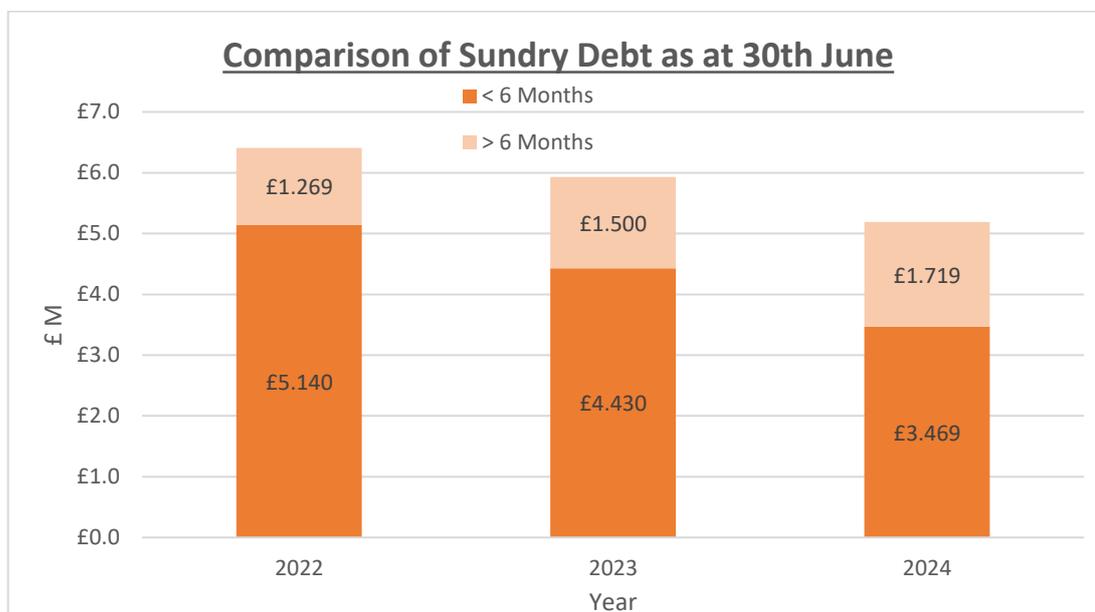
## 6. INCOME COLLECTION AND COLLECTION FUND

### Sundry Debts

6.1 The Council collects significant Sundry Debts income for the payment of services provided by the Council. In total £7.017m sundry debts were raised in

the first three months of 2024/25. As at 30th June 2024, £4.652m (66.30%) of this amount had been collected.

- 6.2 Robust procedures for collecting the remaining outstanding debt are in place. The following graph shows the comparable positions at 30<sup>th</sup> June for the last three years for long term debt and current debt which has been outstanding for less than six months.



- 6.3 Debtors totalled £5.188m as at 30<sup>th</sup> June 2024, of which £3.469m (66.87%) relates to current debts (less than 6 months old). Included within current debts (less than 6 months old) is debt where the customer has been invoiced for the whole of 2024/25 but payment is to be received in instalments throughout the year.
- 6.4 Debts greater than 6 months old total £1.719m. 99.98% of this amount is under recovery action and 0.02% (c£300) is now considered unrecoverable.

### Council Tax

- 6.5 The in-year performance to the end of June is slightly down on 2023/24, though at this stage it is expected that the rate will increase over the year. As at the 30<sup>th</sup> June 2024 the Council had collected 26.42% of the 2024/25 liability, compared to 26.73% for the previous year. Arrears collection remains positive and consistent with 2023/24, which had record collections.
- 6.6 Members may recollect that increased efforts were to be made targeting potential single person discount fraud. An initial target of a 400 reduction during 2024/25 was agreed. In the first quarter of the year the number claiming single person discount has reduced by 220. Efforts will ramp up further as we progress through the year with the expectation that numbers reduce further through the year.

- 6.7 As at the end of June the Local Council Tax Support claimant count was 12,895 of which there were 8,518 working age claimants. There has been an increase in working age claimants since the beginning of the year but numbers have decreased during May and June.
- 6.8 The Collection Fund in respect of Council Tax continues to be closely monitored.

### Business Rates

- 6.9 At the 30<sup>th</sup> June 2024 the Council had collected 26.89% of the 2024/25 liability compared to 27.54% for the previous year. This is slightly down on 2023/24 but business rate collection tends to be volatile during the year, and is also impacted by changes to liability for businesses. At this stage we expect collection rates to be in line with 2023/24.

## 7 CAPITAL OUTTURN

- 7.1 Details of actual expenditure, cost variations and reprofiling of budget are provided in **Appendices H to L** and summarised below. Where applicable expenditure has been reprofiled into future years. Resources will be carried forward to fund these commitments.

Department	Gross Budget	Actual to 31/3/24	Actual to 30/6/24	Budget (adjusted for prior yr reprofiling)	Addition Schemes and Cost Variations to Existing Projects	Reprofiling of expenditure	Revised Budget
	2024/25	2024/25	2024/25	2024/25	2024/25	2024/25	2024/25
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Major Regeneration Schemes	121,047	15,229	3,345	73,877	1,989	(43,825)	32,041
Adult & Community Based Services	8,832	3,640	598	2,748	0	(267)	2,481
Children's & Joint Commissioning Services	13,976	1,436	531	9,899	1,339	(290)	10,948
Development, Neighbourhoods & Regulatory Services	29,959	5,931	1,766	15,908	(60)	(3,083)	12,765
Corporate	2,757	106	122	930	1,239	(577)	1,592
<b>Total Capital Expenditure</b>	<b>176,571</b>	<b>26,342</b>	<b>6,362</b>	<b>103,362</b>	<b>4,507</b>	<b>(48,042)</b>	<b>59,827</b>

- 7.2 The actual 2024/25 capital expenditure to 30<sup>th</sup> June 2024 is £6.362m and reprofiling of expenditure in to future years is £48.042m. After reprofiling the forecast capital expenditure in 2024/25, the in-year capital programme now totals £59.827m.
- 7.3 Screen Industries Production Village Hub - HBC has now received and signed the Grant Funding Agreement from TVCA for £1,989,000 which contributes to the creation of a nationally significant Screen Industries Production Village Hub to support the emerging TV/film industry in Hartlepool, this sum has been added to the existing scheme within the capital programme. This agreement confirms the funding previously offered to HBC through the Combined Authority's Indigenous Growth Fund as part of HBC's successful Levelling Up

Fund Round 2 submission, and confirms the projects £18.6m budget envelope. The purpose of the funding is matched capital finance to support the wider LUF delivery outputs including acquisition of key properties, redevelopment of assets to create flexible space for the TV/film industry, development of Public Realm and restoration of locally important heritage assets.

- 7.4 Children’s Homes Purchase - The council continues to consider all options to mitigate the significant increase in Children’s Social Care costs, particularly in respect of private sector residential placements. In recent years this has included increasing the provision of council run children’s homes that have proved to be less costly to run in comparison to private placements in the independent sector. Given the continued pressures, both current and forecast, within Children’s Social Care, the council continues to look for properties to convert into council run homes. In order to provide officers with the ability to act quickly, at its July 2024 meeting, Council approved borrowing of £1m for the purchase and renovation of properties into children’s homes. The capital programme has been updated accordingly.
- 7.5 Town Hall Theatre (THT) and Borough Hall – following the temporary closure of Town Hall Theatre and part closure of Borough Hall in March, the required assessments and remedial works are nearing completion. The current plan is to reopen the venues in September and October respectively. In addition, it has been identified that further maintenance and improvement works at THT are needed over the next 12 months. The estimated cost of these works is £0.700m. It is proposed that this is funded by a £0.700m transfer from the Borough Hall £3.000m scheme within the approved capital programme.

### Capital Receipts

- 7.6 There are no significant capital receipts received to date.

## 8. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS/IMPLICATIONS

<b>RISK IMPLICATIONS</b>	No relevant issues.
<b>FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS</b>	The financial implications are fully set out in the main body of the report.
<b>SUBSIDY CONTROL</b>	No relevant issues.
<b>LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS</b>	No relevant issues.
<b>CHILD AND FAMILY POVERTY</b>	No relevant issues.
<b>EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY CONSIDERATIONS</b>	No relevant issues.

<b>STAFF CONSIDERATIONS</b>	No relevant issues.
<b>ASSET MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS</b>	No relevant issues.
<b>ENVIRONMENT, SUSTAINABILITY AND CLIMATE CHANGE CONSIDERATIONS</b>	No relevant issues.
<b>CONSULTATION</b>	No consultation required.

## 9. RECOMMENDATIONS

9.1 It is recommended that Members:

- i) Note the 2024/25 forecast outturn position of £2.900m overspend and the accompanying financial performance for the year;
- ii) Note the forecast use of reserves;
- iii) Note the 2024/25 forecast outturn in relation to the Housing Revenue Account detailed within Section 5 of the report;
- iv) Approve HRA Capital Budget Amendments outlined in paragraph 5.4.
- v) Note the capital programme position and approve variations detailed within Section 7 of the report; and
- vi) Approve and refer to council the reallocation of £0.700m from the Borough Hall approved capital scheme to support capital maintenance and improvement works at Town Hall Theatre as detailed in 7.5 of the report.

## 10. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

10.1 To inform Finance and Policy Committee of the Council's 2024/25 financial forecast outturn position.

## 11. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

## 12. CONTACT OFFICERS

James Magog  
 Director of Finance, IT and Digital  
 Email: [james.magog@hartlepool.gov.uk](mailto:james.magog@hartlepool.gov.uk)

Paul Dixon  
Assistant Director, Corporate and Financial Services  
Email: [paul.dixon@hartlepool.gov.uk](mailto:paul.dixon@hartlepool.gov.uk)

Sign Off:-

Managing Director	Date: 03/09/2024
Director of Finance, IT and Digital	Date: 03/09/2024
Director of Legal, Governance and HR	Date: 03/09/2024

## REVENUE FINANCIAL MONITORING REPORT FOR FINANCIAL YEAR 2024/25 as at June 30th 2024

Approved 2024/25 Budget £'000	Description of Service Area	Actual Outturn Adverse/ (Favourable) £'000	Director's Explanation of Variance
	<b>Adult Social Care</b>		
74	Carers	0	
2,426	Commissioning - Adults	80	Relates to a combination of historic income pressures relating to Court of Protection administration fees and increased spend across supplies and services budgets.
185	Departmental Running Costs	0	
104	Direct Care & Support (including Telecare)	190	The projected overspend mainly relates to the impact of Telecare charging implementation being delayed until 1 October 2024.
688	LD & Transition Social Work	(50)	The underspend relates to staff savings from incremental drift and vacancies over and above the departmental salary abatement target.
2,261	Locality & Safeguarding Team	(55)	The underspend relates to staff savings from incremental drift and vacancies over and above the departmental salary abatement target.
1,188	Mental Health Services	0	
1,527	OT & Disability Equipment	105	Mainly relates to increased demand and costs for Occupational Therapy Equipment to support people to remain at home.
29,125	Packages of Care	(465)	Packages of Care forecast outturns reflect use of one-off grants and are based on current projections however it is still early in the year, with the winter period still to come, so these projections will be closely monitored and updated as the year progresses.
165	Transformation & Digital	(40)	The underspend relates to staff savings from incremental drift and vacancies over and above the departmental salary abatement target.
1,281	Working Age Adult Day Services	(50)	The underspend mainly relates to savings within transport costs and incremental drift within staffing budgets.
<b>39,024</b>	<b>Adult Social Care Sub Total</b>	<b>(285)</b>	
	<b>Preventative &amp; Community Based Services</b>		
67	Adult Education	0	
84	Allotments	0	
24	Archaeology	10	The projected overspend mainly relates to reduced income against the historic income targets.
(272)	Coast, Countryside, Heritage and Cemeteries & Crematoria	210	The projected overspend mainly relates to the loss of income from the reduced operating days at Stranton Chapel which are the results of the capital improvement works. Works are due to be completed by October 2024.
1,146	Community Hubs	50	The projected overspend mainly relates to the historic budget reduction from the proposed closure of two branch libraries which have subsequently remained open.
78	Cultural - Events and Theatres	125	The projected overspend mainly relates to the loss of income arising from the temporary closure of the Town Hall Theatre and the Borough Hall.
578	Cultural - Museums and Galleries	(45)	Relates to various minor underspends across a number of areas.
534	Sports, Leisure & Recreation Facilities	210	The projected overspend mainly relates to the loss of income arising from the temporary closure of Carlton Adventure.
<b>2,239</b>	<b>Preventative &amp; Community Based Services Sub Total</b>	<b>560</b>	
<b>41,263</b>	<b>Adult &amp; Community Based Services Total</b>	<b>275</b>	

## REVENUE FINANCIAL MONITORING REPORT FOR FINANCIAL YEAR 2024/25 as at 30th June 2024

Approved 2024/25 Budget £'000	Description of Service Area	Actual Outturn Adverse/ (Favourable) £'000	Director's Explanation of Variance
	<b>Children's Services</b>		
2,960	Children & Families	770	Forecast overspend mainly relates to increases in the number of children subject to Child Arrangement Orders, Special Guardianship Allowances or receiving a Direct Payment.
20,851	Children in our Care	3,850	Forecast overspend mainly relates to an increase in the number of children in our care requiring external residential and independent fostering agency placements. This reflects the increasing complexity of their needs and the significant fees being charged by the external care market.
62	Early Intervention	(210)	Forecast favourable variance mainly relates to staff savings from vacant posts and incremental drift.
438	Housing, Hardship & Welfare	(270)	Forecast favourable variance mainly relates to the receipt of a number of 'one-off' grants.
17	Play & Care	40	Forecast overspend mainly relates to historic income pressures.
5,232	Safeguarding Children	670	Forecast overspend mainly relates to increased staffing costs.
537	Standards, Engagement & Development	30	Forecast overspend relates to increased training and work placement costs.
1,746	Strategic Commissioning	(80)	Forecast favourable variance mainly relates to the receipt of a number of temporary, 'time limited', grants.
295	Youth Justice Service	0	
<b>32,138</b>	<b>Children's Services Sub Total</b>	<b>4,800</b>	
	<b>Education (excluding DSG)</b>		
155	Access to Education	15	Reduction in School Buy Back income
157	Central Support Services	0	
487	Other School Related Expenditure	15	Adverse variance is owing to inflationary pressures on historic pension payments.
430	Raising Educational Achievement	(10)	Forecast variance relates to savings in supplies and services.
397	Special Needs Services	(15)	Forecast variance relates to savings in supplies and services.
421	Strategic Management	(15)	Forecast variance relates to savings in supplies and services.
393	Youth Service	0	
<b>2,440</b>	<b>Education Sub Total</b>	<b>(10)</b>	
<b>34,578</b>	<b>Children's and Joint Commissioning Services Sub Total</b>	<b>4,790</b>	
	<b>Public Health Grant</b>		
3,933	Children's Services	(5)	Minor variances
2,624	Substance Misuse Services	(65)	Underspend mainly relates to staff vacancies; any underspend will be transferred into the ring-fenced Public Health reserve at year end.
1,874	General Public Health Support Services	0	
633	Sexual Health Services	0	Planned additional spend of £23k to be funded from Public Health reserve.
0	Smoking Cessation	0	New specific Stop Smoking Services and Support grant received in 24/25 to be supplemented by use of Public Health reserves.
451	Physical Activity	0	
14	Mental Health	0	
56	Health Checks	10	Minor variances
208	Obesity	0	
(9,793)	Public Health Grant	0	
0	Contribution to ring-fenced Public Health Grant reserve	60	Any underspend is transferred to the ring-fenced Public Health grant reserve.
<b>0</b>	<b>Public Health Grant</b>	<b>0</b>	
<b>34,578</b>	<b>Children's and Joint Commissioning Services Total (including Public Health Grant)</b>	<b>4,790</b>	

	Dedicated Schools Grant	Actual Outturn Adverse/ (Favourable)	
9,797	Early Years Block	0	
19,845	High Needs Block	3,500	
595	Schools Block	0	
30,237	<b>TOTAL Dedicated Schools Grant</b>	<b>3,500</b>	

DEVELOPMENT, NEIGHBOURHOODS & REGULATORY SERVICES

Appendix C

REVENUE FINANCIAL MONITORING REPORT FOR FINANCIAL YEAR 2024/25 as at 30th June 2024

Approved 2024/25 Budget £'000	Description of Service Area	Actual Outturn Adverse/ (Favourable) £'000	Director's Explanation of Variance
	<b>Neighbourhood Services</b>		
(54)	Building Team Design	0	
135	Construction Team	0	
343	Engineering Services (including Coastal Protection and Contaminated Land)	0	
3,050	Environmental Services	0	
2,754	Highways	75	Predominantly relates to an increase in insurance premiums in relation to Highways. Action will be taken to attempt to mitigate this variance.
2,159	Passenger Transport	50	Reflects continual referrals and appeals in relation to Schools, the position will be closely monitored.
332	Planning & Development	150	Reflects shortfall in planning income, the number of large planning applications is down when compared to previous years, which in turn reduces the income received.
165	Road Safety	0	
999	Street Lighting	50	Relates to ongoing maintenance costs and column replacements. Action will be taken to attempt to mitigate this variance.
2,475	Sustainable Transport	(590)	Reflects favourable contract negotiations in relation to concessionary fares.
(96)	Vehicle Fleet	0	
6,142	Waste Services	(50)	Reflects positive uptake of the green waste subscription service. This is likely to be a one-off surplus owing to potential future increases in costs in relation to running the service that will off-set this additional income in future years.
<b>18,404</b>	<b>Neighbourhood Services Sub Total</b>	<b>(315)</b>	
	<b>Regulatory Services</b>		
(849)	Car Parking & Enforcement	180	Reflects a reduction in car parking income due to parking concessions and the residual impact of the pandemic, which has not only affected visitor numbers but also many workers who would have used the car parks but now work from home for part of the week. The reduction in car park usage is a national trend.
909	Community Safety & Engagement	0	
1,225	Facilities Management	0	
223	Health & Safety	0	
597	Public Protection	0	
<b>2,105</b>	<b>Regulatory Services Sub Total</b>	<b>180</b>	
	<b>Development &amp; Growth</b>		
422	Economic Growth	55	Relates to running costs associated with the Hartlepool Enterprise Centre as savings in relation to the proposed sale/transfer of the centre have yet to be achieved.
38	Procurement & Reprographics	65	Reflects income shortfalls in relation to Reprographics.
(123)	Strategic Asset Management	215	Reflects shortfall in fee income and unforeseen additional one off costs in relation to the property portfolio.
96	Strategic Development & Sustainability	0	
<b>433</b>	<b>Development &amp; Growth Sub Total</b>	<b>335</b>	
	<b>Strategic Management &amp; Admin</b>		
259	Strategic Management & Admin	0	
<b>21,201</b>	<b>Development, Neighbourhoods &amp; Regulatory Services Total</b>	<b>200</b>	

## REVENUE FINANCIAL MONITORING REPORT FOR FINANCIAL YEAR 2024/25 as at 30th June 2024

Approved 2024/25 Budget £'000	Description of Service Area	Actual Outturn Adverse/ (Favourable) £'000	Director's Explanation of Variance
	<b>Development and Growth</b>		
224	Communications and Marketing *	(10)	Favourable variance owing to vacant posts and posts not being at the top of the grade.
161	Public Consultation & Diversity *	0	
385	<b>Development and Growth Sub Total</b>	(10)	
	<b>Corporate and Financial Services</b>		
(1,047)	Central Administration Recharges	0	
1,343	Corporate Finance	(50)	Favourable variance owing to vacant posts and posts not being at the top of the grade.
211	Internal Audit	0	Note the budget has been reduced by £52k following the retirement of an officer prior to the start of the financial year.
693	Shared Services	(50)	Favourable variance owing to vacant posts and posts not being at the top of the grade.
259	Corporate Management Running Expenses	(30)	Favourable variance owing to savings on the corporate subscriptions budget.
1,459	<b>Corporate and Financial Services Sub Total</b>	(130)	
	<b>Customer Services and IT</b>		
305	Benefits	(70)	Favourable variance owing to vacant posts and posts not being at the top of the grade.
268	Corporate ICT	(10)	Favourable variance owing to vacant posts and posts not being at the top of the grade.
1,167	Customer and Support Services	(50)	Favourable variance owing to vacant posts and posts not being at the top of the grade.
(133)	Registration Services	20	The adverse variance is owing to a reduction in income generation on both birth and death registration resulting from services being transferred to North Tees Hospital, along with a reduction in ceremonial certificates.
1,253	Revenues	(90)	Favourable variance owing to vacant posts and posts not being at the top of the grade.
(703)	Revenue & Benefits Central	40	The adverse variance is owing to additional costs on printing and postage.
2,157	<b>Customer Services and IT Sub Total</b>	(160)	
<b>4,001</b>	<b>Finance, IT &amp; Digital Total</b>	<b>(300)</b>	

\* These budgets report to the Managing Director via the Assistant Director for Development and Growth

## REVENUE FINANCIAL MONITORING REPORT FOR FINANCIAL YEAR 2024/25 as at 30th June 2024

Approved 2024/25 Budget £'000	Description of Service Area	Actual Outturn Adverse/ (Favourable) £'000	Director's Explanation of Variance
	<b>Legal</b>		
46	Civic Attendants	5	
182	Democratic	(30)	Favourable variance owing to vacant posts.
470	Human Resources	5	
683	Legal Services	15	The adverse variance is owing to additional supplies and services costs and reduced income generation.
193	Managing Director's Office	(50)	Favourable variance owing to vacant posts and posts not being at the top of the grade.
168	Municipal Elections and Registration of Electors	0	
31	Other Office Services	15	The adverse variance is owing to a reduction in income generated from local land searches.
108	Scrutiny	0	
141	Support to Members	(15)	Favourable variance owing to reduced civic expenses and conference fees expected during the year.
32	Trade Union	(15)	The favourable variance is owing to less staff time recharged against union duties.
2	Training & Equality	5	
<b>2,056</b>	<b>Legal, Governance and HR Total</b>	<b>(65)</b>	

**HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT for 2024/25 as at 30th June 2024**

2023/24 OUTTURN		2024/25 BUDGET	2024/25 Forecast Outturn as at 30/06/2024	Variance	COMMENTS
£'000		£'000	£'000	£'000	
	<b>Income</b>				
(1,637)	Dwelling Rents	(1,962)	(1,848)	114	Reflects new Afghan Resettlement properties not coming on line as quickly as anticipated at budget build, owing the presence of asbestos in the properties that require additional works.
(13)	Non-dwelling Rents - Other Income	(24)	(24)	0	
(3)	Charges for services and facilities	(5)	(7)	(2)	
<b>(1,653)</b>	<b>Income sub total</b>	<b>(1,991)</b>	<b>(1,879)</b>	<b>112</b>	
	<b>Expenditure</b>				
506	Repairs and maintenance	498	505	7	
517	Supervision and management	454	454	0	
24	Rents, rates, taxes and other charges	27	30	3	
0	Right to Buy Reserve	50	39	(11)	Reflects forecast reduction in contribution to mitigate rent variance outlined above.
(86)	Provision for bad or doubtful debts	0	0	0	
349	Depreciation (Major Repairs Allowance)	529	469	(60)	Reflects forecast reduction in the voluntary contribution to mitigate rent variance outlined above.
1	Discretionary Housing Payments	5	5	0	
10	Debt Management costs	12	12	0	
332	Net Interest payable	388	337	(51)	Favourable variance reflects revised profile of capital schemes and additional borrowing costs now profiled into future years.
<b>1,653</b>	<b>Expenditure sub total</b>	<b>1,963</b>	<b>1,851</b>	<b>(112)</b>	
<b>0</b>	<b>HRA (Surplus) / Deficit for the year</b>	<b>(28)</b>	<b>(28)</b>	<b>0</b>	
	<b>Movement on the HRA Reserve</b>				
(500)	HRA Reserve Opening Balance	(500)	(500)		
0	(Surplus)/Deficit for the year	(28)	(28)		
<b>(500)</b>	<b>HRA Reserve Closing Balance</b>	<b>(528)</b>	<b>(528)</b>	<b>0</b>	

COUNCIL HOUSING CAPITAL SCHEMESCAPITAL MONITORING REPORT PERIOD ENDING 30th June 2024

Code	Scheme Description	Gross Budget	Actual to 31/3/24	2024/25 Actual to end Q1 (30/6/24)	Budget 2024/25 (adjusted for prior year reprofiling)	Additional Schemes and Cost Variations to Existing Projects 2024/25	Reprofiling of Expenditure 2024/2025	Revised Budget 2024/25	Comments
S106	Affordable Housing	1,072	0	0	1,072	351	(1,000)	423	S106 Developer Contributions. The budget increase is due to additional S106 contributions received in Q1. A small proportion of this funding may be required to meet costs associated with the 'Resettlement Accommodation' scheme pending confirmation of final grant funding. The HRA business plan will be updated later in the year and this will inform the future investment plan.
7182	Empty Homes - Phase 3	618	103	0	515	0	(515)	0	Existing funding approval - individual business case approval required for each scheme. No current plans to utilise this borrowing approval. The HRA business plan will be updated later in the year and this will inform the future investment plan.
7450	Hill View Development	2,240	2,182	0	58	0	0	58	Final account still to be confirmed. Funded from S106 contributions.
7726	Resettlement Accommodation	1,418	1,194	0	224	0	0	224	The remaining grant funding is still to be confirmed as this varies depending on the number of occupants accommodated. S106 funding is available to fund the shortfall if required.
8106	New Build	256	1	0	255	0	(255)	0	Existing funding approval - individual business case approval required for each scheme. No current plans to utilise this borrowing approval. The HRA business plan will be updated later in the year and this will inform the future investment plan.
8799	Major Repairs	210	34	8	176	(100)	0	76	Capital work funded from the MRR reserve. The £100k underspend reflects a transfer required to fund HRA adaptations; as shown below.
9294	HRA Adaptations	0	0	0	0	100	0	100	Adverse variance reflects transfer of funding required from the MRR.
9317	Social Housing Decarbonisation	451	83	0	368	0	0	368	
<b>COUNCIL HOUSING - CAPITAL SCHEMES</b>		<b>6,265</b>	<b>3,597</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>2,668</b>	<b>351</b>	<b>(1,770)</b>	<b>1,249</b>	

MAJOR REGENERATION SCHEMES

APPENDIX H

CAPITAL MONITORING REPORT PERIOD ENDING 30th June 2024

Code	Scheme Description	Gross Budget £000	Actual to 31/3/24 £000	2024/25 Actual to end Q1 (30/6/24) £000	Budget 2024/25 (adjusted for prior year reprofiling) £000	Additional Schemes and Cost Variations to Existing Projects 2024/25 £000	Reprofiling of Expenditure 2024/2025 £000	Revised Budget 2024/25 £000	Comments
8958	A19/ Elwick Road/ North Lane Junction and Elwick Road/Hartlepool Western Link Project	24,497	1,585	41	11,687	0	(10,646)	1,041	Capital spend has been reprofiled as construction works cannot progress without various land acquisitions being completed.
7550	CIP - Highlight	34,650	3,725	1,782	23,315	0	(5,707)	17,608	The expenditure spend profile has been fully updated to align with the current forecast monthly payments to the main contractor, Wates. Works on site are progressing well, with anticipated completion by the end of 2025.
9101	CIP - Borough Hall Improvement	2,300	109	0	2,391	(700)	(1,691)	0	The part closure of the Borough Hall in March 2024 placed on hold any investment works pending a full review of requirements.  To support the capital works required at the Town Hall Theatre (THT) it is proposed to reallocate budget of £0.500m.
NEW	CIP - Town Hall Theatre Improvement	700	0	0	0	700	0	700	THT capital maintenance and improvement capital works to assist reopening recovery. Works to be funded by reallocation of Borough Hall approved budget.
9159	CIP - Wingfield Castle and Dam Board	4,027	527	57	2,300	0	(1,911)	389	Work package timings currently being reviewed due to interdependencies with other Waterfront projects and within seasonal constraints. Expenditure has been reprofiled accordingly.
9161	CIP - NMRN & Museum of Hartlepool	8,500	3,678	17	4,822	0	(4,164)	658	NMRN continue to develop project plans and business case - expenditure has been reprofiled accordingly.  £1m of budget allocated as match funding for Museum of Hartlepool's bid to the National Heritage lottery fund. Expenditure has been reprofiled accordingly.
9130	CIP - Business Park Investment	760	451	0	309	0	0	309	£246k budget accelerated from 2024/25 to 2023/24 at outturn. Total scheme budget unchanged
7536	CIP - SEMH Free School Access Road	857	464	0	393	0	0	393	
TBC	CIP - Bowling Club Refurbishment	600	0	0	0	0	0	0	
TBC	CIP - Brierton Sports Complex	534	0	0	0	0	0	0	
9165	Towns Fund - Middleton Grange	13,860	202	0	6,875	0	(5,375)	1,500	The completion of the leasehold purchase and outline master planning of the site by Hartlepool Development Corporation resulted in a delay on this project commencing. HBC are now in a position to progress the project and the revised spend profile reflects the delay.
9231	Towns Fund - Waterfront Connectivity	6,200	366	718	4,334	0	0	4,334	
7715	Towns Fund - Wesley Chapel	1,400	402	0	998	0	0	998	
9234	Towns Fund - Health and Social Care Academy	1,250	266	0	984	0	0	984	
9235	Towns Fund - Civil Academy	2,250	1,108	688	1,142	0	0	1,142	£297k budget accelerated from 2024/25 to 2023/24 at outturn. Total scheme budget unchanged
9247	Levelling Up - Screen Production Village	18,662	2,346	42	14,327	1,989	(14,331)	1,985	The spend profile previously reported was consistent with successful funding bid to MHCLG, which aligned to the original LUF Round 2 delivery timetable of completion by March 2025. However, due to delays by MHCLG in providing HBC with the MoU / Grant Funding Agreement, and hence HBC starting the project, MHCLG agreed to extend project completion date and spend profile to 31 March 2026.  Additional £1.989m TVCA grant awarded to the project. Funding agreement recently received from TVCA.
<b>Major Regeneration Schemes</b>		<b>121,047</b>	<b>15,229</b>	<b>3,345</b>	<b>73,877</b>	<b>1,989</b>	<b>(43,825)</b>	<b>32,041</b>	

## ADULT &amp; COMMUNITY BASED SERVICES

APPENDIX I

## CAPITAL MONITORING REPORT PERIOD ENDING 30th June 2024

Code	Scheme Description	Gross Budget £000	Actual to 31/3/24 £000	2024/25 Actual to end Q1 (30/6/24) £000	Budget 2024/25 (adjusted for prior year reprofiling) £000	Additional Schemes and Cost Variations to Existing Projects 2024/25 £000	Reprofiling of Expenditure 2024/2025 £000	Revised Budget 2024/25 £000	Comments
7218	Disabled Facilities Grant	5,339	1,651	367	1,244	0	0	1,244	
7522	Stranton Cemetery Flood Alleviation	583	583	0	17	(17)	0	0	Underspend on scheme moved to Crematorium refurbishment scheme.
7576	Seascapes - Seaton High & Lowlight	103	101	0	2	0	0	2	
7711	Carlton Adventure Centre	434	8	2	426	0	(267)	159	Awaiting structural reports to inform works - £267k of expenditure rephased to 2025/26.
7811	Summerhill Cycle Hub	512	496	0	16	0	0	16	
8088	Community Hub South - Kitchen Replacement	55	47	0	8	0	0	8	
8088	Community Hub Central - Internal Alterations	56	34	0	22	0	0	22	
8108	Centre for Independent Living	50	0	0	50	0	0	50	
9212	Relocate Cemetery Office	90	82	0	8	0	0	8	
9232	Playground Equipment - Levelling Up Parks Fund	97	73	2	24	0	0	24	
Allot	Other Allotment Schemes	192	44	0	148	0	0	148	
8700	Waverley Allotments - Adult Education Scheme	51	50	0	1	0	0	1	
8828	Crematorium refurbishment	848	311	227	520	17	0	537	
9310	Changing Places - Summerhill	62	2	0	60	0	0	60	
9311	Changing Places - Community Hub Central	105	76	0	29	0	0	29	
7716	Seaton Library refurbishment	255	82	0	173	0	0	173	
<b>Total Adult &amp; Community Based Services</b>		<b>8,832</b>	<b>3,640</b>	<b>598</b>	<b>2,748</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>(267)</b>	<b>2,481</b>	

## CAPITAL MONITORING REPORT PERIOD ENDING 30th June 2024

Code	Scheme Description	Gross Budget	Actual to 31/3/24	2024/25 Actual to end Q1 (30/6/24)	Budget 2024/25 (adjusted for prior year reprofiling)	Additional Schemes and Cost Variations to Existing Projects 2024/25	Reprofiling of Expenditure 2024/2025	Revised Budget 2024/25	Comments
		£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	
7384	Devolved Schools Capital	535	181	3	182	0	0	182	
9238	Energy Efficiency Capital Funding	136	71	6	65	0	0	65	
7355	CECA IT Infrastructure and Technology	42	18	0	24	0	0	24	
7355	CECA TVCA Grant Unallocated	31	0	0	31	0	0	31	
7142	Schools General - Fire Safety Modifications (Conditions)	0	0	0	53	(53)	0	0	
7142	Schools General - Fire Safety Modifications (Conditions) 23/24	44	0	0	418	(374)	0	44	£370k allocated to 2024/25 Condition Schemes. Children Services Committee (24/3/24).
7142	Kingsley - Fire Safety Modifications	246	71	2	175	0	(86)	89	Fire Shutter project rephased to 2025/26.
7142	Throston - Fire Safety Modifications	314	232	0	25	57	0	82	
7474	High Tunstall 3G Pitch	23	22	0	1	0	0	1	
7478	High Tunstall Grass Pitch	15	0	0	15	0	0	15	
7521	Two Year Old FNE Capacity Funding	23	0	0	23	0	0	23	
7770	St Helens Primary School Main Entrance Access	50	48	2	2	0	0	2	
9148	Springwell School Increase Capacity	424	351	0	73	(73)	0	0	Scheme complete, unspent funding returned to Special Provision budget.
9004	Schools General - Conditions unallocated	142	0	0	205	(63)	0	142	
9004	Schools General - Contingency	74	0	0	49	25	0	74	
9004	Schools General - Suitability Unallocated (SEMH)	743	0	0	743	0	0	743	
9004	Schools General - Special Provision	555	0	0	369	259	0	628	Additional £271k received 2024/25.
9004	Schools General - Basic Need	1,716	0	0	1,716	0	0	1,716	
New	Schools General - Schools Condition - 24/25 onwards	1,130	0	0	614	(614)	0	0	£49k less School Conditions funding received 2024/25 than anticipated. Budget allocated to new schemes below
7768	Supporting Treatment and Recovery Together (START) - Substance Misuse Service	3,027	0	0	3,027	0	0	3,027	
8072	ICS Case Management Improvement	37	0	0	37	0	0	37	
9246	Children's Centre - Family HUB	75	4	0	71	0	0	71	
NEW	Clavering Primary School - Roofing Works	11	2	15	9	0	0	9	
9313	Golden Flatts Primary School - Demolish Caretakers Bungalow	32	13	26	19	0	0	19	
9313	Lynnfield Primary School - Roofing Works	50	27	19	23	0	0	23	
9315	Lynnfield Primary School - Heating Renewal	44	20	0	24	0	0	24	
9312	Throston Primary School - Heating, Pipework, Radiator renewal	52	42	0	10	0	0	10	
NEW	Throston Primary School - Heat Source	29	0	0	25	4	0	29	
9243	Rossmere Youth Centre Refurbishment	1,270	54	358	1,216	0	0	1,216	
7727	Throston Youth Project Centre Refurbishment	96	5	1	91	0	0	91	
9324	Golden Flatts Primary School RAAC Remedial Works	18	18	40	0	0	0	0	
7149	Star Centre Children's Home	700	257	50	443	0	0	443	
NEW	Early Years	121	0	0	121	0	0	121	
NEW	Clavering Primary School Fan Convectors	31	0	0	0	31	0	31	
9391	Fens Primary School - Heating and Boiler Plant	110	0	0	0	110	0	110	
9383	Fens Primary School - Electrical Rewire (Phase 5)	70	0	0	0	70	0	70	
NEW	Golden Flatts Primary School - Heating Emitters / ventilation	26	0	0	0	26	0	26	
NEW	Golden Flatts Primary School - Lintel Replacements	30	0	0	0	30	0	30	
NEW	Golden Flatts Primary School - Building Stonework	20	0	0	0	20	0	20	
NEW	Golden Flatts Primary School - Kitchen Floor Replacement	10	0	0	0	10	0	10	
NEW	Golden Flatts Primary School - Mains Water & Gas	112	0	0	0	112	0	112	
NEW	Horizon School - Heating, Pipework	76	0	0	0	76	(76)	0	Rephased to 2025/26.
NEW	Horizon School - Window Replacement	94	0	0	0	94	0	94	
NEW	Kingsley Primary School - Window Replacement	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	Scheme not required. £10k returned to unallocated Conditions.
9384	Lynnfield Primary School - Electrical Rewire (Phase 2)	67	0	0	0	67	0	67	
7739	Lynnfield Primary School - Heating Pipework Renewal	29	0	0	0	29	0	29	
NEW	Lynnfield Primary School - Toilet Cubicle Replacement	37	0	0	0	37	0	37	
NEW	Lynnfield Primary School - Hall Flooring Renewal	8	0	0	0	8	0	8	
9384	Miers Avenue Childrens Centre - Lighting Renewal	13	0	0	0	13	0	13	

NEW	Rift House Primary School - Window Replacement	62	0	0	0	62	0	62	
9393	Rift House Primary School - Electrical Rewire (Phase 1)	80	0	0	0	80	0	80	
9392	Rift House Primary School - Fire Alarm Renewal	20	0	0	0	20	0	20	
NEW	High Tunstall College of Science (North Building) - Fire Alarm Renewal	54	0	0	0	54	0	54	
NEW	High Tunstall College of Science (North Building) - Electrical Rewire	88	0	0	0	88	(88)	0	Rephased to 2025/26.
NEW	High Tunstall College of Science (Shine Centre) - Electrical Rewire	40	0	0	0	40	(40)	0	Rephased to 2025/26.
NEW	Childrens Homes Purchase	1,000	0	0	0	1,000	0	1,000	Additional scheme added following approval of borrowing by Council in July 24.
NEW	Springwell School Create Classroom	66	0	0	0	66	0	66	
NEW	Greatham Primary School ARP	19	0	0	0	19	0	19	
NEW	Rossmere Family Hub - Boiler Replacement	9	0	9	0	9	0	9	
	<b>Total Children's and Joint Commissioning Services</b>	<b>13,976</b>	<b>1,436</b>	<b>531</b>	<b>9,899</b>	<b>1,339</b>	<b>(290)</b>	<b>10,948</b>	

**DEVELOPMENT, NEIGHBOURHOODS & REGULATORY SERVICES**

**APPENDIX K**

**CAPITAL MONITORING REPORT PERIOD ENDING June 30th 2024**

Code	Scheme Description	Gross Budget	Actual to 31/3/24	2024/25 Actual to end Q1 (30/6/24)	Budget 2024/25 (adjusted for prior year reprofiling)	Additional Schemes and Cost Variations to Existing Projects 2024/25	Reprofiling of Expenditure 2024/2025	Revised Budget 2024/25	Comments
		£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	
8306	Schools - Kitchen Refurbishment	249	22	0	227	0	0	227	
S106	Developers Contribution Fund	5,833	129	0	5,682	22	0	5,704	S106 Developer Contributions.
7272	Wheelie Bin Purchase	347	77	13	90	0	0	90	
7272	Food Waste Collection Capital Transitional Grant	807	0	0	807	0	(807)	0	Rephased to 2025/26 to align with procurement of required vehicles and equipment.
7344	Neighbourhood Improvement Programme (NIP) - Brougham (was Hindpool Close) Play Area	77	5	0	72	0	0	72	
7437	NIP - Sinking Fund	62	0	0	62	0	0	62	
7440	NIP - Central Park	120	114	3	6	0	0	6	
7553	Seaton Toilets	470	337	101	133	0	0	133	
7561	Green Homes Grant - LAD2	663	660	0	3	0	0	3	
8996	NIP - Improvements to Parks	277	252	0	25	0	0	25	
9147	NIP - CCTV in parks	34	16	0	18	0	0	18	
9396	Waste Transfer Station	200	0	0	200	0	(200)	0	Rephased to 2025/26.
7466	DSO Vehicle Purchase	7,928	1,058	929	3,942	0	(1,838)	2,104	The reprofiling of expenditure to future years reflects the current time lag of vehicle deliveries.
7577	Engineering Design Management (EDM) Hartlepool North NDIP Study	50	0	0	50	0	(50)	0	Rephased to 2025/26.
7900	EDM Hartlepool Marina - North Pier	379	4	0	475	(100)	(75)	300	2024/25 expenditure planned of £300k. Remaining budget rephased to 2025/26.
9403	EDM Headland Seawall	100	0	0	0	100	0	100	
7902	EDM Hartlepool Drainage Schemes	36	6	0	30	0	(30)	0	Rephased to 2025/26.
8444	EDM Town Wall Strengthening	46	25	0	21	0	0	21	
8578	EDM Management Unit Study	28	0	0	28	0	(23)	5	Rephased to 2025/26.
LTP	Local Transport Plan (LTP) Schemes	11,999	3,224	720	3,785	(82)	0	3,703	Additional Funding received in 2024/25 of £203k to be used for Patching. However, LTP Pothole £285k has not been received for 24/25.
9331	Environmental Agency (EA) Hartlepool Easington Road Storage & Screen Study	60	0	0	60	0	0	60	
9332	EA Hartlepool Bamburgh Rd Surface water drainage study	60	0	0	60	0	(60)	0	Rephased to 2025/26.
7066	Avondene Accommod, Church St	67	0	0	67	0	0	67	
7220	Private Sector Housing Grants	67	2	0	65	0	0	65	
<b>Development, Neighbourhoods &amp; Regulatory Total</b>		<b>29,959</b>	<b>5,931</b>	<b>1,766</b>	<b>15,908</b>	<b>(60)</b>	<b>(3,083)</b>	<b>12,765</b>	

## CORPORATE

## APPENDIX L

## CAPITAL MONITORING REPORT PERIOD ENDING 30th June 2024

Code	Scheme Description	Gross Budget	Actual to 31/3/24	2024/25 Actual to end Q1 (30/6/24)	Budget 2024/25 (adjusted for prior year reprofiling)	Additional Schemes and Cost Variations to Existing Projects 2024/25	Reprofiling of Expenditure 2024/2025	Revised Budget 2024/25	
		£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	
7036	Uncommitted Corporate Capital Fund	222	0	0	222	0	(222)	0	Rephased to 2025/26.
7041	Corporate Capital Pot	648	0	0	209	(78)	0	131	Allocated additional budget to; Art Gallery Roof, Crematorium Rewire and Boys Welfare Water Heater.
7065	Fire Risk Assessments	100	15	0	85	0	(85)	0	Rephased to 2025/26.
7200	Civic Centre Capital Project	75	13	0	62	0	(62)	0	Rephased to 2025/26.
8970	Historic Quay Dilapidation Work	97	0	0	97	0	(97)	0	Rephased to 2025/26.
7771	Borough Hall - Lighting Replacement	60	41	0	19	0	0	19	
7730	Art Gallery - Roof/ Drainage Replacement	126	33	87	72	21	0	93	
7728	Exmoor Grove - Replace external windows and doors	50	2	35	50	(2)	0	48	
9329	Crematorium - Rewire	50	2	0	48	35	0	83	
9394	Printer Unit - Equipment	66	0	0	66	0	0	66	
NEW	Health and Safety Maintenance Fund	1,000	0	0	0	1,000	0	1,000	Budget created at 23/24 Outturn to address H&S requirements across HBC estate.
NEW	Exmoor Grove - Replace Boiler	128	0	0	0	128	0	128	
NEW	Borough Hall - Heating and Distribution	101	0	0	0	101	(101)	0	Scheme linked to CIP - Borough Hall Works. Rephased to 2025/26.
NEW	Boys Welfare - Replace Water Heater	4	0	0	0	4	0	4	
NEW	Exmoor Grove - External Ramp	20	0	0	0	20	0	20	
NEW	Brierton Sports Centre - Replace Lighting	10	0	0	0	10	(10)	0	Scheme linked to CIP - Brierton Scheme. Rephased to 2025/26 .
<b>Corporate Total</b>		<b>2,757</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>122</b>	<b>930</b>	<b>1,239</b>	<b>(577)</b>	<b>1,592</b>	

## RESERVES FORECASTS (EXCLUDING SCHOOL BALANCES, HRA &amp; UNUSABLE RESERVES)

## APPENDIX M

	Balance as at 31st March 2024	Forecast Use of Reserves				Forecast Balance as at 31st March 2028
		2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Revenue Reserve	5,501	0	0	0	0	5,501
Budget Support Fund (BSF)	7,947	(6,066)	0	0	0	1,881
BSF - Transformation Costs	2,000	(1,000)	(500)	(500)	0	0
BSF - Invest to Save	1,000	(500)	(500)	0	0	0
Revenue Grants Unapplied	6,300	(2,359)	(2,007)	(1,068)	(716)	150
Business Rates Risk Reserve	3,250	0	0	0	0	3,250
Insurance Fund	2,965	(50)	(50)	(50)	(50)	2,765
Children in our Care Reserve	1,230	(653)	(577)	0	0	0
Treasury Management Income	1,150	(650)	(500)	0	0	0
Asset Management Reserve	1,000	(500)	(500)	0	0	0
Earmarked Revenue Reserves under £1m	7,411	(3,103)	(1,543)	(909)	(442)	1,414
<b>Revenue Reserves Total</b>	<b>39,754</b>	<b>(14,881)</b>	<b>(6,177)</b>	<b>(2,527)</b>	<b>(1,208)</b>	<b>14,961</b>
Earmarked Capital Reserves	9,606	(3,952)	(192)	0	0	5,462
Capital Grants Unapplied	16,311	(13,798)	(2,513)	0	0	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>65,671</b>	<b>(32,631)</b>	<b>(8,882)</b>	<b>(2,527)</b>	<b>(1,208)</b>	<b>20,423</b>

# FINANCE AND POLICY COMMITTEE

16<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2024



**Subject:** DRAFT COMMUNITY SAFETY PLAN 2024 - 2027

**Report of:** Executive Director of Development, Neighbourhoods and Regulatory Services

**Decision Type:** Budget and Policy Framework

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## 1. COUNCIL PLAN PRIORITY

Hartlepool will be a place:

- where people will be safe and protected from harm.

## 2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

2.1 To consider and comment on the Draft Community Safety Plan 2024-27

## 3. BACKGROUND

3.1 Under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and the Crime and Disorder Regulations 2007, Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs) have a statutory responsibility to develop and implement a Community Safety Strategy setting out how it intends to address crime and disorder, substance misuse, and re-offending issues in Hartlepool.

3.2 CSP's are made up of representatives from the 'responsible authorities'. These include the Local Authority, Police, Fire Brigade, National Probation Service, and Clinical Commissioning Group. CSP's have a number of statutory duties which include:

- Producing a **Community Safety Strategy** that details how the CSP will tackle the crime, disorder, anti-social behaviour, substance misuse and re-offending priorities in its local area;

- Producing an annual partnership **strategic assessment** to help identify and better understand local community safety priorities;
- **Consulting** with local residents and organisations on community safety priorities.

3.3 In Hartlepool the CSP is known as the ‘Safer Hartlepool Partnership’ (the ‘Partnership’) and at its meeting on 26<sup>th</sup> February 2024, the Partnership agreed the draft plan attached in **(Appendix 1)** and to the commencement of a consultation period from 17<sup>th</sup> September 2024

**4. DRAFT COMMUNITY SAFETY PLAN 2024 - 2027**

4.1 The Community Safety Plan 2024-27 will provide an overview of some of the recent activities undertaken to improve community safety in Hartlepool, along with key findings from the Partnership’s Strategic Assessment and consultation with the public.

4.2 The proposed strategic objectives and priorities for the 2024-27 Plan as recommended in the annual strategic assessment are as follows:

Strategic Objective	Priorities 2024 - 2027
<p><b>To make Hartlepool a safe, prosperous and enjoyable place to live, work and visit.</b></p>	<p><b>Anti-social Behaviour</b></p> <p><b>Drugs and Alcohol</b></p> <p><b>Domestic Violence and Abuse</b></p> <p><b>Serious Violence</b></p>

**5. CONSULTATION**

5.1 As approved by the Partnership on 26<sup>th</sup> February, the draft Community Safety Plan will be subject to an six week consultation period with the consultation exercise comprising of the following:

- An online consultation survey – with links published on the Safer Hartlepool Partnership web page, Hartlepool Borough Council website, Hartlepool Borough Council Facebook page and Hartlepool Borough Council X (formerly Twitter) page. The use of local media mechanisms including but not limited to Hartlepool Mail.
- Targeted emails to a range of public, private, community and voluntary sector representatives and groups containing a link to the online consultation survey.

- Presentation of the draft Plan to the Council’s Audit & Governance and the Health & Wellbeing Board.

**6. PERFORMANCE MONITORING**

6.1 The delivery of the Community Safety Plan will be monitored through the Partnership’s Action Plan 2024-25 to demonstrate progress against the agreed priorities.

**7. LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS**

7.1 In accordance with the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and the Crime and Disorder Regulations 2007 the Partnership is required to produce a Community Safety Strategy to set out how it intends to address crime and disorder, substance misuse, and re-offending issues.

**8. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY CONSIDERATIONS (IMPACT ASSESSMENT FORM TO BE COMPLETED AS APPROPRIATE.)**

8.1 The consultation process will ensure that the needs of all sections of the community are considered when formulating and implementing the Community Safety Plan 2024 – 2027.

**9. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS**

Financial	No relevant issues
Child and Family Poverty	No relevant issues
Staffing	No relevant issues
Asset Management	No relevant issues
Risk	No relevant issues

**14. ENVIRONMENT, SUSTAINABILITY AND CLIMATE CHANGE CONSIDERATIONS**

14.1 No relevant issues

**15. SECTION 17 CONSIDERATIONS**

15.1 Failure to develop a Community Safety Strategy would undermine the Partnerships ability to fulfil its statutory responsibilities around reducing crime and disorder, substance misuse, and re-offending in Hartlepool.

**16. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 16.1 As part of the Safer Hartlepool Partnership’s consultation process it is recommended that the Finance and Policy Committee consider and comment upon the draft Community Safety Plan 2024-27.

**17. REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 17.1 The Safer Hartlepool Partnership has a statutory duty to develop a strategy aimed at reducing crime and disorder, substance misuse, and re-offending behaviour.

**18. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 18.1 Safer Hartlepool Partnership Strategic Assessment 2022 - 2023

**19. CONTACT OFFICERS**

Tony Hanson  
Executive Director of Development, Neighbourhoods and Regulatory Services  
Hartlepool Borough Council  
Email: [tony.hanson@hartlepool.gov.uk](mailto:tony.hanson@hartlepool.gov.uk)  
Tel: 01429 523301

Sylvia Pinkney  
Assistant Director (Regulatory Services)  
Hartlepool Borough Council  
Email: [Sylvia.pinkney@hartlepool.gov.uk](mailto:Sylvia.pinkney@hartlepool.gov.uk)  
Tel: 01429 523315

Sign Off:-

Managing Director	Date: 04/09/2024
Director of Finance, IT and Digital	Date: 05/09/2024
Director of Legal, Governance and HR	Date: 05/09/2024



# Safer Hartlepool Partnership



## Community Safety Plan

2024 - 2027



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## 1. FOREWORD

As Chair, I am pleased to present the Community Safety Partnership (CSP) Plan for 2024 – 2027 on behalf of The Safer Hartlepool Partnership (SHP).

The Partnership Plan brings together our aims, ambitions and priorities for the next three years. We will work in Partnership to tackle the issues which impact on, and matter to local people.

The Community Safety Plan retains the strategic objective and priorities of the 2021/24 plan, with an additional priority of serious violence, reflecting the outcomes of the 2022 - 2023 SHP Strategic Assessment and ongoing analysis of emerging issues across the Town. Utilising this data and information enables the SHP to deliver a holistic approach to address the priorities, with a greater emphasis on prevention and reducing harm.

In recent years, there has been a significant change in issues that are presented to partners to address, whilst also tackling substantial resource pressures. Important matters such as anti-social behaviour, serious violence, substance misuse, domestic violence and responding to those members of our communities with specific vulnerabilities understandably take priority.

The SHP will continue to look at new and innovative ways of working collaboratively to reduce crime and disorder, substance misuse and re-offending, and most importantly, improving the quality of life for the people who live and work in and visit Hartlepool.

**Chair, Safer Hartlepool Partnership**

## 2. INTRODUCTION

The Safer Hartlepool Partnership (SHP) brings together a number of agencies and organisations concerned with tackling crime and disorder in Hartlepool. As defined by the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, the Partnership comprises members from each of the “responsible authorities”; Hartlepool Borough Council, Cleveland Police, Cleveland Fire and Rescue Service, The Probation Service and Hartlepool and Stockton Clinical Commissioning Group. In addition, a range of other stakeholders from the public and voluntary sectors are also represented and include Thirteen Group, Safe In Tees Valley and the Police and Crime Commissioner for Cleveland.

Our key role is to understand the kind of community safety issues Hartlepool is experiencing; decide which of these are the most important to deal with; and then decide what actions we can take collectively, adding value to the day-to-day work undertaken by our individual agencies and organisations.

We detail these actions in our Community Safety Plan. To help us do that we undertake a Strategic Assessment which analyses a range of detailed information that exists about crime, disorder, substance misuse, re-offending and other community matters that are affecting Hartlepool.

The outcomes of the assessment form recommendations about how to keep the Community Safety Plan priorities relevant.

In producing our plan we are also mindful of the pledges of the Police and Crime Commissioner in the Police and Crime Plan and the requirement to ‘have regard’ to the priorities established by this plan.

The community safety landscape continues to evolve and partners continue to face challenges in having to adapt the way services and initiatives are delivered. Since the introduction of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, legislative changes have amended our focus, and also the statutory partners we work with, but the principles of working together remain at the heart of tackling crime and disorder.

The strategic objective of the Safer Hartlepool Partnership remains unchanged and is still as important as it ever has been:

*“To make Hartlepool a safe, prosperous and enjoyable place to live, work and visit”*



### 3. LOCAL CONTEXT

Hartlepool is the smallest unitary authority in the North East region with a population of approximately 93,663 people; 51% female and 49% male.

There are approximately 40,434 households with 58% of homes owned outright / owned with a mortgage.

The average age in Hartlepool is 40 with 7% of the population aged 55-59.

The largest ethnic group is White British (98%).

Low educational attainment, high unemployment and poor physical health place Hartlepool in a deprived status and amongst the top 10% in England (ONS, 2021).

## 4. SUMMARY OF THE 2021/24 PLAN

Over the last 3 years we have focused on ensuring Hartlepool is a safe, prosperous and enjoyable place to live, work and visit by undertaking activity to address the issues that are likely to have most effect on people during their day to day lives.

### Community Safety Priority: Anti-social Behaviour

- **Operation Endurance** is an ongoing campaign which tackles anti-social behaviour caused by off-road bikes in local communities. Responding to community intelligence, numerous targeted operations have resulted in offenders being identified and off-road bikes subsequently seized and destroyed
- **Effective use of Anti-Social Behaviour Tools and Powers** including obtaining premise closure orders, issuing of Community Protection Warnings, engaging young people in Acceptable Behaviour Contracts and undertaking reviews of ASB cases through the Community Trigger process
- **Publicity campaigns** to increase awareness of environmental crime, such as fly-tipping and deliberate fires, and encourage the reporting of these issues.
- **Robust enforcement** in relation to individuals illegally dumping waste in the Town

### Community Safety Priority: Drugs and Alcohol

- **Drug and Alcohol Needs Assessment** undertaken to identify any gaps in treatment and support services.
- **Development of a Drug and Alcohol Strategy** which focuses on prevention and early intervention, reducing drug and alcohol related harms, supporting wider health needs and reducing drug and alcohol related crime
- **Execution of warrants** under the Misuse of Drugs Act resulting in the recovery of controlled drugs amounting to millions of pounds in street value
- **Presentations and targeted interventions** delivered in schools and colleges across Hartlepool on key themes including County Lines and anti-social behaviour and drink spiking



## Community Safety Priority: Domestic Violence and Abuse

- **Domestic Abuse Needs Assessment** undertaken and Domestic Abuse Strategy developed.
- **Improved provision** of safe accommodation for victims of Domestic Abuse
- **Re-commissioned** specialist domestic abuse services based on lived experiences
- **Publicity campaigns to raise awareness** of domestic abuse and promote initiatives including “ask for ANI”, a code word scheme that enables victims of domestic abuse to discreetly ask for immediate help in participating pharmacies, and “ask for Angela”, a code word scheme for women to seek help from staff in pubs and bars if they are feeling unsafe on a night out.

## 5. STRATEGIC ASSESSMENT

The Partnership conducts an annual assessment of the levels and patterns of crime and disorder, substance misuse and re-offending in Hartlepool to identify and address the community safety issues that impact upon and really matter to the local community. The following provides an overview of the key findings from the assessment which covers the period from October 2022 to September 2023.

Recorded crime during the period increased by 11% (+1,471 offences) in Hartlepool when compared to the previous assessment period.

Increases were experienced in violence against the person offences (+315; 5%), sexual offences (+46; 12%) and criminal damage offences (+232; 14%)

Acquisitive crime offences increased overall by 34%, predominantly due to an increase in recorded shoplifting offences:

- Residential Burglary (-83; -12%)
- Vehicle Crime (+103; +20% offences)
- Shoplifting (+722; +66%)

Community Safety Partnerships are arranged in “Most Similar Groups<sup>1</sup>” with 14 other CSPs, determined by various measures including population figures and deprivation levels. Positions in these groups are ranked with 1 being the lowest (fewest offences) and 15 the highest (most offences).

The crime rate in Hartlepool is above the Most Similar Group (MSG) average of 118 per 1,000 population, standing at 154. (July 2023). (Table 1)

<sup>1</sup> Most Similar Group (MSG) Community Safety Partnerships – I-Quanta: Walsall, Sunderland, South Tyneside, Halton, Barrow-in-Furness, Rochdale, St Helens, Newport, Knowlesley, Stoke-on-Trent, Middlesbrough, North East Lincolnshire, Bradford, Thanet, Hartlepool.

Crime Type	Hartlepool	MSG Average	Hartlepool Position	MSG Comparison
All Crime	154.006	117.497	15	<b>Above</b>
<b>Violence against the Person</b>				
Homicide	0.054	0.013	15	<b>Above</b>
Violence with Injury	13.492	12.661	11	<b>Above</b>
Violence without Injury	21.130	17.855	13	<b>Above</b>
<b>Sexual Offences</b>				
Rape	1.577	1.286	12	<b>Above</b>
Other Sexual Offences	3.025	2.461	15	<b>Above</b>
<b>Acquisitive Crime</b>				
Burglary Residential*	10.404	6.418	15	<b>Above</b>
Burglary Bus & Com	1.707	1.513	9	<b>Above</b>
Bicycle Theft	1.113	0.967	11	<b>Above</b>
Theft from the Person	0.0605	0.574	9	<b>Above</b>
Robbery - Personal	1.145	0.858	12	<b>Above</b>
Robbery - Business	0.162	.0125	13	<b>Above</b>
Vehicle Crime	6.449	6.040	11	<b>Above</b>
Shoplifting	17.576	8.159	15	<b>Above</b>
Other Acquisitive	10.208	8.290	13	<b>Above</b>
<b>Criminal Damage</b>				
All Criminal Damage	16.938	12.309	15	<b>Above</b>
Arson	1.015	0.804	13	<b>Above</b>



## 6. PUBLIC CONSULTATION

To follow

## 7. STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 2021-2024

Based on the findings of the 2022 - 2023 Strategic Assessment and consultation with the local community and other stakeholders, the Safer Hartlepool Partnership's Strategic Objective 2024-2027 is: -

### **To make Hartlepool a safe, prosperous and enjoyable place to live, work and visit**

## 8. PRIORITIES 2024 - 2025

As with any town, Hartlepool faces many challenges and must work within an environment of conflicting demands and limited resources.

The Partnership recognises that there are many issues that impact on the lives of some, or all, of Hartlepool's residents and continued efforts will be made by all Partnership members to address these in a focussed and effective manner.

Issues such as violence (particularly serious violence) and exploitation are significant in both the local and national context and the Partnership recognises the need to work both individually and collectively to address them.

However, the Partnership also recognises the benefits of identifying those issues that have the greatest impact on the town and the need to target resources and efforts to deal with them effectively and efficiently.

To do this, the Safer Hartlepool Partnership will focus activity on four key priority areas:

### **Anti-Social Behaviour**

By adopting an intelligence led problem solving approach, the Partnership will work to tackle anti-social behaviour (ASB) across the town by deploying resources and undertaking targeted activity to address the issues that cause concern for our residents and communities and negatively impact on their quality of life.

### **Drugs and Alcohol**

Through targeted partnership working, focussed efforts will be made to reduce both the demand for, and the supply of, illegal drugs in Hartlepool.

The Partnership will also work together to reduce the negative social, personal and health consequences caused by the misuse of alcohol in the town.



### **Domestic Violence and Abuse**

The Partnership will work together to safeguard individuals and their families from domestic violence and abuse. Working with the Office and the Police and Crime Commissioner, the development of a perpetrator strategy is a key priority for 2024/25.

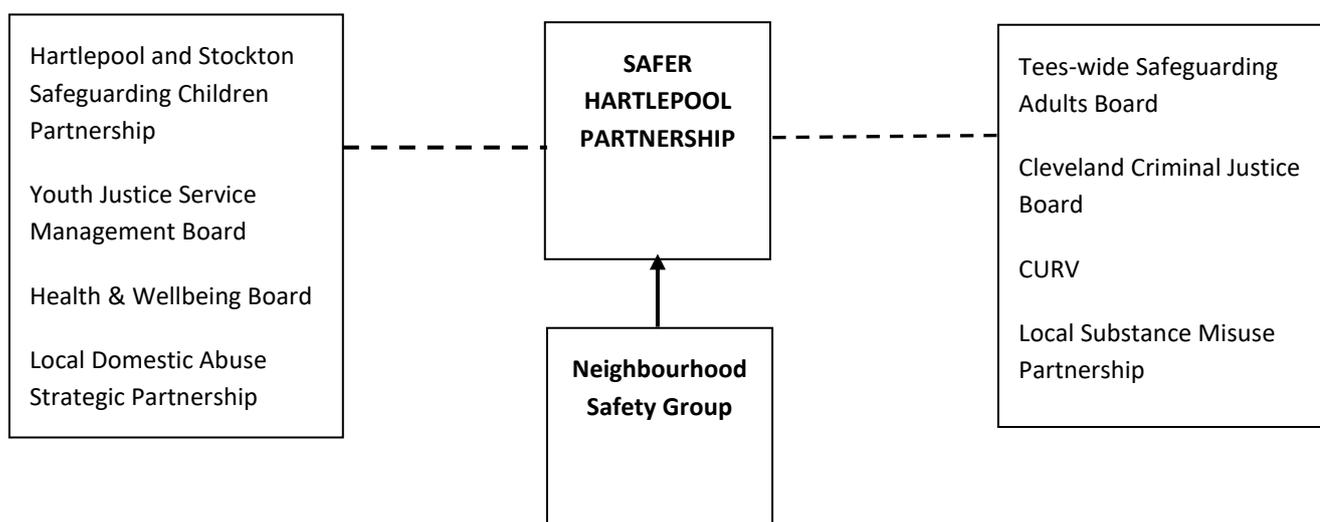
### **Serious Violence**

The Partnership will continue to work with the Cleveland Unit for the Reduction of Violence (CURV) to deliver the objectives contained in its Response Strategy at a local level.



## 9. DELIVERING THE PLAN

The Safer Hartlepool Partnership has the responsibility to deliver the priorities that are set out within this plan. There are governance structure is outlined below. This chart outlines the Partnership delivery and reporting structure. Recognising its responsibility to reduce re-offending, the SHP sub groups will include re-offending as a specific area of focus. Performance monitoring will be undertaken on a quarterly basis to assess progress against key priorities drawn from the strategic assessment and identify any emerging issues.





## 10. MONITORING PERFORMANCE

Performance reporting will be in the form of an action plan covering each priority with the Community Safety Plan. The action plan will outline the work being carried out by partners and updates will be reported to the Safer Hartlepool Partnership every six months. The action plan is a living document which will allow partners to include new initiatives to fully reflect the work being carried out.

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For further information contact:

The Safer Hartlepool Partnership

Civic Centre

Victoria Road

Hartlepool

TS24 8AG

Tel: 01429 523100

Email: [community.safety@hartlepool.gov.uk](mailto:community.safety@hartlepool.gov.uk)

<p><b>FINANCE AND POLICY COMMITTEE</b></p> <p><b>16 September 2024</b></p>
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**Subject:** HARTLEPOOL HOUSING ALLOCATION POLICY

**Report of:** Executive Director of Children’s and Joint Commissioning Services

**Decision Type:** Key (CJCS150/24)

**1. COUNCIL PLAN PRIORITY**

Hartlepool will be a place:
- Where people are enabled to live healthy, independent and prosperous lives.
- Where people will be safe and protected from harm.
- Of resilient and resourceful communities with opportunities for all.

**2. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

2.1 Members of Finance and Policy Committee are asked to approve amendments to the Hartlepool Housing Allocation Policy (**Appendix A**).

**3. BACKGROUND**

3.1 The Council is required to have an allocation system for determining priorities between applicants for housing. A new policy was adopted in November 2022 and a new IT system for delivering the service went live in April 2023.

3.2 Due to changes in supply and demand a full review of the policy has taken place. In November 2022 it was agreed that a policy was required to meet the needs of people in Hartlepool, to make best use of the social housing stock that is available and that the new system needs to be flexible to adapt to changing demands.

3.3 To date there are 2660 households actively registered on Hartlepool Home Search and since April 2023 691 applicants have been rehoused.

- 3.4 Consultation on the Hartlepool Housing Allocation Policy has taken place with Elected Members, registered providers, staff, residents, stakeholders and partners.

#### 4. POLICY CONSULTATION

- 4.1 Consultation took place between 12<sup>th</sup> July and 11<sup>th</sup> August 2024 using a variety of different methods including:

- A survey via the Council's consultation platform Your Say, Our Future;
- Via contact with all registered providers operating in Hartlepool;
- Contact with members of the Hartlepool Homelessness Prevention Partnership;
- Contact with all relevant Council staff members; and
- Contact with Elected Members.

- 4.2 43 responses were received to the consultation across Hartlepool. 25 responders were residents, nine were registered providers, two were from statutory organisations, one was from a voluntary organisation, two from someone who works in Hartlepool but lives elsewhere, two councillors and one other and one who skipped the question.

- 4.3 The results from the consultation are summarised and attached at **Appendix B**.

#### 5. PROPOSED POLICY AMENDMENTS

The following section summarises the amendments to the policy as attached at Appendix A

##### 5.1 **Deliberate worsening of circumstance:**

The list of examples has been updated to include someone who has deliberately overcrowded a family home by moving back into the household after leaving it previously.

- 5.1.2 The majority of responses to the consultation were in agreement with the proposed addition.

- 5.1.3 It is proposed that this addition will be adopted in the Hartlepool Housing Allocation Policy.

##### 5.2 **The Priority Bands:**

The scheme has four Bands. All eligible applicants will have their circumstances assessed and will be placed in the relevant band, according to their level of housing need. In order to respond to more local housing need and alleviate homelessness the following changes are proposed:

- Inclusion of a new Band 1+ to prioritise applicants in temporary accommodation (B&B, hotels, crash pads) above other homeless households who are owed the statutory homeless, prevention or relief duty.
- Category F added to Band 1 for people who need to move on emergency medical grounds to prevent them from having to present as homeless.
- Category added to Band 2 for homeless applicants without a priority need.
- Definition for supported accommodation (Band 2) assessed as ready for independent living updated.
- Definition for care leavers in Band 2 updated.
- Definition in Band 3 for people sharing facilities updated to remove relationship breakdown from this priority.
- In Band 4 additional categories added to include people in rent arrears, criminal convictions/anti-social behaviour or no local connection.

5.2.1 The majority of responses to the consultation were in agreement with the proposed bandings and categories.

5.2.2 It is proposed that these changes will be adopted in the Hartlepool Housing Allocation Policy.

### 5.3 **Assessing under-occupation, overcrowding, property entitlement and additional bedrooms:**

To ensure that bedroom need is assessed fairly and to respond to the increasing demand for family sized accommodation we have proposed making the policy clearer for the following circumstances:

- How we will assess gender for bedroom need.
- How we will assess an extra bedroom for a carer.
- How we will assess an extra bedroom for access arrangements and how we will only award one extra bedroom as standard.
- How we will assess access arrangements, including where there is an amicable agreement and where an applicant presents as homeless.

5.3.1 The majority of responses to the consultation were in agreement with the updated assessments.

5.3.2 It is proposed that these changes will be adopted in the Hartlepool Housing Allocation Policy.

### 5.4 **Best use of housing stock:**

The proposed policy now includes a section to include criteria around who is eligible for which type of property. This is in response to the increasing demand for family houses and lack of supply when Registered Providers

have flats available to meet the needs of single people, couples or other households without children.

5.4.1 The majority of responses to the consultation were in agreement with the addition of this section.

5.4.2 It is proposed that these changes will be adopted in the Hartlepool Housing Allocation Policy.

5.5 **Local connection:**

The criteria for local connection has been updated in response to the increase in demand for social housing in Hartlepool and to give preference to people living and/or working in Hartlepool. However, there are exemptions to needing local connection and this has also been expanded. We have proposed the following:

- Local connection amended from the current definition to include two years residency in Hartlepool.
- Local connection updated with regard to close family connection and place of work.
- Exemptions to the local connection definition updated.

5.5.1 The majority of responses to the consultation were in agreement with the changes to local connection criteria.

5.5.2 It is proposed that these changes will be adopted in the Hartlepool Housing Allocation Policy.

**6. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS/IMPLICATIONS**

<p><b>RISK IMPLICATIONS</b></p>	<p>The Council has a statutory responsibility to have an allocation scheme for determining priorities between applicants for housing which sets out the procedure to be followed when allocating housing accommodation. If the appropriate procedures are not put into place the Council risks not being able to nominate applicants in housing need. There would also be the risk of additional difficulties in discharging our duties under the homelessness legislation which could lead to increased temporary accommodation costs whilst trying to secure permanent accommodation for those we have a duty to rehouse.</p>
<p><b>FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS</b></p>	<p>There are no financial considerations relating to this report.</p>
<p><b>SUBSIDY CONTROL</b></p>	<p>There are no subsidy control considerations relating to this report.</p>

<b>LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS</b>	There is a legislative requirement (Part 6 of the Housing Act 1996) for the Council to publish an allocation policy. The most significant risk on any allocation policy is by legal challenge or judicial review. Policy amendments adapting to changes to housing need across Hartlepool, as outlined in the proposed policy, will reduce this risk.
<b>CHILD AND FAMILY POVERTY</b>	There are no direct child and family poverty implications relating to this report. However there will be child and family poverty implications if the policy for accessing suitable accommodation is not managed properly for families in housing need.
<b>EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY CONSIDERATIONS</b>	Equality and diversity issues have been considered relating to this report and there is negligible impact.
<b>STAFF CONSIDERATIONS</b>	There are no staff considerations relating to this report.
<b>ASSET MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS</b>	There are no asset management considerations relating to this report.
<b>ENVIRONMENT, SUSTAINABILITY AND CLIMATE CHANGE CONSIDERATIONS</b>	There are no environment, sustainability and climate change considerations relating to this report.
<b>CONSULTATION</b>	<p>(a) Internal consultation has been undertaken with staff through staff meetings</p> <p>(b) Public consultation has been undertaken through an online survey on Your Say Our Future</p> <p>(c) Comments have been invited from the following statutory consultees: Registered Providers and members of the Hartlepool Homelessness Prevention Partnership</p>

## 7. RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 Finance and Policy Committee is recommended to:

- Approve the updated Hartlepool Housing Allocation Policy.

## 8. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1 Adoption of the updated policy is recommended in order:

- To enable the Council to meet its commitments in respect of allocating social housing and providing nominations to registered providers; and
- To ensure that the policy is reflective of stakeholder feedback provided during the consultation process.

## 9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

9.1 There are no background papers.

## 10. CONTACT OFFICERS

Karen Kelly, Principal Housing Strategy Officer  
01429 284117  
[karen.kelly@hartlepool.gov.uk](mailto:karen.kelly@hartlepool.gov.uk)

Penny Thompson, Head of Housing, Hardships and Welfare Services  
01429 284878  
[penny.thompson@hartlepool.gov.uk](mailto:penny.thompson@hartlepool.gov.uk)

Sign Off:-

Managing Director	Date: 19 August 2024
Director of Finance, IT and Digital	Date: 19 August 2024
Director of Legal, Governance and HR	Date: 19 August 2024



# HARTLEPOOL HOME SEARCH

A part of Hartlepool Borough Council

## Allocation Policy

Version 2  
April 2024

## **Glossary of Terms**

### **Choice Based Lettings**

The system for registering applications and advertising properties.

### **Advocate**

Someone who an applicant has given permission to act on their behalf to deal with their housing application e.g. Support worker, family member.

### **Applicant**

A person who applies for housing on the lettings scheme.

### **Band**

The system used for giving priority for housing.

### **Bidding**

An applicant expressing an interest in an advertised home.

### **Effective Date**

The date when an applicant was awarded a priority band.

### **Housing Register**

A single list of all the applicants who have registered for rehousing.

### **Local Connection**

Connections to a local authority area because of residency, employment or close family.

### **Nominate**

This agreement details how the local authority and registered providers will co-operate and work in partnership via a Nomination Agreement to help people in housing need and to prevent homelessness.

### **Non-qualifying**

Someone who is not allowed to register with the scheme due to their behaviour or the behaviour of a member of their household.

### **Reasonable Preference**

The phrase used in the Housing Act to describe those types of housing need that should be given priority in a local authority's allocations policy.

### **Registration Date**

The date the application is received.

### **Registered Provider**

A housing association or housing company registered with the Regulator of Social Housing.

## **Section 1 – Introduction and Background**

### **1.1 Aims and Objectives**

This policy has been developed by Hartlepool Borough Council and sets out the allocation policy through the Hartlepool Home Search Choice Based Lettings Scheme. Hartlepool Borough Council works with Registered Providers with properties across the borough and they will advertise and seek to let at least 50% of their available homes using the scheme. This is known as 'nominations' and is managed through a nominations agreement with Registered Providers with the aim of working in partnership to help people in housing need and to prevent homelessness.

This policy has the following aims and objectives:

- Provide an allocation system which is easily understood and accessible to all residents and one which enables people to make choices about where they live;
- Provide a consistent approach to allocating available Hartlepool Borough Council homes and properties advertised by other Registered Providers;
- Improve access to affordable homes across Hartlepool;
- Provide help for applicants to resolve issues which may cause barriers to housing and to tackle and prevent homelessness;
- Provide choice in housing to residents in Hartlepool to help choose a home for their immediate needs or long term medical needs;
- To let homes in a fair and transparent way, allowing applicants to make informed choices about where they want to live; and
- To make efficient use of the social housing stock in meeting housing needs and contributing towards sustainable communities.

### **1.2 Statement on Choice**

Applicants will be allowed to bid for advertised homes on the scheme, enabling them to have an active choice on where they choose to live balanced with meeting housing needs.

The choice based lettings scheme will enable the Council to nominate people from the housing register to Registered Providers. The scheme might also include private rented sector properties and affordable home ownership products to increase the choice and availability of housing. These lettings will be made outside of this policy.

### **1.3 Affordability**

Applicants will be allowed to bid for properties that meet their bedroom need and are affordable and which they are eligible for. Applicants who do not feel that they are receiving the income that they are entitled to should seek independent advice.

## **1.4 Equality and fairness**

We will ensure that our policies and practices do not discriminate in line with the Equality Act 2010. We will take measures to ensure that people with disabilities have equal access to housing opportunities with the population as a whole.

We will ensure that all applicants have access to information about the service and equal opportunity to register, bid for and receive offers of accommodation. We will do this by providing help, in the applicants preferred way, where the applicant may have difficulty applying to the register, bidding for a property or accessing our online services.

## **1.5 Meeting our obligations**

Our policy has been written to meet the legal requirements for the allocation of housing as set out in the Housing Act 1996 Part VI as amended by the Homeless Act (2002), the Localism Act 2011 and the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017.

This policy also has regard to the following:

- Homelessness Reduction Act 2017: Homeless Code of Guidance
- Allocation of accommodation: guidance for local housing authorities in England (June 2012 updated June 2022)
- Providing social housing for local people: Statutory guidance on social housing allocations for local authorities in England (December 2013)
- Right to Move (2015) Statutory Guidance
- Childrens Act 1989 and Childrens Act 2004
- Public Sector Equality Duty
- Improving access to social housing for members of the Armed Forces (June 2020)
- The Allocation of Housing and Homelessness (Eligibility) (England) and Persons subject to Immigration Control (Housing Authority Accommodation and Homelessness) Regulations 2006
- The Allocation of Housing and Homelessness (Eligibility) (England) and Persons subject to Immigration Control (Housing Authority Accommodation and Homelessness) (Amendment) Regulations 2022
- The Council's Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Strategy and Housing Strategy

## **1.6 Advice and information**

A copy of this policy is available to be downloaded from [hartlepool.gov.uk](http://hartlepool.gov.uk)

Applicants who do not have internet access can visit or phone the Civic Centre for assistance.

Information may also be provided to applicants on their likelihood of obtaining social housing and other options that may be available to resolve their housing needs.

## **1.7 Information sharing, confidentiality and data protection**

All information received relating to an applicant's housing circumstances will be processed in accordance with UK Data Protection law. Information will only be shared in accordance with our Information Sharing Protocols.

In dealing with an application for housing, we may need to contact other relevant agencies or organisations for further information (e.g. medical professionals, probation service, former or current landlords).

Where an applicant has difficulty communicating directly themselves, they can name an advocate (or interpreter) to communicate on their behalf.

## **Section 2 – Joining the Housing Register**

### **2.1 Who can register?**

Anyone over the age of 18 years can apply to join the register, providing they are 'eligible'. Applicants do not need to have a connection with Hartlepool, although preference for housing will be given to applicants with a local connection (see section 4.6). In exceptional circumstances, people who are 16 and 17 can apply with appropriate support and a guarantor. Care Leavers whose placements end on their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday can apply and bid from 17 years and 6 months old.

People are eligible if they meet the requirements of 160ZA of the Housing Act 1996 (and any subsequent legislation), which deals with the immigration status of people who have come to the United Kingdom from abroad.

The regulations setting out which classes of people from abroad are eligible or ineligible for an application are The Allocation of Housing and Homelessness (Eligibility) (England) and Persons subject to Immigration Control (Housing Authority Accommodation and Homelessness) Regulations 2006 (and any subsequent amendments).

### **2.2 Who will qualify to join the register?**

Under the Localism Act 2011, we have the ability to decide who may not qualify for social housing in the area. People who fall into the following category may be assessed as 'non-qualifying' for a period of 12 months on the housing register:

- An applicant (or a member of their household) who has been found guilty of unacceptable behaviour that is serious enough that a landlord would not offer them housing and that they remain unsuitable because of that behaviour.

We may regard the following as unacceptable behaviour for an applicant or any member of their household:

- Criminal convictions\*;
- Significant housing debt\*\* which includes rent arrears, mortgage arrears, court costs or rechargeable repairs;

- Failing to keep to an agreed repayment plan in relation to housing debt;
- Perpetrator of domestic abuse, racial abuse or harassment;
- Perpetrator of abuse, violence or threats towards a member of staff;
- History of anti-social behaviour; and
- Providing false or misleading information.

\*Spent convictions will not be considered during our assessment.

\*\* Significant housing debt will be equivalent to 8 weeks and above chargeable rent arrears or 2 months mortgage arrears

***Each case will be considered on an individual basis and exceptional circumstances will be considered.*** Before a decision is made to make an applicant non-qualifying, we will gather evidence such as references from current or previous landlords, rent statements, photographic evidence of damages, and information from Police/Probation or complete any other required investigations we need to complete to make our decision.

If an applicant is made non-qualifying, they will be informed in writing of the reasons for this decision and what can be done to rectify the situation. Applicants who have been made non-qualifying can request a review of this decision within 21 days of the date of the notification.

Applicants are expected to address the issues that made them non qualifying before they can be made active on the housing register. This may include making and adhering to a repayment plan or evidence that they have not caused any further anti-social behaviour during a defined period.

### **2.3 Joint applications**

Joint applications will be accepted, provided all applicants are eligible, aged 18 or over and intend to occupy the property together as their only or main home. The joint application will be assessed and placed in the appropriate band using the details of the household member with the greatest housing need. In exceptional circumstances, people who are 16 and 17 can apply as joint applications with appropriate support and a guarantor.

### **2.4 Multiple applications**

Multiple applications are not allowed. A person can only be on the register with one active application.

### **2.5 Re-applying for housing**

If an applicant has been housed via the scheme and then wishes to re-register, they would need to register a new application which will be assessed based on their new circumstances.

## **2.6 Requests to transfer to another home**

Applicants who already rent from the Council can register to move and will have their housing application considered in line with the Council's Tenancy Management Policy.

## **2.7 Applications from employees/members and their close relatives**

Applications can be accepted from Hartlepool Borough Council employees, elected members, and their close relatives, provided they meet the eligibility criteria set out above.

## **2.8 How to apply and what happens**

Applications can be registered online by accessing Hartlepool Home Search or by contacting the Council for an appointment.

Once a completed application is received, we will ask for some documents to prove the applicants identity, address and circumstances. The application will then be assessed and placed in the band that reflects the circumstances of the household. Applicants will be informed of their band and effective date.

See section 3 for how we assess housing need.

## **2.9 Verification checks**

Our checks will include the following:

- A full housing history for the last 5 years.
- We may seek such references and statements from former landlords and mortgage providers.
- Proof of residency.
- Evidence of immigration status and Right to Rent (if applicable).
- Proof of joint custody (if applicable).
- Proof of pregnancy to show the need for an extra bedroom (if applicable).
- Proof of fostering or adopting status (if applicable).
- Proof that members of the household cannot share a bedroom for medical reasons (if applicable).
- Proof of an overnight carer from outside the household (if applicable).
- Proof of child in need or care leaver status (if applicable).

## **2.10 Changes in circumstances**

It is the responsibility of the applicant (or their advocate) to tell us about any change in circumstances that could affect their application.

## **2.11 Keeping the Register up to date**

Applicants with a priority for housing will be reviewed regularly to ensure they are not having difficulties with the scheme and to check that they are applying for suitable properties.

Applicants who have not placed any bids in a 9 month period will be contacted to see if they still want to be considered for housing.

Failure to respond to a review may result in closure of the application due to lost contact.

## **2.12 Cancelling applications**

Applications will be cancelled in the following circumstances:

- A request has been received from the applicant (or their named advocate);
- There is no activity in a 9 month period and no response received;
- The applicant is deceased and s/he was the sole applicant;
- The applicant has bought their property through Right to Buy or Right to Acquire subsequent to applying for rehousing;
- An applicant has been assessed as non-qualifying
- It is discovered that the applicant has given false or misleading information in their application; or
- There has been no response to correspondence sent to them.

Applicants will be given the reason why their application has been cancelled and informed of their right to request a review of the decision.

## **2.13 Giving false information or deliberately withholding information**

It is a criminal offence for anyone applying for housing from a housing authority to knowingly or recklessly give false information or knowingly withhold information which is relevant to their housing application (Section 171 of the Housing Act 1996).

The Council will consider taking action against a professional organisation that provides false information or deliberately withholds information on behalf of an applicant they are representing.

Applicants who are found to have given false or misleading information will be made non-qualifying.

## **2.14 Deliberate worsening of circumstances**

Any applicant who deliberately worsens their housing circumstances, will have any priority removed and will be placed into Band 4 for a 12 month period.

Examples of worsening circumstances may include:

- Giving up a tenancy/secure housing for no good reason;

- Moving from a property that has been adapted for the needs of someone in the household to a property that does not have the required adaptations;
- Deliberately overcrowding a family home through a previous family member moving back in; and
- Moving into a property that is too small or large to meet the needs of the household.

*Please note – the above list is not exhaustive.*

The applicant can ask for a reassessment of their band but would be responsible for providing evidence to support this.

## **2.15 Notifications about decisions and the right to a statutory review of a decision**

Applicants have the following rights about decisions made about their housing application:

- The right to be notified in writing of any decision not to be registered on the waiting list;
- The right, on request, to be informed of a decision about any information which is being taken into account in considering whether to make an offer of accommodation; and
- The right to request a review of a decision made regarding their application.

A request for a review should be made within 21 days of the date of the notification. The review will be carried out by an officer who is senior to the person who made the original decision and should be completed within eight weeks. Applicants will be notified in writing of the outcome of the review and the reasons for the decision. Applicants may also be entitled to a further review by the Council and they will be informed where this is the case.

## **Section 3 – Assessing Housing Need**

### **3.1 Legal background**

To ensure that those with the highest level of housing need are given preference, we have considered the categories of people that must be given 'reasonable preference' by local authorities, as set out in s166a of the Housing Act 1996 and the Homelessness Act 2002. These are:

#### **Reasonable Preference**

- People who are statutorily homeless;
- People who the Local Authority owe certain homeless duties to;
- People who live in insanitary or overcrowded homes;
- People who need to move for medical or welfare reasons; and
- People who need to move to avoid hardship.

We expect that all applicants who are awarded reasonable preference will search and bid for properties that they are eligible to apply for. Failure to bid for properties could result in their banding being reviewed and changed.

### **Additional Preference**

Local authorities are required to frame their allocation scheme to give additional preference to certain members of the Armed Forces community, where they fall within one or more of the reasonable preference categories and have urgent housing needs.

These are:

- a. Former members of the Regular Armed Forces
- b. Serving members of the Regular Armed Forces who are suffering from a serious injury, illness or disability which is wholly or partly attributable to their service.
- c. Serving or former members of the Reserve Armed Forces who are suffering from a serious injury, illness or disability which is wholly or partly attributable to their service.
- d. Bereaved spouses or civil partners of those serving in the Regular Forces where (i) the bereaved spouse or civil partner has recently ceased, or will cease, to be entitled to reside in Ministry of Defence accommodation following the death of their Service spouse or civil partner, and (ii) the death was wholly or partly attributable to their service.

We will award additional preference as a 6 month backdate to the applicant's effective date if they fall within this category.

### **3.2 The priority bands**

The scheme has 4 Bands. All eligible applicants will have their circumstances assessed and will be placed in the relevant band, according to their level of housing need unless they have debt at the time of their application, recent unspent criminal convictions, pending convictions or no local connection.

#### **Band 1+**

**People owed the relief duty and in priority need currently placed in temporary accommodation**

#### **Band 1**

**A People living in Hartlepool who are losing their home due to a Council led demolition or regeneration scheme**

This includes council tenants, registered provider tenants, private tenants and owner occupiers living within the boundary of a defined regeneration area who are required to move home, provided they have lived there, as their sole or main home, for at least 12 months. Proof of residency will be requested.

**B People assessed as statutorily homeless and in priority need**

People who have been accepted as statutorily homeless and in priority need and where the main homeless duty is owed (Part 7 of the Housing Act 1996).

**C People who are owed the homelessness prevention or relief duty and in priority need**

Applicants with a priority need, who, following assessment, are owed the homelessness prevention or relief duty.

**D People at risk of domestic abuse**

Victims of domestic abuse who have lost their accommodation or who are at risk of losing their accommodation as a result of violence or a threat of violence will be assessed as prevention or relief duty.

**E People leaving HM Armed Forces community**

People leaving the HM Armed Forces community who are identified as having an urgent need for housing. This will include a member of the Armed Forces (serving, or has formerly served in the regular forces; serving, or has formerly served in the reserved forces; a bereaved spouse/civil partner; divorced spouse/civil partner).

**F People who need to move on emergency medical grounds**

Applicants who have been assessed by the Council as unable to remain in their current accommodation or who cannot return home from hospital or a care home and who would otherwise be owed the homelessness prevention duty.

**Band 2**

**A People who need to move on urgent medical grounds**

Applicants who have been assessed by the Council as requiring alternative accommodation because their medical condition (physical or mental health) and/or disability is having a significantly detrimental effect on their ability to live in their current home.

**B People who are owed the homelessness prevention or relief duty but not in priority need**

Applicants without a priority need, who, following assessment, are owed the homelessness prevention or relief duty.

**C People assessed as ready for independent living**

Those who need to move as part of an agreed plan, following a successful placement, to re-integrate into the community e.g. people leaving any type of supported accommodation in Hartlepool including refuges.

People with learning disabilities who are assessed as having to move in order to receive care and support or where their current housing is having a detrimental effect on their quality of life and ability to live independently.

**D A household with a child in need or care leaver**

As defined in the Children Act 1989, where a formal referral has been made by Social Services with the aim of safeguarding the welfare of the child or children or a child/children leaving the care of the local authority under the Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000. Care leavers in residential or foster care whose placement ends at age 18 will be placed in this category until 56 days before their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday. At this point they will be assessed under the prevention duty.

**E Adoptive parents or prospective adoptive parents/foster carers**

Those who need to move due to their current accommodation being unsuitable or who need to move to a different location to safeguard or promote the well-being of the child or children they have adopted or are planning to adopt or foster children in foster care.

**F People living in unacceptable housing conditions**

People who are living in accommodation where, following a property inspection by the local authority, an assessment has concluded that the property contains unacceptable hazards and it has a duty to take action.

**G Applicants who are under-occupying 3 or 4+ bedroom family homes (social rented) by 1 or more bedrooms**

Calculations for under-occupancy will be based upon the number of people within the household and the criteria set out by the Department of Work and Pensions.

**H People who are overcrowded by 2 or more bedrooms**

Overcrowding is assessed on the number of people within the household and according to the best use of bedrooms and sleeping spaces available.

**I HM Armed Forces Personnel**

Members of the HM Armed Forces community (serving, or has formerly served in the regular or reserve forces; a bereaved spouse/civil partner or a divorced

spouse/civil partner) who are identified as having an urgent need for housing within 5 years of discharge.

### **Band 3**

#### **A People who need to move due to high medical grounds**

Applicants who have been assessed by the Council as having a medical condition (physical or mental health) and/or a disability where a move to alternative accommodation would significantly improve their health.

#### **B People who need to move on hardship grounds**

People who need to move to a particular area in order to take up an offer of employment, education or training, or to be nearer to family or friends in order to give or receive support (working with a statutory agency), providing it is unreasonable to expect them to commute from their existing home.

People suffering financial hardship, e.g. if their income is insufficient to cover reasonable living expenses and financial commitments including if they are under-occupying a 2 bedroom social rented property and this is unaffordable.

#### **C People sharing facilities with persons not of the same household**

People sharing facilities with other people who are not members of the same household, for example:

- People living in houses in multiple occupation;
- Bed & Breakfast; and
- Hostel.

**Note:** Gypsies and Travellers will be considered under this category if they are sharing communal facilities e.g. WC or showers whilst residing on an authorised site.

#### **D People who are overcrowded by 1 or more bedroom**

Overcrowding is assessed on the number of people within the household and according to the best use of bedrooms and sleeping spaces available.

### **Band 4**

**A** People whose current home is adequate to meet their housing needs.

**B** People who have refused a reasonable offer of accommodation or worsened their own circumstances.

**C** People who are in rent arrears or have any housing related debt at the time that they apply to the housing register.

- D** People with recent unspent convictions\* or history of anti-social behaviour\*\* at the time that they apply to the housing register.
- E** People who do not meet the local connection criteria to Hartlepool.  
\* Recent unspent convictions will be considered those that have occurred in the 2 years prior to their housing application.

\*\* Anti-social behaviour that has occurred more than 2 years prior to their housing application will be disregarded.

### **3.3 Assessing under-occupation, overcrowding, property entitlement and additional bedrooms**

Under-occupation and overcrowding will be assessed based upon the number of people within the household and according to best use of the bedrooms to reflect the criteria set out by the Department of Work and Pensions.

One bedroom will be considered suitable for:-

- An Adult /Adult Couple;
- Two children of the same sex under the age of 16;
- Two children under the age of 10 regardless of their sex;
- Any other person aged 16 or over\*; or
- Any other child that cannot be matched with the above.

*Please note:* This assessment does not include living room space unless there is a second living room which can be used as a bedroom and it does not breach health and safety standards. Where a bedroom is being used for another purpose e.g. study or toy room, its original function as a bedroom will be used in assessing the level of under occupation or overcrowding.

We will assess overcrowding and bedroom entitlement in accordance with the gender that a child is registered at birth with, unless medical evidence is provided to the contrary.

There may be some circumstances where a household is allowed an extra bedroom as detailed below:

- Health reasons;
- Bedroom for an overnight carer;
- Joint custody or overnight access to a child/children; or
- Prospective adopters and foster carers.

Where one of the above applies, evidence will be requested and an affordability check may need to be completed to make sure the applicant can afford the additional bedroom.

To qualify for an additional bedroom for a carer, the applicant must demonstrate that this care is provided by someone who would not otherwise live with the applicant, and if they are a relative or friend, they must be in receipt of Carers Allowance or Attendance allowance.

In addition, the Council's Adult Social Care service should be able to provide evidence that the applicant needs a live-in carer, and where such support is not currently provided, that the applicant would qualify for funding for a live-in carer.

Where the Council is satisfied that there is a need for a live-in carer who is not already co-habiting with another member of the household, the household will qualify for an additional bedroom.

Where a parent does not provide the principal home but have evidenced access arrangements that include overnight stays, they will be eligible for a 2 bedroom property only. In exceptional cases involving many children consideration may be given for a 3 bedroom need. This will be considered on a case by case basis.

Where an applicant has overnight access arrangements, evidence of the arrangement will be required in the form of a Solicitor's letter, Court documents or a Social Worker's letter detailing the arrangement.

Where there is an amicable agreement between parents, a letter from each party concerned will be sufficient if no other form of confirmation is available. However, these applications will be dealt with on a case by case basis. If the applicant presents as homeless they will be assessed on their circumstances only.

Access to children will only be considered where the person is a parent whether natural or by adoption or has legal residence order of a child(ren).

For the purposes of the Allocations Policy, a child is defined as being under 18 years and being the natural or adopted child of the applicant or his/her partner, under 18 and subject to a legal residence order or under 18 and in the care of the Local Authority.

We regard an unborn child as though it is already in the household at 24 weeks. Evidence will need to be provided.

\*Adult children may, in certain circumstance, not be given additional bedroom entitlement. This is where older siblings wish to continue to share a bedroom. Cases will be assessed on their individual circumstances.

### **3.4 Making direct offers without advertising**

As well as applicants bidding for advertised properties, there will also be circumstances in which some applicants will receive direct offers.

A direct offer may be made in exceptional circumstances, for example:

- Applicants assessed by the Council as being owed a homelessness duty;
- People who need emergency accommodation due to fire, flood or major repairs;

- Ex-offenders subject to Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA), where a full support package is in place with other relevant statutory and voluntary organisations to enable them to be returned to the community; and
- People who are at an imminent risk of violence or a threat of violence e.g. victims of domestic abuse, hate related crime or through a witness protection scheme.
- People who need adapted family accommodation.

If an applicant refuses a direct offer of accommodation, they will only be given a 2<sup>nd</sup> offer in exceptional circumstances and their banding priority may be reviewed.

### **3.5 Best use of housing stock**

Houses and maisonettes of any size are categorised as family accommodation and will only be let to applicants who have their children living with them on a permanent, fulltime basis. Exceptions can be made, for example where children are on university courses and live away during term time or where there is a joint custody arrangement that has been evidenced.

Single people, couples or other households without children will only be allowed to bid for flats unless they are eligible for age restricted bungalows or adapted accommodation.

For the purposes of the Allocations Policy, a child is defined as being under 18 years and being the natural or adopted child of the applicant or his/her partner, under 18 and subject to a legal residence order or under 18 and in the care of the Local Authority.

## **Section 4 – The Lettings Scheme**

### **4.1 Advertising properties on the lettings scheme**

Once an applicant has a verified application, they can bid for available homes. Adverts will be clearly labelled to show the property features, local neighbourhood information and the types of household that can bid for it. A photograph will usually be included with the advert.

Properties are sometimes advertised during a tenant's 4 week notice of termination period, and could be withdrawn from the scheme if the tenant changes their mind about moving.

There will sometimes be other restrictions in the advert e.g. age restrictions or adapted properties. Applications from applicants will only be considered if they can match the requirements in the advert.

Properties can be added to the site on any day of the week and will advertise for a minimum of 7 days (5 working days plus a weekend).

Properties that are re-advertised following an unsuccessful bidding cycle can be for a shorter period to prevent landlords from incurring additional loss of time to reallocate

their property.

Where there is more than one property of the same description in the same location, only one advert will be displayed. The property advert will show that there are 'X' properties of the same type available at the same time. For example, if there are 2 or more flats available in a block or where there are a number of new build properties.

#### **4.2 Adapted properties for people with disabilities**

Adapted properties are homes which have been designed or adapted to meet the needs of people with physical or sensory disabilities.

Applicants who have an assessed need for adapted properties will be given priority over others without that need and the property advert will make this clear. The advert will also describe the adaptations to help people choose whether to bid for that property or not.

People who require adapted accommodation may be prioritised over those without a need for that accommodation even if they are in a higher band.

#### **4.3 Bidding**

Available properties will be advertised daily on the lettings platform. Applicants (or their advocates) wanting to bid for a property can speak directly to a member of staff or use the website. There will also be an option to 'auto-bid' for the system to place bids on properties that people are eligible for in the areas that they select as where they want to live.

Applicants can bid for an unlimited amount of available properties, but will only be contacted if they are successful.

#### **4.4 Short-listing and selection**

At the end of the advertising period, a list of applicants will be produced. Applications will usually be placed in band order (ranked Band 1 - 4). If there are two or more applicants in the same band, the date they entered the band (their effective date) will be used as a tie-breaker. In the case of decants, the applicant's occupancy date for their current property will be used as their effective date. If the effective date is the same for two or more applicants, the registration date will be used. Local Lettings Policies may also affect the order of the shortlist.

#### **4.5 Local Lettings Policies**

In some cases, a home may be advertised with a Local Lettings Policy (LLP). This means that there may be certain qualities or characteristics that the landlord will be looking for when allocating the property. An LLP is usually developed between the landlord, Hartlepool Borough Council and other agencies in order to achieve a specific aim for an area/estate or new build development. For example:

- Where there is an issue with anti-social behaviour on an estate, an LLP can be used to make sure that no more households with a history of anti-social behaviour are housed there until the area stabilises, or;
- For new build developments, an LLP can help us get the right mix of families on an estate.

Where a property has an LLP attached to it, we will state this on the advert and make this available for the applicant to read.

#### **4.6 Local connection**

Applicants will be counted as having a local connection to Hartlepool if they fit one or more of the following categories:

- They have lived in Hartlepool for at least 2 years immediately prior to their housing application;
- They have previously lived in Hartlepool for 3 consecutive years out of the past 5 years;
- They have close family connections with someone living in Hartlepool for at least 5 years immediately prior to their housing application. A close family connection is defined as a parent, child, grandparent, grandchild, sibling, legal guardian; or
- Their permanent place of work (16 hours or more) for at least 12 months immediately prior to their application is located within Hartlepool.

Applicants in temporary accommodation (e.g. probation hostels) will not usually have a local connection to that area unless they meet one of the criteria listed above or there are special circumstances, e.g. they have been placed into that accommodation by the Local Authority due to homelessness.

An applicant who is homeless, and Hartlepool Borough Council has accepted the main section 192(2) housing duty under the Housing Act 1996, and is not intending to refer the applicant to another Council, will be exempted from local connection requirements. Applicants leaving the armed forces and victims of domestic abuse will not need to have a local connection. Divorced or separated spouses or civil partners of Service personnel who need to move out of accommodation provided by the Ministry of Defence will also be exempted from local connection requirements. A local connection will be applied for these applicants.

Asylum seekers who have been dispersed to Hartlepool by the National Asylum Support service (NASS) and whose status changes to that of refugee, or asylum seekers who have been awarded exceptional or indefinite leave to remain whilst living in Hartlepool will be exempted from local connection requirements.

Where an applicant has left or will shortly leave an institution such as a prison, a secure unit or hospital, a rehabilitation centre or refuge, that is not in Hartlepool and the applicant was normally resident in Hartlepool for at least 2 years immediately prior to being accommodated in that institution will be exempted from local connection requirements.

A young person will have a local connection to Hartlepool if the Council has an ongoing duty to them as a care leaver, having been looked after by Hartlepool Children's Services under section 29 of the Children Act 1989.

A care leaver aged under 21 who has been placed in Hartlepool by another local authority for at least 2 continuous years, including some time before they turned 16, will have local connection to Hartlepool.

#### **4.7 Offers**

If an applicant has been given priority for housing in Band 1 and Band 2 they will be given one reasonable offer of accommodation. If the applicant refuses an offer that meets their housing need and this refusal is considered to be unreasonable, they may have their priority removed and be placed in Band 4. Applicants who have had priority removed can ask for a review of this decision.

#### **4.8 Monitoring and review**

This Policy will be regularly reviewed and revised in the light of any relevant legislative changes or regulations issued by the Secretary of State and changes to the Codes of Guidance.

#### **4.9 Contact details**

For any queries in relation to this policy please contact the team on:

☎ 01429 806834

✉ [housingwaitinglist@hartlepool.gov.uk](mailto:housingwaitinglist@hartlepool.gov.uk)

🌐 [www.hartlepool.gov.uk](http://www.hartlepool.gov.uk)

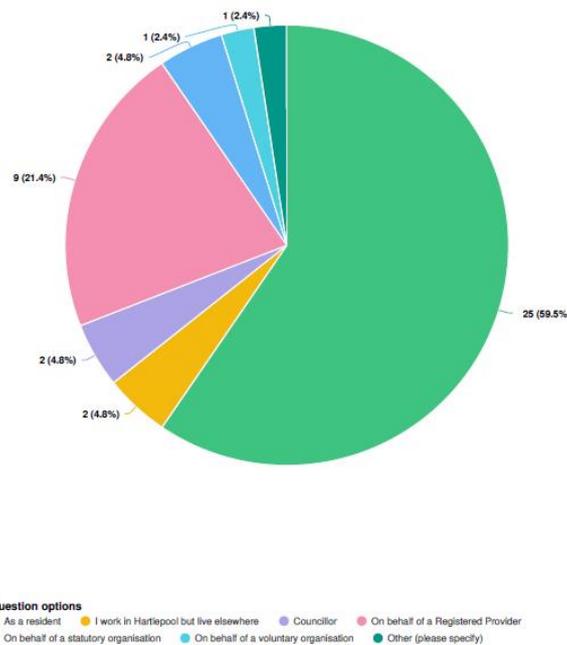
## Hartlepool Housing Allocation Policy Consultation Summary Report

### Background

Consultation took place between 12<sup>th</sup> July and 11<sup>th</sup> August 2024 via the Council's consultation platform Your Say Our Future and; via email to all registered providers working in Hartlepool and to the Hartlepool Homelessness Prevention Partnership, relevant staff members and Elected Members.

43 responses were received to the consultation across Hartlepool. 25 responders were residents, 9 were registered providers, 2 were from statutory organisations, one was from a voluntary organisation, 2 from someone who works in Hartlepool but lives elsewhere, 2 councillors and one other and one who skipped the question.

The following information was gathered from the on-line survey on Your Say Our Future.

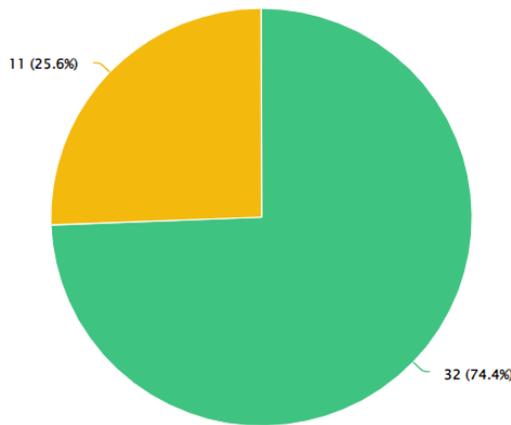


9 of the responders to the survey have a current housing register application.

**Consultation Summary**

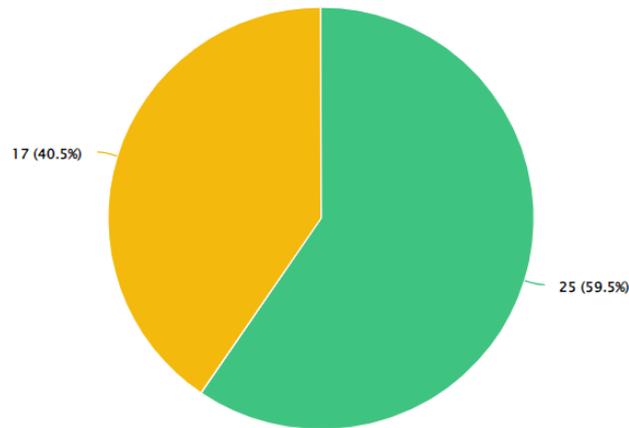
The results from the consultation on the updated policy for Hartlepool are summarised below:

<b>Existing Policy</b>	<b>Policy amendment</b>	<b>Consultation Question</b>
2.14 Deliberate worsening of circumstances	The list of examples has been updated to include someone who has deliberately overcrowded a family home by moving back into the household after leaving it previously	Do you agree with the addition of this example?



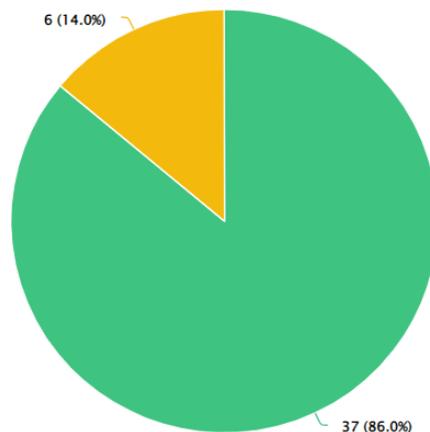
**The majority of responders agreed with the addition of this example.**

<b>Existing Policy</b>	<b>Policy amendment</b>	<b>Consultation Question</b>
3.2 The priority bands	<p>Band 1+ added to prioritise applicants in temporary accommodation (B&amp;B, hotels, crash pads) above other homeless households who are owed the statutory homeless, prevention or relief duty.</p> <p>This has been included in the policy as applicants in this category are incurring temporary accommodation costs to the Council.</p>	Do you agree that applicants in this category should be prioritised over other applicants in Band 1?



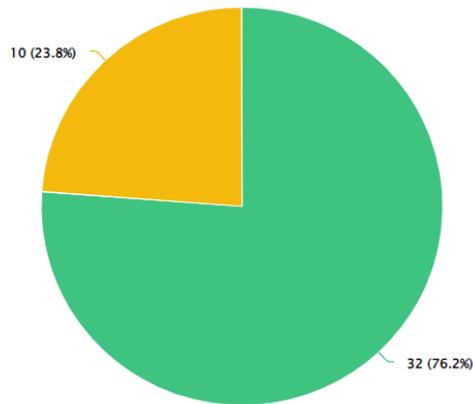
The majority of responders agreed with this proposal.

Existing Policy	Policy amendment	Consultation Question
3.2 The priority bands	Category F added to Band 1 for people who need to move on emergency medical grounds to prevent them from having to present as homeless.	Do you agree with the addition of this category within Band 1?



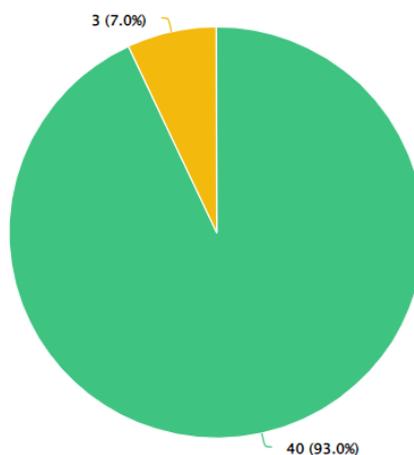
The majority of responders agreed with this proposal.

Existing Policy	Policy amendment	Consultation Question
3.2 The priority bands	Category added to Band 2 for homeless applicants without a priority need.	Do you agree with the addition of this category within Band 2?



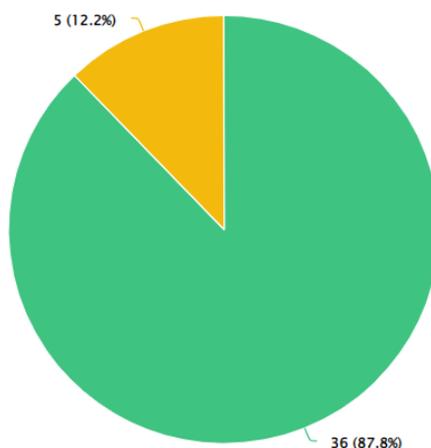
The majority of responders agreed with the addition of this category.

Existing Policy	Policy amendment	Consultation Question
3.2 The priority bands	Definition for supported accommodation under Band 2 assessed as ready for independent living updated.	Do you agree with the updated definition?



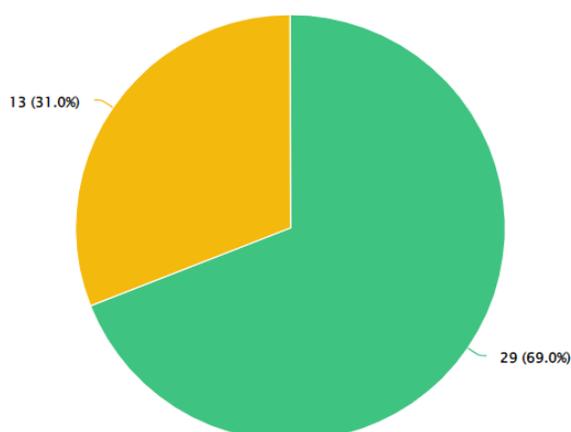
The majority of responders agreed with the updated definition.

Existing Policy	Policy amendment	Consultation Question
3.2 The priority bands	Definition for care leavers in Band 2 updated.	Do you agree with the updated definition?



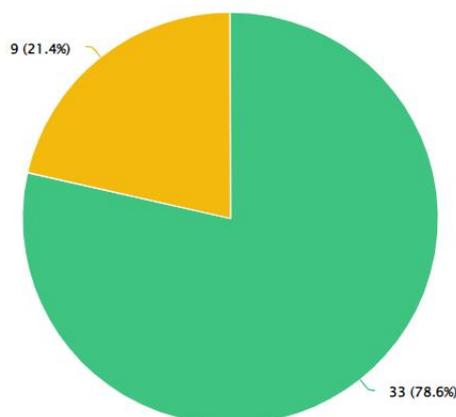
The majority of responders agreed with the updated definition.

Existing Policy	Policy amendment	Consultation Question
3.2 The priority bands	Band 3 people sharing facilities definition updated to remove relationship breakdown from this priority.	Do you agree with the removal of this from the definition?



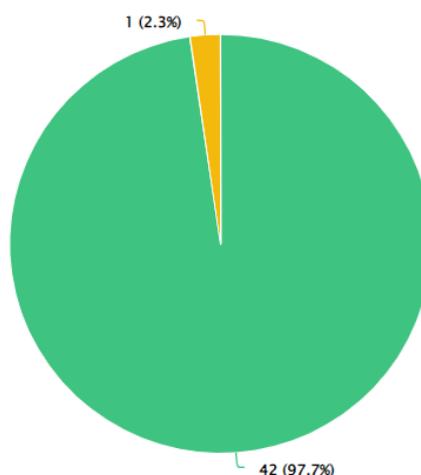
The majority of responders agreed with the updated definition.

Existing Policy	Policy amendment	Consultation Question
3.2 The priority bands	Band 4 – additional categories added to include people in rent arrears, criminal convictions/anti-social behaviour or no local connection.	Do you agree with the additional categories within Band 4?



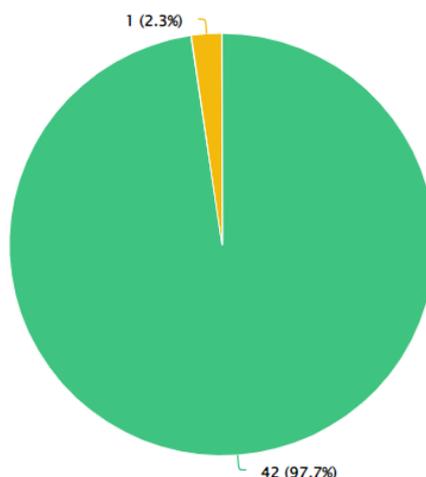
The majority of responders agreed with the updated categories for Band 4.

Existing Policy	Policy amendment	Consultation Question
3.3 Assessing under-occupation, overcrowding, property entitlement and additional bedrooms	Updated to include how we will assess gender for bedroom need.	Do you agree with this?



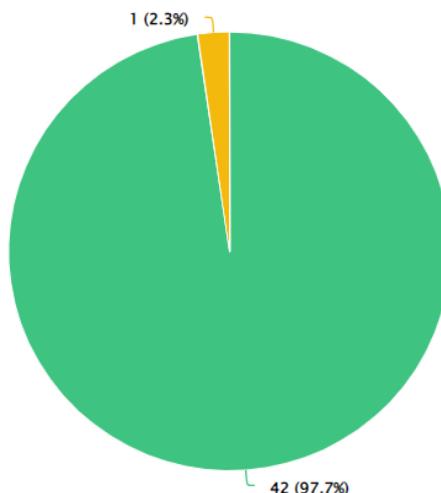
The majority of responders agreed with the updated assessment.

Existing Policy	Policy amendment	Consultation Question
3.3 Assessing under-occupation, overcrowding, property entitlement and additional bedrooms	How we will assess an extra bedroom for a carer has been made clearer.	Do you agree with this?



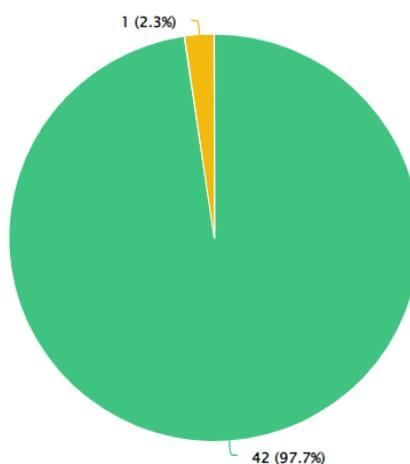
The majority of responders agreed with the updated assessment.

Existing Policy	Policy amendment	Consultation Question
3.3 Assessing under-occupation, overcrowding, property entitlement and additional bedrooms	How we will assess an extra bedroom for access arrangements has been made clearer and how we will only award one extra bedroom as standard.	Do you agree with this?



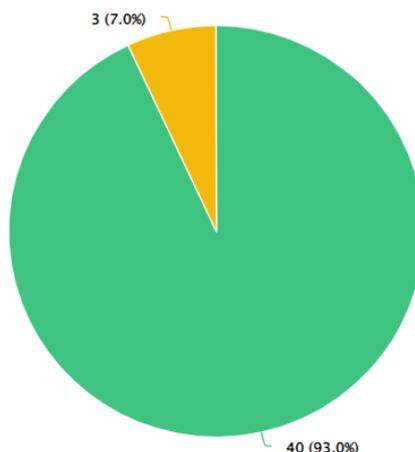
The majority of responders agreed with the updated assessment.

Existing Policy	Policy amendment	Consultation Question
3.3 Assessing under-occupation, overcrowding, property entitlement and additional bedrooms	How we will assess access arrangements has been made clearer and includes where there is an amicable agreement and where an applicant presents as homeless.	Do you agree with this?



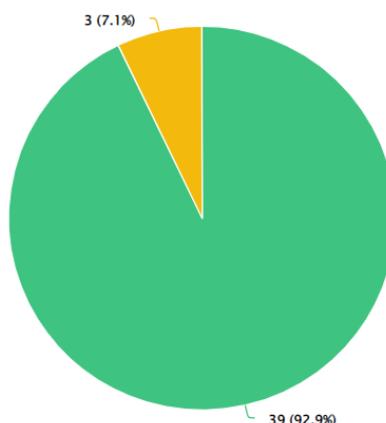
The majority of responders agreed with the updated assessment.

Existing Policy	Policy amendment	Consultation Question
Not in existing policy	3.5 added for Best use of housing stock to include criteria around who is eligible for what type of property.	Do you agree with this?



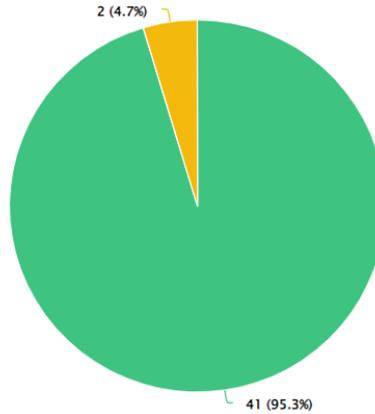
The majority of responders agreed with the addition of this section.

Existing Policy	Policy amendment	Consultation Question
4.6 Local connection	Local connection amended from the current definition to include 2 years residency in Hartlepool.	Do you agree with this?



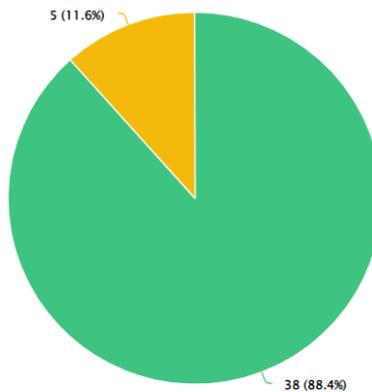
The majority of responders agreed with this proposal.

Existing Policy	Policy amendment	Consultation Question
4.6 Local connection	Local connection updated with regard to close family connection and place of work.	Do you agree with these?



The majority of responders agreed with this proposal.

Existing Policy	Policy amendment	Consultation Question
4.6 Local connection	Exemptions to the local connection definition updated.	Do you agree with these?



The majority of responders agreed with these exemptions.

**Comments**

Do you have any comments you would like to make about the proposed Housing Allocation Policy? If you disagreed with any of the proposals please tell us why.

Comments included:

- Additionally I would include at 2.14 moving to a property knowing it would be too small in order to gain a higher band in future. Also, moving in additional family members/friends and the accommodation becoming overcrowded (not just people who have moved out and back in)

- Care leavers and those leaving supported accommodation for independent living. I feel these should be given higher priority as it is currently creating a back log of tenants remaining in supported accommodation and bed blocking when we could be opening the door to more vulnerable residents.
- I disagree with the best use of stock criteria and the inability of estranged parents with access to their children being only eligible for flats, I believe the number of bedrooms should be the consideration, not whether the property is a house/maisonette or flat. I also disagree that someone who has previously left the family home and then returned is deliberately worsening their circumstances, there could be very valid reasons for doing this.
- Re: people in temporary accommodation -band 1 priority. Does this include crash pads in Refuges? Are rent arrears still an issue for band 1 applicants; many people who have homeless priority, also have rent arrears /failed tenancies.
- I have a concern that pregnant woman have to wait until they are 29 weeks pregnant. This is a lot of nervous mums to be to find a home. This needs to be looked at.
- Housing stock should first and foremost be for those who have lived in Hartlepool for a number of years not those who want to be here because it's considerably cheaper to rent here. Also, those who have anti social behaviour convictions shouldn't be prioritised as that's just moving the problem on instead of tackling it. Housing stock should be made available to those who want to get a home within the criterion especially when properties have been stood empty a while as they're not desirable to some folk.
- Section 3.3 Additional bedroom for non-residential carer. The suggested carers allowance for relatives and friends will cause additional hardship for disabled and informal carers. I don't believe this is statute as many social care providers already offer additional bedrooms as norm to disabled people. Also comparisons of accessible housing stock of one and two bedrooms could make waiting even longer.
- What is the policy regarding illegal immigrants being 'sneaked in' to Hartlepool properties with no consultation with Hartlepool residents?
- I disagreed with several points. I feel non rent payers and still social residents should be furthest down the list. I fully support local residents first, particularly those that are working to support their self. I feel the working are often ignored and the workless take priority for social housing. Coming out of the care system needs supported living until age 21 at least with an intention to work. Benefits should be a temporary safety net not a lifestyle choice. UK residents first, never temporary asylum individuals housed before hard working individuals from the town. The workless should be in temporary and hostels. This is how animosity is started as hardworking local people, who can't afford a house, feel ignored.

- Applicants who don't bid for properties or refuse a reasonable offer of a property should not benefit from more offers.
- I have been on the list for over a year waiting for a 2 bed bungalow for me n hubby needing it after just been released from hospital we in desperate need n live in 4 bed room fully adapted house with just me n him in it not using upstairs n no not priority when u need my house stupid rules I been 8th on the list for a year not moving closer
- I am currently struggling in a house without proper bathing facilities and struggling to get upstairs. I feel that some people are milking the system.
- There are many reasons why I disagree with elements of the policy. Local connections should not include a resident who has lived in Hartlepool for 2 years this will bring more people to an already struggling town.
- No proposed amendments
- 3.2 - Think there should be more qualifying criteria for this other than just being placed in temporary accommodation, maybe at point of bed pressure in terms of no 1 bed availability or length of stay where there is a need for bed/property. I can understand the rationale in terms of cost of use but feel it could have an impact on prevention forcing more into temp accommodation at point of eviction. I think there also needs to be clear on refusals of offers and demotions which would also avoid 'cherry picking' in a band 1+ 3.5 Agree in principle regarding the family accommodation, have ticked no as feel that couples in houses could be making best use of stock as could have children/foster or adopt and then would have to move on which reduces tenancy sustainability and increases turnover/void cost. Think the other criteria makes sense and in agreement. 3.2 - Ticked no as concerned about where there's relationship breakdown and either domestic abuse is not reported or there is not confidence from a victim to report but would be looking to move. I feel that there should be some consideration within the policy for relationship breakdown.
- Further clarity required for Band 4 relating to unspent convictions / asb prior to 2 years / rent arrears
- Section 2.14 (Q1) - We disagreed with this as we feel more clarity is needed around what would be considered "no good reason". We feel that loss of home due to relationship breakdown, job loss etc. should be included as good reasons and there should be flexibility to consider applicants on a case by case basis. Section 3.2 (Q4, Q6, Q7, Q8) - We did not answer these questions as we wanted to highlight some points for clarification. For Q4 around the addition of homeless applicants without a priority need to band 2, we would like more clarity for residents written into the policy on when people would fall into this category and perhaps some examples. For Q6, around the updated definition for care leavers in Band 2, we would like to suggest rewording this to make it clearer for residents around proposed timescales. It is our understanding (from text in 2.1) that Care Leavers whose placements end on

their 18th birthday can apply and bid from 17 years and 6 months old and then 56 days before their 18th birthday they will be placed into band 2 and then moved into band 1 once they turn 18 as they would be owed a duty and in priority need. The text which states "until 56 days before their 18th birthday" needs rewording and further info needs to be put in about subsequent banding and timescales. For Q7 we feel the removal of relationship breakdown needs careful consideration as this may put some residents at risk of domestic abuse due to the strain of sharing a home during relationship breakdown. We would like an understanding as to what difference this removal would make in terms of demand and whether its removal is warranted. For Q8 around the addition of categories to include people in rent arrears, people with criminal convictions/anti-social behaviour or no local connection, we feel that that the policy would benefit from additional text to category C to state that where thresholds have not been exceeded for rent arrears and refer the reader to section 2.2 on qualification. We also feel that a definition is needed of what constitutes ASB for the policies purposes and to prevent challenge. For those with unspent convictions, it is unclear if the policy would consider an offence as spent once two years have passed from the date of the offence being considered or after two years from applying to be on the register. If it is the former, it would require someone to take themselves off the register and then reapply once the two years has been met to become eligible. It would not follow in the later example (and potentially be against legislation) that someone who has committed an offence within two years of applying remains in band 4 in perpetuity if the anniversary date has already passed and they have other housing needs. Section 3.3 - We wanted to highlight some points for clarification, particularly for those with access arrangements for children. It is unclear how these provisions will work in the context of section 3.5 around best use of housing stock. Where a person has overnight access to children will they be able to bid on family accommodation or are they restricted to flats, either one bed or plus dependent on needs? Within Thirteens allocations policy where we have someone living in a high rise flat with children they are given extra priority to move out as often we have issues with noise transfer in such spaces and subsequent reports of ASB. Will this become more of an issue for HBC if the flats first approach is adopted and includes those with access arrangement for children? In general - We would like to see more emphasis placed upon the use of mutual exchanges across the whole registered provider sector as a good way to meet housing need and we would like the policy to actively support this. We would also like to see more definition or referral to more guidance around the differences between emergency and urgent medical grounds to protect against challenge. Finally, we would like to note that we often have difficulty satisfying the needs of those who are assessed as homeless and in priority need who also have pets. This is not addressed in the policy and revisions within it to a flats first approach for single households could compound this issue further. For clarity on any of these points please contact natalie.hodgson@thirteengroup.co.uk in the first instance.

- As an RP with a small but growing portfolio in Hartlepool we support the Council in trying to best utilise limited social stock to meet local housing need.

**FINANCE AND POLICY COMMITTEE**  
**SEPTEMBER 2024**



**Subject:** PERMISSION TO DIRECT AWARD FOR THE DELIVERY OF DRUG AND ALCOHOL SERVICES

**Report of:** Director of Public Health

**Decision Type:** Key (CJCS 152/24)

**1. COUNCIL PLAN PRIORITY**

<b>Hartlepool will be a place:</b>
- Where people are enabled to live healthy, independent and prosperous lives.
- Where those who are vulnerable will be safe and protected from harm.

**2. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

2.1 To seek approval under the new Health Care Services (Provider Selection Regime) Regulations 2023 (“PSR”) to direct award the delivery of clinical drug and alcohol services to Foundations the current provider.

Category C applies where the existing provider is satisfying its existing contract, will likely satisfy the new contract to a sufficient standard, and the proposed contracting arrangements are not changing considerably

**3. BACKGROUND**

3.1 The START model is delivered by an integrated team between Hartlepool Borough Council and Foundations. It is a model which facilitates individuals to progress through different levels of support, recognising achievements throughout a treatment and recovery journey. Interventions are evidence based, appropriate to need and delivered in a way that reduces risk and are non-restrictive.

The model was developed using an evidence based approach, with reference to NICE guidelines, Drug Strategy 2017, Medications in Recovery and Routes to Recovery publications.

Between 2020 and 2024 we have seen the following improvements in the delivery of clinical services:

- Increased the numbers of people in treatment by 14.9%
- Numbers of new presentations increased by 18.8%
- Deaths as a proportion of treatment decreased by 43.3%
- Opiate Successful completions increased by 15.4%
- Opiate Representations decreased by 56.3%

#### **4. PROPOSALS/OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION**

- 4.1 The proposal is to use the PSR to recommission the clinical element of the START service delivered by Foundations for three years with option for 1+1 including standard contract break clauses. Foundations is a local provider who is currently commissioned to deliver clinical Drug and Alcohol services in Hartlepool since September 2020 until August 2025. Contract value £1,221,799.

The reasons for direct award are:

- Meets the criteria for PSR
  - The contract value will be unchanged (exemption; inflationary uplift in line with the Public Health grant uplift arrangements)
  - The provider is satisfying the contract currently and will continue to deliver services to a high standard
  - The risk of a formal procurement exercise following a failed procurement exercise in Middlesbrough
  - Continuity of care for patients
- 4.2 The PSR removed the commissioning of health care services (under the PSR) from the scope of the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 and the expectation that competitive tendering is used to award contracts for health care services.
- 4.3 Directly awarding contracts using the PSR allows for a flexible and proportionate process for selecting providers of health care services (so that all decisions can be made with a view to securing the needs of the people who use the services, improving the quality of the services, and improving the efficiency in the provision of the services) whilst avoiding the costs and risks associated with a competitive tendering exercise.

## 5. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS/IMPLICATIONS

<b>RISK IMPLICATIONS</b>	<p>PSR regulation will reduce risks associated with a competitive tendering exercise, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The additional time and costs of a tendering exercise;</li> <li>• That the additional time and costs are wasted as a consequence of lack of market interest (local benchmarking suggests that this is likely);</li> <li>• Should an exercise be successful and a change in provider be proposed there would be a disruption in service provision the stable partnerships that has been formed and the delivery of integrated care.</li> </ul> <p>A failure to secure an external provider via PSR or a competitive tendering exercise would require an “in house” service to be established. HBC does not have the specialised knowledge or experience in this sector to be able to deliver the service within timescales and could not acquire it within the existing budget envelope. This would also lead to a disruption in provision.</p>
<b>FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS</b>	Budget will remain the same (see note above re: PH grant inflationary uplift)
<b>SUBSIDY CONTROL</b>	None
<b>LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS</b>	PSR Regulations
<b>CHILD AND FAMILY POVERTY</b>	Completed as part of strategy development
<b>EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY CONSIDERATIONS</b>	Completed as part of strategy development
<b>STAFF CONSIDERATIONS</b>	None.
<b>ASSET MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS</b>	None.
<b>ENVIRONMENT, SUSTAINABILITY</b>	None.

<b>AND CLIMATE CHANGE CONSIDERATIONS</b>	
<b>CONSULTATION</b>	<p>PSR regulations will require:</p> <p>The Authority publishes an “intention to award notice” triggering a standstill period lasting for a maximum of 30 days (unless extended by mutual agreement).                  The Authority publishes a notice to award if no representations are received during the standstill.</p>

**6. RECOMMENDATIONS**

6.1 To use the PSR Regulations to direct award the delivery of clinical drug and alcohol services to the current provider Foundations.

**7. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

7.1 As outlined in section 4.1

**8. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

8.1 None.

**9. CONTACT OFFICERS**

Craig Blundred Director of Public Health  
[Craig.blundred@hartlepool.gov.uk](mailto:Craig.blundred@hartlepool.gov.uk)

Claire Robinson  
 Public Health Principal  
[Claire.Robinson@hartlepool.gov.uk](mailto:Claire.Robinson@hartlepool.gov.uk)

Sign Off:-

Managing Director	Date: 04/09/2024
Director of Finance, IT and Digital	Date: 04/09/2024
Director of Legal, Governance and HR	Date: 04/09/2024

**FINANCE AND POLICY COMMITTEE**  
**16<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2024**



**Subject:** ANNUAL EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION UPDATE  
**Report of:** Director of Legal, Governance and Human Resources  
**Decision Type:** For information

**1. COUNCIL PLAN PRIORITY**

Hartlepool will be a place:
- where people are enabled to live healthy, independent and prosperous lives.
- where people will be safe and protected from harm.
- of resilient and resourceful communities with opportunities for all.
- that is connected, sustainable, clean and green.
- that has an inclusive and growing economy.
- with a Council that is ambitious, fit for purpose and reflects the diversity of its community.

**2. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 2.1 The purpose of this report is to provide an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) update to Finance and Policy Committee which includes the Annual Equality Report for 2023/24. Through the publication of this Annual Equality Report we aim to demonstrate our compliance with the Public Sector Equality Duty with regard to people affected by our policies and practices and our employees. We are also using this report to publish our gender pay gap data and demonstrate the progress made in delivering the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy agreed by Finance and Policy Committee in March 2023.
- 2.2 In addition, Finance and Policy Committee are requested to agree the Council’s approach to setting new Equality Objectives, a specific requirement of the Public Sector Equality Duty.

### 3. BACKGROUND

3.1 The Equality Act 2010 requires us, along with other public sector organisations, to comply with the Equality Duty, which came into force in April 2011. The duty covers nine protected characteristics:

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- marriage and civil partnership
- race
- religion and belief
- pregnancy and maternity
- sex
- sexual orientation

3.2 The General Duty requires us to have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation;
- advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not;
- foster good relations - including tackling prejudice and promoting understanding, between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

3.3 There are a number of specific duties that are intended to enable more effective performance of the general duty, and to standardise some of the work of general duty holders. These complement the general duty but don't replace it and are often referred to as the Public Sector Equality Duty. These specific duties are:

- Publish one or more equality objectives at least every 4 years;
- Publish information on general duty compliance with regard to people affected by your policies and practices every year;
- Publish information on general duty compliance with regard to your employees every year;
- Publish gender pay gap information by 31 March every year.

### 4. 2023/24 EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION REPORT

4.1 The 2023/24 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Report as set out in **appendix 1** has been prepared to highlight the range of activity delivered by the Council in relation to the EDI Policy agreed by Finance and Policy Committee in March 2023. The report also demonstrates our compliance with the specific duties (Public Sector Equality Duty).

4.2 The report includes a Hartlepool Population Equality Fact File setting out the data available in relation to the 9 protected characteristics. In addition, it sets out the data available in relation to our locally adopted areas of consideration which are care leavers, the Armed Forces Community (as established in our Armed Forces Covenant) and inequality related to poverty and disadvantage.

**5. EQUALITY OBJECTIVES**

5.1 Through the Public Sector Equality Duty we also have a requirement to publish Equality Objectives once every 4 years. Since our first equality objectives were published in April 2012 the Council has based them on the strategic objectives set out in our Council Plan. By doing this the Council intended to demonstrate that equality and diversity was a core part of what we do as an organisation and not an add on activity. However, following the agreement of our new 5 year Council Plan priorities by the Committee in June it has been timely to review this approach.

5.2 The Executive Leadership Team have agreed that it would be beneficial to make our Equality Objectives more specific and for them to sit within the Council Plan underpinning the agreed priorities. New equality objectives will therefore be developed over the coming months and will be based on a review of the available evidence and consultation with our local communities. This approach will provide more specific focus on areas of the most significant disparity where there are identified gaps and areas of concern or under-representation in our activities.

**6. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS/IMPLICATIONS**

<b>RISK IMPLICATIONS</b>	Failure to consider equality, diversity and inclusion issues is a significant risk as the Council has a legal duty as established by the Equality Act 2010. The Equality and Human Rights Commission is the regulatory body responsible for enforcing the Equality Act 2010 and they have a range of legal and enforcement powers available to them. Ultimately, failure to consider EDI may lead to reputational damage and financial penalties.
<b>FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS</b>	There are no additional financial implications of this report however as noted above failure to consider EDI may lead to financial penalties for the Council.
<b>SUBSIDY CONTROL</b>	No implications.
<b>LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS</b>	As set out in section 3 the Council has a legal duty under the Equality Act 2010 to:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.</li> <li>• Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.</li> <li>• Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.</li> </ul> <p>The EDI Policy that the Committee has previously approved provides the strategic framework for ensuring we comply with our legal duty.</p>
<b>CHILD AND FAMILY POVERTY</b>	The EDI Policy identifies that inequality related to poverty and disadvantage will be considered in the approach to EDI. It is recognised that poverty relates to individuals as well as children and families.
<b>EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY CONSIDERATIONS</b>	The purpose of the 2023/24 EDI Report is to demonstrate the Council's commitment to EDI and set out how we are delivering against the 3 main aims of the general Equality Duty and supporting individuals with protected characteristics.
<b>STAFF CONSIDERATIONS</b>	No implications.
<b>ASSET MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS</b>	No implications.
<b>ENVIRONMENT, SUSTAINABILITY AND CLIMATE CHANGE CONSIDERATIONS</b>	No implications.
<b>CONSULTATION</b>	Community consultation will be undertaken to inform the development of the Council's new Equality Objectives.

## 7. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1 Finance and Policy Committee are requested to:
- Note the 2023/24 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Report as set out in appendix 1;
  - Note the intention to develop new Equality Objectives over the coming months based on a review of the available evidence and consultation with our local communities.

## 8. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 8.1 Finance and Policy Committee have overall responsibility for the equality and diversity as set out in the Constitution.

## 9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 9.1 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy report to Finance and Policy Committee on 13<sup>th</sup> March 2023

## 10. CONTACT OFFICERS

Hayley Martin  
 Director of Legal, Governance and Human Resources  
 01429 523002  
[Hayley.martin@hartlepool.gov.uk](mailto:Hayley.martin@hartlepool.gov.uk)

Beverley Bearne  
 Assistant Director (Development and Growth)  
 01429 523006  
[Beverley.bearne@hartlepool.gov.uk](mailto:Beverley.bearne@hartlepool.gov.uk)

Sign Off:-

Managing Director	Date: 28.08.2024
Director of Finance, IT and Digital	Date: 28.08.2024
Director of Legal, Governance and HR	Date: 28.08.2024



**HARTLEPOOL**  
**BOROUGH COUNCIL**

# 2023/24 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Report



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- Our workforce profile compared to the community we serve
- Our workforce profile in 2023/24 compared to our workforce profile in 2022/23
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- Leavers
- Gender Pay Gap
- Consultation and Employee Engagement

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

- Progress made in 2023/24
- Activity planned for 2024/25

## Introduction

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

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

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

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

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

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

DRAFT

# Hartlepool Population Equality Fact File

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

**Total Population = 95,366**

Population aged 16+ = 77,311

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

**Sex:**

Percentage of the total population who are male = 48.7%

Percentage of the total population who are female = 51.3%

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

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

**Age:**

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

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

**Ethnicity:**

Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh = 1.7%

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

Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups = 0.7%

White = 96.5%

Other ethnic group = 0.6%

**Religion:**

Christian = 52.5%

Buddhist = 0.2%

Hindu = 0.2%

Jewish = 0.0%

Muslim = 1.3%

Sikh = 0.2%

Other religion = 0.3%

No religion = 40.1%

Not answered = 5.1%

**Disability:**

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

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

Day-to-day activities not limited = 77.1%

**Gender:**

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

Gender identity different from sex registered at birth = 0.4%

Not answered = 5.1%

**Sexual Orientation:**

Straight or Heterosexual = 91.1%

Gay or Lesbian = 1.5%

Bisexual = 1.1%

Other Sexual Orientation = 0.2%

Not answered = 6.1%

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

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

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

**Care Leavers:**

Total number of care leavers aged 17 to 18 = 34

Total number of care leavers aged 19 to 21 = 77

Total number of care leavers aged 22 to 25 = 93

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

**Poverty and Disadvantage:**

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

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

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

## Hartlepool Borough Council Workforce Equality

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

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

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

## Our workforce profile compared to the community we serve

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

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

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

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

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

## Workforce Summary

The data highlights that:

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

## Recruitment

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

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

## Recruitment Summary

The data highlights that:

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

## Leavers

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

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

## Leavers Summary

The data highlights that:

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

## Gender Pay Gap

The Council's mean gender pay gap:

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

The Council's median gender pay gap:

2023/24	2022/23
0.74%	0.25%

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

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

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

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

## Understanding our gender pay gap

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

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

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

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

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

## Consultation and Employee Engagement

### Consultation with Trade Unions

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

### Employee Engagement

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

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

#### **Executive Leadership Team (ELT) Roadshows**

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

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

#### **Hartlepool Borough Council (HBC) Managers Forum**

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

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

### **Annual Employee Survey**

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

### **Staff Equality Network**

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

### **Your Say Staff Hub**

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

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

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

Hartlepool will be a place...

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

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

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

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

...that has an inclusive and growing economy;

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

## Progress made in 2023/24

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### **Water Well Being Accreditation**

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

### **Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) Programme**

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

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

### **Poverty Investigation by Audit and Governance Committee**

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

### **Joint Sensory Support Plan**

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

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#### **Waterfront connectivity (Towns Deal)**

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

#### **Good Boost for Leisure Users**

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

#### **The People Power of Purpose (PPP)**

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

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

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

#### **Supported Internships**

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

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

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

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

**The Support Hub – wellbeing offer**

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

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

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

Available sessions/activities include:

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

**Household Support Fund (HSF)**

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

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### **Home Library Service**

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

### **Young Men's Better Mental Health Group**

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

### **Bread and Butter Thing**

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

### **English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL)**

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

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

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

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

**Independent Living**

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

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

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

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

**Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)**

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

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

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

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

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

**Free School**

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

**Togetherall**

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

**Adult Social Care**

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

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

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

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

**Changing Place Toilet (CPT) Facility**

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

**Autism Accreditation**

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

**Support at Home**

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

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

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

**Multi Agency Child Exploitation Hub**

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

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

**National Safeguarding Adults Week**

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

**Learning Disability Week**

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

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

#### **Bag Books at the Community Hubs**

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

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

#### **Poverty Truth Commission**

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

#### **Hartlepool Art Gallery and Museum of Hartlepool**

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

The following were also delivered:

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

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

### **Learning for Inclusion**

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

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

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

### **Family Homework Clubs**

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

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

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

### **Learning Support**

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

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

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

### **Hartlepool Youth Service**

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

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

### **Community Hubs**

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

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

A recent poll reported that volunteers felt:

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

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

### **Just Transition to Net Zero**

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

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

### **Council Housing**

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

### **E-Billing**

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

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

**Sustainable Warmth**

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

**Net Zero**

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

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

**National Careers Week**

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

**Tall Ships**

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

**Summer at Seaton**

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

**Healthy workforce Week**

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

**Hartlepool Business Awards**

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

**Hartlepool Restaurant Week**

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

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

### **Hartlepool Creative Business**

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

### **Business Forum**

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

### **Resettlement**

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

### **Civil Engineering Skills Academy opportunities**

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

### **Health and Social Care Skills Academy opportunities**

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

### **Employment and Skills Hubs**

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

- Employment Support
- Careers Guidance
- Learning Opportunities
- Qualifications

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

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

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

#### **Youth Hub**

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

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

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

#### **Multiply Programme**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**Workforce**

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

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

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

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

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

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

Transgender Ally training was delivered by Unison in March 2024.

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### **Better Health At Work Award**

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

Recent work includes:

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

### **Disability Confident**

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



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### **Staff Equality Network**

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

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

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

### **Lunch and Learn Sessions**

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

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

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

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

The sessions held were:

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

**Consultation and Engagement**

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

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

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

**Big Conversation**

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

**Digital Progression**

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

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

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

**Accessibility of Council Services – Scrutiny Investigation**

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

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

Hartlepool will be a place...

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

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

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

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

...that has an inclusive and growing economy;

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

## Activity planned for 2023/24

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**For further information please contact:**

**Workforce EDI – Rachel Clark**

Telephone **01429 523198**

Email **Rachel.clark@hartlepool.gov.uk**

Post **Hartlepool Borough Council,  
Civic Centre, Victoria Road, Hartlepool, TS24 8AY**

**Strategic EDI - Catherine Grimwood**

Telephone **01429 523504**

Email **Catherine.grimwood@hartlepool.gov.uk**

Post **Hartlepool Borough Council,  
Civic Centre, Victoria Road, Hartlepool, TS24 8AY**



**FINANCE AND POLICY COMMITTEE**  
**16<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2024**



**Subject:** CORPORATE COMPLAINTS MONITORING REPORT FOR 2023/24

**Report of:** Monitoring Officer

**Decision Type:** For information

**1. COUNCIL PLAN PRIORITY**

<b>Hartlepool will be a place:</b>
- with a Council that is ambitious, fit for purpose and reflects the diversity of its community.

**2. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

2.1 The purpose of this report is to inform Finance and Policy Committee of the 2023/24 outturn position in relation to corporate complaints and those considered by the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO).

**3. BACKGROUND**

3.1 Within the Corporate Complaints, Comments and Compliments Policy there is a requirement to report to elected members on the number of complaints received by the Council along with the final outcome of those complaints. This report outlines the complaints received in 2023/24.

**4. SUMMARY OF PROGRESS – CORPORATE COMPLAINTS 2023/24**

4.1 During 2023/24 there was an increase in the number of corporate complaints in comparison with the previous year but the upheld rate remained the same at 33%.

Year	Number of complaints	Number upheld or partially upheld	Percentage upheld or partially upheld
2023/24	15	5	33%
2022/23	9	3	33%
2021/22	12	4	33%

4.2 **Tables 1, 2 and 3 in Appendix 1** set out further information on the corporate complaints received during 2023/24.

## 5. LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND SOCIAL CARE OMBUDSMAN (LGSCO) – ANNUAL REVIEW LETTER 2024

5.1 The LGSCO Annual Review 2024 Letter, received 17th July 2024, sets out the annual statistics on complaints made to the LGSCO about Hartlepool Borough Council (HBC) for the year ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024. The data shows both the complaints and the enquiries that the LGSCO has recorded along with any decisions they have made.

5.2 In summary:

- In 2023/24 the LGSCO received 21 complaints or enquiries about HBC, which is an increase of 3 on the previous year.
- The LGSCO made decisions on 19 of these complaints or enquiries during 2023/24 and the outcomes were:

Decision	Number
Referred back for local resolution	6
Closed after initial enquiries	11
Upheld	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>19</b>

*Please note the number of complaint enquiries the LGSCO received during the year does not always match the number of decisions made as not all complaints investigations were completed within the same year.*

- Further detail on the 2 complaints upheld is provided in **Table 4 in Appendix 1**.
- This means that both of the complaints received and investigated by the LGSCO were upheld and therefore the upheld rate is 100%. This is higher than the zero upheld rate in 2022/23 and higher than the average upheld rate for LGSCO complaints investigated across similar authorities which is 79%. However, our numbers are very small (just two investigated complaints in 2023/24 and 2022/23) and this can skew the percentage figure significantly.
- When calculated as a rate of upheld decisions per 100,000 residents our rate is 2.1. The average for our similar authorities is 4.6 upheld decisions per 100,000 residents.
- There have been 9 complaints upheld in the last 5 years out of a total number of 98 complaints received by the LGSCO. This represents an upheld rate of 9% of the total number received by the LGSCO over the 5

year period. Of the 22 complaints that went on to be investigated by the LGSCO over the past 5 years the upheld rate is 41%. Further details are provided in **Appendix 1 Table 5 and Table 6**.

- 5.3 Once a corporate complaint investigation has been completed the complainant is advised of their right to approach the LGSCO. The fact that few complainants choose to do so provides reassurance that our approach to corporate complaints is robust.
- 5.4 The LGSCO has recently released their Complaint Handling Code. This Code is currently being piloted by a number of authorities across the country and will be used across all of the LGSCO caseload from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2025. We are awaiting further guidance to be released by the LGSCO and will look to amend our policy and procedure where necessary with the view to being ready to follow the Complaints Handling Code by 1<sup>st</sup> April 2025.

## **6. REVIEW OF COMPLAINTS POLICIES ACROSS THE COUNCIL**

- 6.1 There are a number of complaints policies in place across the council including:
- Corporate Complaints, Comments and Compliments Policy
  - Public Health Complaints Policy (statutory)
  - Children’s Social Care Complaints Policy (statutory)
  - Adult Social Care Complaints Policy (statutory)
  - Housing Management Service Complaints Policy (statutory related to our role as a social landlord)
- 6.2 We will reviewing all of the policies where necessary to ensure that they are fit for purpose, fulfil our statutory duties where necessary and are easily accessible for the public as well as meeting the new LGSCO Complaints Handling Code. This is likely to involve developing simpler public facing documents that are easy to understand and accessible to all. We are also keen to strengthen our early resolution process to help ensure that issues that are brought to our attention are dealt with as quickly and efficiently as possible.

## **7. UNREASONABLE CUSTOMER BEHAVIOUR POLICY UPDATE**

- 7.1 At present there are no residents on restricted contact with the Council through the Unreasonable Customer Behaviour Policy.

**8. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS/IMPLICATIONS**

<b>RISK IMPLICATIONS</b>	No relevant issues.
<b>FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS</b>	No relevant issues.
<b>SUBSIDY CONTROL</b>	No relevant issues.
<b>LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS</b>	No relevant issues.
<b>CHILD AND FAMILY POVERTY</b>	No relevant issues.
<b>EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY CONSIDERATIONS</b>	No relevant issues.
<b>STAFF CONSIDERATIONS</b>	No relevant issues.
<b>ASSET MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS</b>	No relevant issues.
<b>ENVIRONMENT, SUSTAINABILITY AND CLIMATE CHANGE CONSIDERATIONS</b>	No relevant issues.
<b>CONSULTATION</b>	No relevant issues.

**9. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 9.1 Finance and Policy Committee are recommended to note the update on complaints received during 2023/24.

**10. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 10.1 Finance and Policy Committee have responsibility for the monitoring of the Corporate Complaints, Comments and Compliments Policy and the Unreasonable Customer Behaviour Policy.

**11. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 11.1 Finance and Policy Committee (18<sup>th</sup> September 2023 - Corporate Complaints Monitoring Report for 2022/23).

**12. CONTACT OFFICERS**

Hayley Martin, Director of Legal, Governance and HR / Monitoring Officer  
[Hayley.martin@hartlepool.gov.uk](mailto:Hayley.martin@hartlepool.gov.uk)  
 01429 284322

Sign Off:-

Managing Director	Date: 13 August 2024
Director of Finance, IT and Digital	Date: 13 August 2024
Director of Legal, Governance and HR	Date: 13 August 2024

Table 1: Corporate complaints received in 2023-24

	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	Total Number of Corporate Complaints	Number of Corporate Complaints Upheld
<b>Total Number of Corporate Complaints</b>	5	4	1	5	15	5
<b>Finance, IT and Digital Services (FIT&amp;DS) Department</b>	2	0	0	0	2	1
<b>Development, Neighbourhood and Regulatory Services (DN&amp;RS) Department</b>	3	2	1	5	11	3
<b>Children's and Joint Commissioning Services (C&amp;JCS) Department</b>	0	2	0	0	2	1
<b>Adult and Community Based Services (A&amp;CBS) Department</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0

Table 2: Historical comparison of corporate complaints

	2019/20		2020/21		2021/22		2022/23	
	Number of complaints	Upheld	Number of complaints	Upheld	Number of complaints	Upheld	Number of complaints	Upheld
<b>Total Number of Corporate Complaints</b>	25	11 (44%)	25	11 (44%)	7	3 (43%)	12	4 (33%)

**Table 3: Details of corporate complaints upheld in 2023-24**

Department	Complaint description	Outcome of complaint
DN&RS	Complaint in relation to the supply of waste bins, issues relating to customer service and the information on the Council website.	Incorrect information on Council website leading to confusion about the cost of purchasing a bin for a new build property – all information has since been updated and a corporate working group set up to review all information on the Council’s website to ensure accuracy. Review of process in relation to the updating of the Local Land and Property Gazetteer is ongoing to prevent similar situation occurring in the future. Partial refund to complainant as a goodwill gesture in response to the different information on the website.
DN&RS	Complaint about the reinstatement of a former site compound and poor response from Council and the time taken to facilitate works.	Although the Council was not fully responsible for the reinstatement of the compound it could have pressed more firmly for progress with the responsible party. There was opportunity for the Council to have shortened the process and time taken for the reinstatement works but communication was poor leading to frustration on the complainant’s part.
CS&JC	Difficulty in securing correct school placement for children and delay in providing alternative education options when school placements fell through. Complainant felt communication was poor throughout the process.	Complainant received an apology for distress and upset caused due to delays with a financial remedy offered for child’s loss of education and distress and upset caused. Schools to be reminded of obligation to notify parents of receipt of applications and decisions made alongside reasons for decisions. Council to ensure improved communication between all parties ensuring fully documented records completed. Dissemination and embedding of reviewed Fair Access Protocol to be actioned.
FIT&DS	Complaint about the treatment received from a security guard in the Civic Centre and the refusal from the security staff to provide identification along with listening in to personal conversations.	Apology made for the Security Guard joining in with complainants conversation with the receptionist. Service improvements have been made to prevent this happening again.

Department	Complaint description	Outcome of complaint
DNR&S	Complaint with regards to the car park at Coniscliffe Road/Duchy Road and the Section 106 agreement within the planning permission and Anti-Social Behaviour issues at the car park.	It was agreed that the transfer of the car park had not been completed as per the Section 106 agreement, the Council is continuing to try and forge a way forward with all parties to finalise this. The element of complaint relating to ASB issues was not upheld as it was identified that the Neighbourhoods Committee report provided the appropriate information and ensured that a full discussion could be held.

**Table 4 – Outcome of Local Government Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO) complaints 2023-24**

Reference	Description of complaint	Outcome	Date completed
<b>Upheld (2 complaints)</b>			
23 001 507	The complainant was unhappy about being restricted to bidding for two-bedroom properties and the time that they had been waiting for a property.	Although upheld the complaint was not subject to a detailed investigation by the LGSCO as they were satisfied with the response that the Council had already made to the complaint and the remedy offered to the complainant for the uncertainty and distress caused. The LGSCO also confirmed that there was no fault in the Council's decision to restrict bidding to only two-bed properties as this was in line with the Council's Housing Allocation Policy and Government guidance.	7 June 2023
23 002 352	The complainant was unhappy that the Council refused to consider their complaint that a social worker had presented false information in court.	The LGSCO did not investigate this complaint as the Council agreed to resolve the complaint early by reconsidering the complaint in line with statutory guidance and issuing a new decision.	8 March 2024

**Table 5: Historical comparison of complaints and enquiries received by the LGSCO for the last 5 years – Hartlepool**

	Adult Care Services	Benefits and Tax	Corporate and other services	Education and Children's Services	Environment Services	Highways and Transport	Housing	Planning and Development	Other	Total
<b>2023/24</b>	2	0	1	9	1	4	1	3	0	21
<b>2022/23</b>	3	0	3	10	1	0	0	0	1	18
<b>2021/22</b>	5	1	3	6	1	1	1	2	0	20
<b>2020/21</b>	4	1	2	2	0	1	1	4	1	16
<b>2019/20</b>	4	2	3	8	2	2	0	2	0	23

**Table 6: Historical comparison of decisions made by the LGSCO for the last 5 years - Hartlepool**

	Incomplete or Invalid	Advice Given	Referred back for Local Resolution	Closed after Initial Enquiries	Detailed Investigations/Outcome			Total	Average upheld rate (%) of similar authorities
					Not Upheld	Upheld	Upheld Rate		
<b>2023/24</b>	0	0	6	11	0	2	100%	19	79%
<b>2022/23</b>	1	1	5	10	2	0	0%	19	72%
<b>2021/22</b>	0	0	5	15	4	1	20%	25	64%
<b>2020/21</b>	1	0	7	4	1	3	75%	16	NA
<b>2019/20</b>	0	2	3	10	6	3	33%	24	NA

**Table 7 - North East Local Authorities – 2023/24 LGCSO comparison**

	Number of detailed investigations	Complaints Upheld		Upheld cases where the authority provided a satisfactory remedy before the complaint reached the Ombudsman (%)	Cases we were satisfied the authority successfully implemented our recommendations to remedy the complaint (compliance rate) (%)
		Number	Percentage	Percentage	Percentage
Hartlepool	2	2	100%	50%	N/A
Durham	15	10	67%	40%	100%
Northumberland	26	18	69%	11%	100%
Newcastle	10	7	70%	14%	100%
Sunderland	12	11	92%	36%	100%
Gateshead	4	4	100%	25%	100%
South Tyneside	3	2	67%	50%	100%
North Tyneside	13	12	92%	33%	100%
Darlington	9	8	89%	38%	100%
Stockton	13	8	62%	13%	100%
Middlesbrough	5	3	60%	0%	100%
Redcar & Cleveland	4	3	75%	0%	100%