

FINANCE AND POLICY COMMITTEE

AGENDA



Tuesday 25 June 2024

at 10.00 am

**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 19 February 2024.

4. BUDGET AND POLICY FRAMEWORK ITEMS

- 4.1 Final Outturn 2023/24 – *Director of Finance, IT and Digital*
4.2 Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) 2025/26 to 2027/28 – *Director of Finance, IT and Digital*

5. KEY DECISIONS

- 5.1 Developing the New Council Plan 2024 – 2029 – *Managing Director*
5.2 Sexual Health Service Re-procurement – *Director of Public Health*

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.

6. OTHER ITEMS REQUIRING DECISION

- 6.1 Productivity Plan – *Director of Finance, IT and Digital*
- 6.2 Transformation Plan – *Managing Director*
- 6.3 Workforce Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy – *Director of Legal, Governance and Human Resources*
- 6.4 Work Experience Policy – *Director of Legal, Governance and Human Resources*

7. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

- 7.1 Council Plan 2021-2024 – Progress Update – *Managing Director*
- 7.2 Financial Position Statement – *Director of Finance, IT and Digital*

For Information:

Dates and times of forthcoming meetings of the Finance and Policy Committee –

Monday 16 September, 2024 at 5.00 pm
Monday 25 November, 2024 at 10.00 am
Monday 20 January, 2025 at 2.00 pm
Monday 10 February, 2025 at 10.00 am
Monday 7 April, 2025 at 5.00 pm



FINANCE AND POLICY COMMITTEE
MINUTES AND DECISION RECORD
19 FEBRUARY 2024

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

Present:

Councillor Mike Young (In the Chair)

Councillors: Moss Boddy, Paddy Brown, Bob Buchan, Tom Feeney, Gerard Hall, Brenda Harrison and Melanie Morley.

Also Present: Councillor Rachel Creevy.

Officers: Denise McGuckin, Managing Director
James Magog, Director of Finance, IT and Digital
Paul Dixon, Assistant Director, Corporate and Financial Services
Sally Robinson, Executive Director of Children’s and Joint Commissioning Services
Jill Harrison, Executive Director of Adult and Community Based Services
Tony Hanson, Executive Director of Development, Neighbourhoods and Regulatory Services
Beverley Bearne, Assistant Director, Development and Growth
Gemma Jones, Scrutiny and Legal Support Officer
Connor Kerr, Communications and Marketing Team
David Cosgrove, Democratic Services Team

68. Apologies for Absence

Councillors Sue Little, Jim Lindridge and Andrew Martin-Wells.

69. Declarations of Interest

None.

70. Minutes of the meeting held on 22 January 2024

Received.

The Managing Director tabled an update for Members on the redevelopment of the Star Centre as requested by Members at Council. The Managing Director sought Members approval to include further

updates in the quarterly Financial Management updates. This was agreed by Members.

71. Capital Programme 2024/25 to 2026/27 (*Director of Finance, IT and Digital*)

Type of decision

Budget and Policy Framework.

Purpose of report

To seek approval to the Capital Strategy for 2024/25 to 2026/27 to be recommended to Council for approval. The strategy is a requirement of the Prudential Capital Code.

To seek approval to the Capital Programme new starts 2024/25 to 2026/27, to be recommended to Council for approval.

Issue(s) for consideration

The Director of Finance, IT and Digital reported that the Council had, in recent years, developed an ambitious Capital Programme, ensuring investment in existing and new assets within the Borough, to support delivery of the priorities set out in the Council Plan. The report brought together the Capital Programme and Capital Strategy, aligning them with the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) and Treasury Management Strategy as an integral part of the Councils Strategic and Financial Planning Framework.

The capital programme also included planned HRA investment. Decisions on HRA investment were subject to Business Cases and were included as part of the annual HRA Business Plan and updates provided to Finance and Policy Committee on a regular basis. The Director of Finance, IT and Digital highlighted that the programme included the current year schemes – planned for or actually spend already incurred in 2023/24. The programme would be reviewed at year-end to ensure only live schemes remained going forward.

Decision

1. That the Capital Strategy for 2024/25 to 2027/28, set out at Appendix 1 to the report, be recommended to Council for approval. The strategy was a requirement of the Prudential Capital Code;
2. That the Capital Programme new starts 2024/25 to 2026/27, as set out at Appendix 2 to the report, be recommended to Council for approval;

3. That the delegation to relevant policy committees to approve detailed schemes arising from confirmed specific grant allocations as set out in Appendix 2 to the report be approved;
4. That any capital receipts generated be considered for funding the existing capital programme or financial flexibility arrangements being used to fund revenue costs associated with service transformation as reported; and
5. That the capital programme (including new starts) set out on Appendices 3-9 to the report, be noted.

72. Strategic Financial Management Report as at 31 December 2023 *(Director of Finance, IT and Digital)*

Type of decision

Budget and Policy Framework.

Purpose of report

The purpose of the report was to inform Members of:

- i) Forecast General Fund outturn for 2023/24;
- ii) Forecast Housing Revenue Account outturn for 2023/24;
- iii) Corporate Income Collection Performance; and
- iv) Capital Programme Monitoring 2023/24.

Issue(s) for consideration

The Director of Finance, IT and Digital reported that the previous report to Finance and Policy Committee in November, highlighted the significant financial pressures being experienced by the Council from high general inflation, energy inflation, higher than anticipated pay awards and increased demand and significant cost rises for Children's Social Care external placements. These pressures had continued in to the third quarter of the 2023/24 financial year.

The report detailed the latest 2023/24 budget forecast position for the Council. The Director of Finance, IT and Digital highlighted that the overall position showed an improvement of circa £1.6m from quarter 2, though there was still a forecast overspend of £2.6m. The Director of Finance, IT and Digital stated that there were three key reasons behind the reduction;

- Firstly, the on-going action taken by Directors, their teams and the finance team to reduce spend and take remedial action. This had been a significant team effort and was starting to bear fruit;
- Secondly, additional investment income being generated and for longer than anticipated. There were various factors including pre-payment of grant income by government, proactive Treasury

Management and also continued higher rates of interest. While positive, it was temporary and not an on-going benefit into future years.

- Finally, the government had redistributed £100m of the national Business Rates levy in early February; this equated to a benefit of £239,000 to Hartlepool and again was a one-off bonus.

The Dedicated Schools Grant continued to forecast a significant overspend and while work was on-going to address this, any DSG overspend would need to be carried forward as a deficit on our balance sheet.

The Managing Director wished to record her thanks to the Executive Leadership Team and all officers who had contributed to the work to reduce the budget overspend. No officer wished to see services to front line users diminish and reduced services could be quite demoralising for staff. The Managing Director was grateful to the hard work of those that had helped deliver the reduced budget deficit now reported.

Decision

1. That the forecast revenue outturn position and accompanying financial performance for the quarter be noted;
2. That the Committee recognised the seriousness of the financial position and actions being progressed to mitigate this as far as possible as set out in the report;
3. That the Housing Revenue Account position detailed within the report be noted;
4. That the forecast capital outturn position detailed within the report, including reported budget realignments and the Managing Director's comments, be noted.

73. Council Tax – Fraud Prevention Strategy *(Director of Finance, IT and Digital)*

Type of decision

Key Decision. Tests (i) and (ii) apply.

Purpose of report

The report provided members with information as to additional steps the council proposed to take to reduce potential Council Tax fraud; and The report sought approval for a Council Tax and Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme Sanction and Prosecution Policy to be implemented on the 1 April 2024.

Issue(s) for consideration

The Director of Finance, IT and Digital reported that the Council had an overarching Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy which included the provision that any fraud or theft against the authority would be investigated to a criminal standard where the option to prosecute the offender was always considered. Such cases were rare and the council had not prosecuted for council tax fraud for a number of years.

The fraud prevention service CIFAS undertook a national poll of 2,000 adults and found that one in 10 people admitted to knowing someone who had falsely claimed SPD over the past 12 months. Additionally 10% of those surveyed didn't view falsely claiming single person discount as illegal, while one in 13 believed it was a 'reasonable' thing to do. Fraud against the council was never acceptable.

Based on the annual council tax base government return in October, the council had 18,162 single person discount households, representing 41% of all chargeable dwellings. The England average was under 34% of chargeable dwellings. The Director of Finance, IT and Digital indicated that following an annual review, the current SPD numbers as at 31 December 2023 were 17,400 or 39% of all chargeable properties. This remained significantly above the England average. Based on the current caseload, should 10% of all Single Person Discounts be deemed fraudulent (either intentional or unintentional) this would mean that 1,740 households were incorrectly claiming a discount. Using Band A council tax as a reasonable proxy, this would amount to in excess of £500,000 of lost revenue.

The Director of Finance, IT and Digital stated that while not knowing the level of fraud, it was anticipated that a savings target of £150,000 would represent a reduction of around 400 cases as an initial target. Following a review of team structures and roles, an additional fraud support post has been established in order to provide capacity to investigate SPD fraud.

The Director of Finance, IT and Digital reported that it was proposed to focus additional efforts into tackling SPD fraud given it was most likely to provide a positive return to the council. To supplement the annual SPD review a continuous year round approach would be adopted. It was proposed to promote the changes using Hartbeat and social media during March. The promotion would also highlight a grace period to 1 May 2024 for anyone who wished to correct their SPD record i.e. we will not seek to prosecute anyone who comes forward before this date.

A Councillor commented that they were concerned at the potential for delay in changing people's circumstances on the Council Tax system. The Director of Finance, IT and Digital indicated that there had been a backlog in the recording of changes to people's circumstances that had been built up over the period when staff had been redirected towards

dealing with processing financial payments during Covid. The rise in new property registrations also created a significant workload and additional resources had been put in place to deal with the backlog.

There was concern expressed at some individuals who seemed to be able to simply not pay any Council Tax and the Director of Finance, IT and Digital stated that any debt would be pursued by Officers. There was also concern that some families that were already struggling could be placed under greater financial pressure through the application of the policy. The Member also sought assurance through the policy that those individuals / families seeking support through Harbour, or similar agencies supporting victims of domestic abuse, would be dealt with appropriately and the Director of Finance, IT and Digital undertook to communicate this to staff.

Decision

1. The Committee supported the more robust approach to tackling Single Person Discount fraud as reported, and supported the active promotion of this initiative; and
2. That the new Council Tax and Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme Sanction and Prosecution Policy be approved.

74. Long Term Plan for Towns (*Executive Director of Development, Neighbourhoods and Regulatory Services*)

Type of decision

Key Decision – General Exception Notice Applies.

Purpose of report

The purpose of the report was to update Finance and Policy Committee on the government announcement of a new 'Long Term Plan for Towns' programme and the award of a £20m fund to the Council to provide long-term investment in local people's priorities.

Issue(s) for consideration

The Executive Director of Development, Neighbourhoods and Regulatory Services reported that on 30th September 2023, it was announced that Hartlepool was identified as one of 55 towns by the Government to be part of their Long Term Plan for Towns (LTPT). This was a Department for Levelling Up Housing and Communities (DLUHC) programme aimed at supporting regeneration in town centres through providing greater stakeholder enjoyment, decision making and investment in local priorities.

Guidance was published on 18th December 2023 by DLUHC setting out how the LTPT programme must be administered by the Local Authority as the accountable body for any funding and DLUHC are providing revenue support to establish the new programme and processes.

£50,000 of capacity funding had been provided to the Council on 22nd December 2023 to support the establishment of the programme and put in place a Board by 1st April 2024. The Board was to be ‘community led, including through membership, ways of working and distinction from the local authority and evidence of buy-in from local businesses, civil society and communities.’ The Council would be the accountable body for the funding and executing plans, however Town Boards would be responsible for developing the Long-Term Plan, working closely with local people and advising the Council on how best to use the money. It is proposed to create a new full time Project Officer post dedicated to supporting the Board and overseeing delivery of the Long Term Plan and its interventions, which will be funded from the external revenue allocated by DLUHC for the administration of the programme.

The Chair commented that there would need to be cross-party discussions on the appointment of the Board. Members commented on the restrictive conditions set by government for the appointments to the Board and the timescales set. In relation to a question relating to the vision statement, the Managing Director stated that the Council’s own vision statement developed following the Peer Review would provide a basis for the LTPT. The Managing Director acknowledged Members concerns around the appointment of the Board, the timescales and the forthcoming elections. At this time the Committee had to decide if it wished to accept the grant funding and if so, then move forward to appoint the Board so it could meet to take the next steps.

Decision

1. That the report be noted.
2. That the Council accept the £20m funding over the 7 year drawdown period.
3. That the structure and proposed membership of the Board, as set out in the report, be approved.
4. It was noted that the Board would put in place appropriate terms of reference in accordance with guidance.
5. That the creation of new project officer post which will be funded from the external revenue allocated by DLUHC for the administration of the programme be approved.

75. Council Plan 2021-2024 – Progress Update *(Managing Director)*

Type of decision

For information.

Purpose of report

To provide an update to Finance and Policy Committee on the progress made on the delivery of the Council Plan 2021/22 – 2023/24. The report also included the latest version of the Strategic Risk Register.

Issue(s) for consideration

The Managing Director submitted for the Committee's information an update on progress made on the delivery of the Council Plan since the previous report in November.

Decision

1. The Committee noted the progress made on the Council Plan 2021-2024 by January 2024;
2. The Committee noted the updated Strategic Risk Register as set out in appendix 1 to the report, the changes to individual risk scores and the deletion of the Inflation risk.

76. Developing the New Council Plan 2024-2029 – Progress Update *(Managing Director)*

Type of decision

For information.

Purpose of report

The purpose of this report was to update Finance and Policy Committee on the Big Conversation, the Borough-wide consultation and engagement exercise which would inform the development of the new Council Plan 2024/25 – 2028/29.

Issue(s) for consideration

The Managing Director submitted an update on the progress of the development of the new Council Plan and an outline of the public engagement in the consultation process which had been extended to end on 14 February.

Members noted the encouraging number of engagements with the consultation process and acknowledged the work of officers. The Managing Director commented that the involvement of all departments throughout the consultation process had increased public contact significantly, as had the involvement of elected Members. In response to a question, The Managing Director stated the feedback from the consultation process would be reported to Committee in the summer.

Decision

The Committee noted the progress made on the Big Conversation, the Borough-wide consultation and engagement exercise, which would inform the development of the new Council Plan 2024/25 – 2028/29.

77. Any Other Items which the Chairman Considers are Urgent

None.

The meeting concluded at 10.40 am.

H MARTIN
DIRECTOR OF LEGAL, GOVERNANCE AND HUMAN RESOURCES

PUBLICATION DATE: 29 FEBRUARY 2024

FINANCE AND POLICY COMMITTEE
25TH JUNE 2024



Subject: FINAL OUTTURN 2023/24

Report of: Director of Finance, IT and Digital

Decision Type: Budget and Policy Framework

1. COUNCIL PLAN PRIORITY

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.

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

2.1 To provide details of the final outturn position for the 2023/24 financial year.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 The Council is required to publish its annual Statement of Accounts in line with statutory deadlines. The deadline for publishing of the draft Statement of Accounts for the 2023/24 was the 31 May 2024. The council published its draft accounts on 31 May and provided them to our appointed auditors, Forvis Mazars LLP, who have now commenced their audit. The statutory deadline for the audit to be completed and for the council to publish its Audited Statement of Statement of Accounts is 30 September 2024. Subject to completion of the

audit, the Audited Statement of Accounts will be presented to the meeting of the Audit and Governance committee for approval along with the auditors report, at the meeting scheduled for the end of September.

- 3.2 The purpose of this report is to provide members with details of the final outturn position for the 2023/24 financial year, building on the quarterly budget monitoring reports presented to meetings of the committee throughout the year. The outturn position presented in this report corresponds to the position reported in the draft Statement of Accounts.

4. GENERAL FUND REVENUE OUTTURN 2023/24

- 4.1 The revenue outturn position is a net overspend of £0.612m, after earmarking of reserves for specific purposes. This outturn represents an improved position to that presented at quarter 3, at which point an overspend of £2.616m was forecast.
- 4.2 As detailed in previous budget update reports, in response to the emerging forecast overspend reported in the year, non-essential spending restrictions were introduced alongside increased spend control measures and monitoring. These actions have been successful in that the outturn position improved by the end of the financial year, although the underlying pressures within Children's Social Care remained. The Council benefited from increased treasury investment returns, a business rates levy distribution from government and a VAT refund in relation to leisure services activity income, which also supported the improvement.
- 4.3 The year-end overspend has been funded from the Budget Support Fund as part of year end entries. The revenue outturn position is summarised in the table below and detailed variations presented in **Appendices A to E**.

Description of Expenditure	2023/2024 Approved Budget £'000	2023/2024 Actual Expenditure/ (Income) £'000	2023/2024 Variance Adverse/ (Favourable) £'000
Adult & Community Based Services	40,170	39,626	(544)
Children's & Joint Commissioning	30,064	35,010	4,946
Finance, IT and Digital	3,714	3,571	(143)
Legal, Governance and HR	2,090	2,088	(2)
Development, Neighbourhoods & Regulatory Services	22,292	21,829	(463)
Corporate	(14,123)	(16,389)	(2,266)
VAT Refund	0	(677)	(677)
Business Rates Levy Distribution	0	(239)	(239)
Total Departmental Position	84,207	84,819	612

Adult and Community Based Services

- 4.4 The final outturn reflects an improvement since the third quarter review and consists of a £0.575m underspend within Adult Social Care partly offset by a £0.031m overspend within Preventative & Community Based Services. This £0.544m underspend represents only 1.35% of the department's overall net budget.

Children and Joint Commissioning Services

- 4.5 The final outturn overspend in this area has increased further since the third quarter review, from £4.450m to £4.946m. The number of children in our care requiring residential placements continues to increase which has contributed to the increased forecast overspend. As previously reported, the increased complexity of children's needs and significant placement fee increases charged by external care providers, in an extremely high demand market, is leading to unprecedented budget pressures in this area. Budget pressures also continued in relation to independent fostering agency placements, Special Guardianship allowances, direct payments and Section 17 payments.
- 4.6 The most recent Ofsted inspection of children's services in March 2024 recognised the increased level of demand and complexity of need in their report and agreed that the Council brings children into care only when this is the most appropriate plan for them. The Council was rated as 'outstanding' by this inspection.
- 4.7 In response to this growing pressure, the 2024/25 budget included an additional £4.5m of funding.

Development, Neighbourhoods and Regulatory Services

- 4.8 The final outturn for the department is a favourable variance of £0.463m.
- 4.9 Although the department faced pressures in relation to Car Parking, Planning income and increased referrals for children with SEND needs in the Passenger Transport service, the department continued to proactively manage budgets in an effort to offset pressures both within the department and the wider Council. Work was undertaken in trading areas which resulted in an increase in external income generation demonstrating that the service remains competitive with external providers following a review of charges and overheads. The department also exceeded its salary abatement target. There was a positive uptake of the green waste subscription service and an improved negotiated position in relation to concessionary fares. The department also received Public Health grant in relation to environmental services activity and additional government highways grant for pot-hole repair.

Finance, IT and Digital Services

- 4.10 The final outturn is an underspend of £0.143m. This has arisen owing to favourable variances from staffing vacancies and staff not being at the top of

their grade and increased income generation which is offsetting a pressure relating to housing benefit subsidy recovery and court costs.

Legal, Governance and HR

- 4.11 The favourable variance of £0.002m relates to increased income generation and staff not being at the top of their grade, offsetting the additional cost of elections and other income shortfalls.

Corporate Areas

- 4.12 The final outturn is an underspend of £2.266m, an improvement from that reported at third review. This has largely been achieved through; additional business rate S31 grant income, an improvement in the outturn energy costs position and proactive treasury investment income maximising the continued higher rates of return available in the investment market.
- 4.13 Along with a number of other local authorities, since 2010 the Council has proactively pursued a case against HMRC to change the VAT treatment of leisure services. The case was recently concluded in the Council's favour and the Council received a £0.677m VAT refund in relation to overpaid VAT and accrued interest.
- 4.14 Some authorities pay a levy on their business rates growth, which is used to cover the cost of safety net payments for those authorities seeing a decline in their business rates income. This money is held in the Business Rates Levy Fund. After all payments have been received / paid, should there be a balance on the account and the government determines whether the balance is distributed to local authorities. For 2023/24 the excess was distributed and in March 2024 the Council received income of £0.239m.

Dedicated School Grant Outturn

- 4.15 The Dedicated School Grant (DSG) 2023/24 position was an overspend of £2.523m, £0.376m more than forecast. After releasing all DSG usable reserve balances, the final outturn 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 has been transferred to the Dedicated Schools Grant Adjustment Account.
- 4.16 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 demand on this service, including the impacts arising from the pandemic. The increase in expenditure is considered necessary to invest in Hartlepool provision and so avoid placement of pupils needing SEND provision 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.

- 4.17 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.
- 4.18 Work is continuing with Schools Forum to update and develop an action plan for future years in order to bring DSG HNB spend back in line with the budget. The council incurs the treasury management impact of the overspend, i.e. lost investment income.

Reserves

- 4.19 The improved outturn position and emerging areas requiring earmarked resource, has informed a further review of reserves. The key movements which include reserve reductions and also the creation of new reserves are noted in sections 4.20 to 4.27 below. These have been enacted for the 2023/24 Statement of Accounts.
- 4.20 **Collection Fund Reserve** (£1.316m). This reserve was held to meet the three year smoothing of collection fund deficits as allowed by government following the pandemic. This was the last year of the smoothing period and both council tax and NNDR have exited the arrangements with a surplus (council tax surplus was budgeted for and used in 24/25 budget setting). As such this full reserve is no longer required.
- 4.21 **Energy Reserve** (£1.520m). The outturn, but more importantly future price forecasts and purchases made to date, enables the release of £0.800m from this reserve.
- 4.22 It is proposed to utilise the above £2.116m freed up resource on the areas noted in 4.23 to 4.28 below.
- 4.23 **Asset Management - Urgent H&S works £1.000m.** The council has a significant maintenance backlog and recent inspections have identified essential works required across a number of council buildings.
- 4.24 **Insurance Fund - £0.516m.** Like many councils, our insurance arrangements are such that we part self-insure and run a high excess on our external policy. In doing so a reserve is held to mitigate the risk. The prudent topping up of the fund will help mitigate financial risk in this area.
- 4.25 In addition a number of smaller reserves, each of value lower than £0.250m have been established to meet known commitments and pressures. This includes funding to undertake remedial work on our tree portfolio over an 18 month programme to ensure they continue to be safe. This work will be prioritised based on the outcome of a recent comprehensive risk survey.

4.26 The detailed reserves position, including future years forecast movements, is provided at **Appendix M**.

5. HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT (HRA)

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

5.2 In the final quarter additional maintenance issues arose owing to the persistent wet weather. As a consequence of addressing these issues there was an adverse variance in relation to the maintenance budget. There was also an increase in supervision and management costs owing to the additional costs associated with the Golden Meadows and Brenda Road units coming on-line.

5.3 These adverse variances were offset through a combination of the following:

- Income was higher than budgeted as a result of new Brenda Road units coming on-line sooner than originally anticipated;
- Borrowing costs were lower than originally budgeted owing to slippage on the capital programme; and
- A review of the debt position revealed an overprovision for bad debts which was consequently reduced and released back into the HRA resulting in a favourable variance.

5.4 In addition to the above, in order to fully mitigate the adverse variance, the voluntary contribution to the Major Repairs Reserve was reduced.

5.5 The HRA reserve remained at £0.500m.

6. INCOME COLLECTION AND COLLECTION FUND

Sundry Debts

6.1 The Council raises invoices for circa £40m of sundry debts income for payment of services provided by the Council. The Council's performance in collecting these debts is positive with 95.4% (96.8% 2022/23) of debts collected within the year they are billed. Long term collection remains high with 99.4% (99.6% comparative figures for 2022/23) of sundry debts fully recovered within 2 years.

Council Tax

6.2 The final collection rate for 2023/24 is 92.48% which is an improvement on the 92.14% for 2022/23. It remains significantly lower than the pre-pandemic in-year rates which averaged circa 95%. The performance position demonstrates the scale of the task in recovering from the pandemic. However,

this improvement builds on the improvement seen in 2022/23 and continues the recovery to historic trends.

- 6.3 More positively in excess of £2.9m of arrears were collected during 2023/24, which was a further improvement on that collected in 2022/23. By way of comparison the three years prior to the pandemic, average arrears collection was £1.6m a year. This demonstrates our continued approach to seek recovery of all Council Tax arrears and provides some reassurance that our 98.5% long term collection target remains appropriate, although challenging.
- 6.4 The outturn position shows a small surplus of circa £0.150m, in line with forecast. This position was taken into account when setting the 2024/25 budget.

Business Rates

- 6.5 The final collection rate for 2023/24 was 98.74%, an improvement on the 98.17% in year collection for 2022/23. Collection rates are in line with the historic in year collection rates. In addition, we continue to make good progress in collecting previous year's arrears. The long term collection rates remain positive with a target of 99% long term collection.
- 6.6 The outturn position shows a surplus attributable to Hartlepool of circa £0.850m, in excess of that forecast. Assuming no in year shocks are experienced in the coming year, this position points to the likelihood that additional business rates can be built into the budget position for 2025/26 onwards.

CAPITAL OUTTURN

- 7.1 Details of actual capital expenditure against the capital programme are provided in **Appendices H to L** and summarised below. Where applicable expenditure has been re-phased into subsequent years. Resources will be carried forward to fund these commitments.

Department	2023/24 Budget £000	2023/24 Actual as at 31/03/24 £000	Expenditure Rephased into 2024/25 £000	Actual plus Rephased Expend £000	Variance from Budget £000
Major Regeneration Schemes	31,987	8,368	23,619	31,987	0
Adult & Community Based Services	4,554	3,012	1,542	4,554	0
Children & Joint Commissioning Services	11,279	3,320	7,959	11,279	0
Development, Neighbourhood & Regulatory Services	21,168	6,140	15,028	21,168	0
Corporate	1,226	298	928	1,226	0
TOTAL Capital Expenditure	70,214	21,138	49,076	70,214	0

- 7.2 The actual capital expenditure to the end of the 2023/24 financial year totaled £21.138m. Rephasing of expenditure in to future years of £42.653m was reported throughout the year as part of the quarterly monitoring updates. The additional rephasing up to £49.076m reflects additional scheme delivery changes, new grants and additional developer contributions, and the associated need to utilise these in future years.

- 7.3 Details of HRA related capital activity is provided at **Appendix G**

Capital Receipts

- 7.4 Net capital receipts of £0.611m have been received in year. This funding is committed to the capital programme.

8. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS/IMPLICATIONS

RISK IMPLICATIONS	No relevant issues.
FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS	The financial implications are fully set out in the main body of the report.

SUBSIDY CONTROL	No relevant issues.
LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS	No relevant issues.
CHILD AND FAMILY POVERTY	No relevant issues.
EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY CONSIDERATIONS	No relevant issues.
STAFF CONSIDERATIONS	No relevant issues.
ASSET MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS	No relevant issues.
ENVIRONMENT, SUSTAINABILITY AND CLIMATE CHANGE CONSIDERATIONS	No relevant issues.
CONSULTATION	No consultation required.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

9.1 It is recommended that Members:

- i) Note the final 2023/24 outturn position of £0.612m overspend and the accompanying financial performance for the year;
- ii) Note the review of reserves and associated reserves creation and realignments;
- iii) Note the final 2023/24 outturn in relation to the Housing Revenue Account detailed within Section 5 of the report; and
- iv) Note the capital outturn position detailed within Section 7 of the report.

10. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

10.1 To inform Finance and Policy Committee of the Council's 2023/24 financial outturn position.

11. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Strategic Financial Management Report – as at 30 June 2023 report to Finance and Policy Committee 18 September 2023.

Strategic Financial Management Report – as at 30 September 2023 report to Finance and Policy Committee 27 November 2023.

Strategic Financial Management Report – as at 31 December 2023 report to Finance and Policy Committee 19 February 2024.

12. CONTACT OFFICERS

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Sign Off:-

Managing Director	Date: 12 June 2024
Director of Finance, IT and Digital	Date: 12 June 2024
Director of Legal, Governance and HR	Date: 12 June 2024

REVENUE FINANCIAL MONITORING REPORT FOR FINANCIAL YEAR 2023/24 as at March 31st 2024

Approved 2023/24 Budget £'000	Description of Service Area	Actual Outturn Adverse/ (Favourable) £'000	Director's Explanation of Variance
	Adult Social Care		
8	Carers & Assistive Technology	1	Minor variances.
2,264	Commissioning - Adults	25	Overspend mainly relates to the use of Hartfields for which a full year savings was included within the 2023/24 MTFS, however the actual rental agreement did not end until August 2023.
199	Departmental Running Costs	(6)	Minor variances.
453	Direct Care & Support Team	(6)	Minor variances.
683	LD & Transition Social Work	(19)	Favourable variance relates to staff vacancies and pay incremental drift.
2,409	Locality & Safeguarding Team	(38)	Favourable variance relates to staff vacancies and pay incremental drift.
1,094	Mental Health Services	(43)	Favourable variance relates to staff vacancies and pay incremental drift.
1,406	OT & Disability Equipment	(8)	Minor variances.
27,384	Packages of Care	(397)	Underspend relates to a combination of 2024/25 savings achieved in advance, health contributions and one-off grant funding.
1,325	Working Age Adult Day Services	(84)	Underspend mainly relates to reduced transport and supplies and services costs.
37,225	Adult Social Care Sub Total	(575)	
	Preventative & Community Based Services		
67	Adult Education	(91)	Favourable variance mainly relates to a combination of one-off grant income and staff savings arising from secondments.
84	Allotments	(5)	Minor variances.
27	Archaeology	(16)	Favourable variance mainly relates to a staffing vacancy partly offsetting reduced income.
(23)	Coast, Countryside, Heritage and Cemeteries & Crematoria	149	Overspend mainly relates to a combination of increased expenditure and reduced income in relation to cremations and reduced income from the outdoor markets.
1,351	Community Hubs	(84)	Favourable variance relates to staff vacancies and pay incremental drift.
80	Cultural - Events and Theatres	75	Overspend mainly due to historic income pressures relating to the Town Hall and Borough Hall.
577	Cultural - Museums and Galleries	14	Overspend mainly relates to increased staffing requirements at the Art Gallery.
0	Employment & Skills	0	
782	Sports, Leisure & Recreation Facilities	(11)	Underspend mainly relates to increased income and planned reductions on supplies and services budgets.
2,945	Preventative & Community Based Services Sub Total	31	
40,170	Adult & Community Based Services Total	(544)	

REVENUE FINANCIAL MONITORING REPORT FOR FINANCIAL YEAR 2023/24 as at March 31st 2024

Approved 2023/24 Budget £'000	Description of Service Area	Actual Outturn Adverse/ (Favourable) £'000	Director's Explanation of Variance
	Children's Services		
2,673	Children & Families	707	Overspend relates to increases in the number of children subject to Child Arrangement Orders, Special Guardianship Allowances or receiving a Direct Payment.
16,609	Children in our Care	4,487	Overspend relates to an increase in the number of children in our care requiring 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.
43	Early Intervention	(217)	Favourable variance on staffing mainly arising from incremental drift and receipt of 'one-off' and temporary grants.
415	Housing, Hardship & Welfare	(328)	Favourable variance mainly relates to the receipt of a number of 'one-off' grants.
20	Play & Care	26	Overspend relates to historic income pressures.
5,393	Safeguarding Children	574	Overspend mainly relates to increased temporary staffing costs and Section 17 related spend on supporting children and families.
274	Standards, Engagement & Development	55	Overspend mainly relates to staffing pressures.
1,892	Strategic Commissioning	(211)	Favourable variance mainly relates to the receipt of a number of 'one-off' grants.
300	Youth Justice Service	0	
27,619	Children's Services Sub Total	5,093	
	Education (excluding DSG)		
164	Access to Education	28	Overspend due to reduced income from service buy backs and additional staffing costs.
158	Central Support Services	0	
487	Other School Related Expenditure	0	
436	Raising Educational Achievement	(50)	Favourable variance on staffing and consultancy costs.
400	Special Needs Services	(15)	Salary savings as staff not at top of grade and delays in staff appointments.
470	Strategic Management	(75)	Supplies and services savings.
330	Youth Service	(35)	Savings from staff vacancies.
2,445	Education Sub Total	(147)	
30,064	Children's and Joint Commissioning Services Sub Total	4,946	
	Public Health Grant		
4,080	Children's Services	(8)	Minor variances.
2,611	Substance Misuse Services	0	£70k 'underspend' was transferred to the ring-fenced Public Health Grant reserve to support Substance Misuse Services in future years.
1,642	General Public Health Support Services	19	Adverse variance mainly relates to the funding of a number of 'one-off' initiatives.
634	Sexual Health Services	(4)	Minor variances.
0	Smoking Cessation	0	Planned spend was funded from the Public Health reserve.
308	Physical Activity	0	
173	Mental Health	(1)	Minor variances.
115	Health Checks	(6)	Minor variances.
102	Obesity	0	
(9,665)	Public Health Grant	0	
0	Public Health Grant	0	
30,064	Children's and Joint Commissioning Services Total (including Public Health Grant)	4,946	

	Dedicated Schools Grant	Actual Outturn Adverse/ (Favourable)	
6,816	Early Years Block	(150)	Favourable position on 3-4 Year Old Provision
15,664	High Needs Block	2,523	Known overspend of £2.147m. Increase predominantly owing to increase expenditure on Individual Pupil Support.
20,479	Schools Block	(19)	Favourable position on Growth Fund
42,959	TOTAL Dedicated Schools Grant	2,354	

REVENUE FINANCIAL MONITORING REPORT FOR FINANCIAL YEAR 2023/24 as at March 31st 2024

Approved 2023/24 Budget £'000	Description of Service Area	Actual Outturn Adverse/ (Favourable) £'000	Director's Explanation of Variance
	Neighbourhood Services		
(36)	Building Team Design	(168)	Increased internal and external workload coupled with a rate and overhead review has resulted in a favourable variance.
146	Construction Team	(109)	The adverse variance previously forecast reflected inflationary pressures and a number of large contracts awaiting a start date. A review of overheads has also been undertaken this financial year with a view to reducing operating costs where possible. The service will continue to seek internal and external work opportunities and work with clients for early notification of projects which allows for an early engagement with the supply chain and allows value to be offered to the client through early contractor input.
350	Engineering Services (including Coastal Protection and Contaminated Land)	(150)	Increased internal and external workload coupled with a rate and overhead review has resulted in a favourable variance.
3,183	Environmental Services	(142)	Favourable variance owing to careful budget management, essential only works, vacant posts and additional income.
2,738	Highways	(425)	Favourable variance is mainly owing to higher than anticipated grant funding and the service actively managing the budgets to offset pressures elsewhere. In relation to trading activity, rate changes and a review of overheads also contributed to the favourable outturn. Essential only spend has been in place since Q2.
1,935	Passenger Transport	97	The adverse variance reflects a number of issues including an increase in SEND referrals, which require out of town transport, inflationary pressures in relation to fuel and the cost of external provision which typically has increased by 10%. There is currently a national shortage of qualified drivers owing to new licence requirements, which has meant external operators are having to pay more to attract and retain staff. The adverse variance reduced between Q3 and Q4 as some potential out of town placements that were anticipated did not materialise.
300	Planning & Development	346	Reflects shortfall in planning income, higher fee planning applications have reduced significantly resulting in an adverse variance. Planning application numbers were comparable to previous years but the type of applications resulted in lower fees being received. Loss of income from HDC applications.
189	Road Safety	(103)	External income and efficiencies in service operation have led to an improved outturn position.
1,652	Street Lighting	70	Adverse variance reflects increased costs in materials and labour. The position has improved throughout the year owing to action taken to mitigate this issue.
2,452	Sustainable Transport	(390)	Reflects favourable contract negotiations in relation to concessionary fares by TVCA on behalf of the Council.
(94)	Vehicle Fleet	(22)	Favourable variance relates to borrowing costs owing to delays in acquiring new vehicles.
5,998	Waste Services	(97)	Favourable variance reflects positive uptake of the green waste subscription service. This is likely to be a one-off surplus owing to the implementation of year two savings targets, and increased step costs in relation to running the service are anticipated to be incurred next year that will off set this additional income.
18,813	Neighbourhood Services Sub Total	(1,093)	
	Regulatory Services		
(894)	Car Parking & Enforcement	393	The adverse variance is a result of a reduction in car parking income which reflects 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.
809	Community Safety & Engagement	(112)	Favourable variance is linked to vacancies and the service actively managing the budgets to offset pressures elsewhere.
1,227	Facilities Management	123	The majority of the adverse variance reflects a shortfall in income in relation to building cleaning. SLAs had to be put in place on an estimated basis prior to the pay award being settled and the higher than expected pay increase meant these SLAs did not reflect the full cost of delivering the service. In addition, cleaning at Middleton Grange and Bevan House offices was required for a number of months beyond the closure dates originally set. The school meal trading service however broke even in line with forecasts made throughout the year.
220	Health & Safety	0	
986	Public Protection	19	Adverse variance reflects shortfall in license fee income.
2,348	Regulatory Services Sub Total	423	

	Development & Growth		
445	Economic Growth	13	Reflects additional maintenance costs.
40	Procurement & Reprographics	29	Reflects reduction in income in relation to Reprographics.
(60)	Strategic Asset Management	62	Reflects shortfall in fee income in relation to capital receipts.
99	Strategic Development & Sustainability	140	Reflects the decision not to release a reserve as budgeted owing to the department's favourable outturn position. Maintaining the reserve will ensure future resilience in relation to income generation risk for the service.
524	Development & Growth Sub Total	244	
	Strategic Management & Admin		
607	Strategic Management & Admin	(37)	Reflects overachievement of salary abatement target.
22,292	Development, Neighbourhoods & Regulatory Services Total	(463)	

REVENUE FINANCIAL MONITORING REPORT FOR FINANCIAL YEAR 2023/24 as at March 31st 2024

Approved 2023/24 Budget £'000	Description of Service Area	Actual Outturn Adverse/ (Favourable) £'000	Director's Explanation of Variance
	Development and Growth		
188	Communications and Marketing *	(9)	Favourable variance owing to vacant posts and posts not being at the top of the grade.
160	Public Consultation & Diversity *	1	Minor variances.
348	Development and Growth Sub Total	(8)	
	Corporate and Financial Services		
(1,027)	Central Administration Recharges	0	
1,383	Corporate Finance	(261)	Favourable variance owing to vacant posts and posts not being at the top of the grade.
265	Internal Audit	(3)	Favourable variance owing to reduced supplies and services costs.
678	Shared Services	(78)	Favourable variance owing to vacant posts and posts not being at the top of the grade.
259	Corporate Management Running Expenses	(28)	The favourable variance is owing to savings on the corporate subscriptions budget.
1,558	Corporate and Financial Services Sub Total	(370)	
	Customer Services and IT		
211	Benefits	(64)	Favourable variance owing to vacant posts and posts not being at the top of the grade.
(143)	Housing Benefits Subsidy	220	The grant generates £24m in subsidy, but the grant is reducing along with the current transfer rate of claimants across to Universal Credit. The adverse variance is based on the final claim submitted to DWP.
284	Corporate ICT	(4)	Favourable variance owing to a vacant post for part of the year.
1,151	Customer and Support Services	(72)	Favourable variance owing to vacant posts, posts not being at the top of the grade and additional income.
(138)	Registration Services	31	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.
1,121	Revenues	(11)	Favourable variance owing to vacant posts and posts not being at the top of the grade.
(678)	Revenue & Benefits Central	135	The adverse variance is owing to additional costs on printing and postage and an adverse variance on court costs collected.
1,808	Customer Services and IT Sub Total	235	
3,714	Finance, IT & Digital Total	(143)	

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

REVENUE FINANCIAL MONITORING REPORT FOR FINANCIAL YEAR 2023/24 as at March 31st 2024

Approved 2023/24 Budget £'000	Description of Service Area	Actual Outturn Adverse/ (Favourable) £'000	Director's Explanation of Variance
	Legal		
46	Civic Attendants	3	Minor variances.
176	Democratic	0	
498	Human Resources	(2)	Minor variances.
709	Legal Services	8	The adverse variance is owing to additional supplies and services costs and reduced income generation.
204	Managing Director's Office	(60)	Favourable variance owing to vacant posts and posts not being at the top of the grade.
168	Municipal Elections and Registration of Electors	57	The adverse variance is owing to additional cost of elections.
6	Other Office Services	32	The adverse variance is owing to a reduction in income generated from local land searches.
108	Scrutiny	(1)	Minor variances.
141	Support to Members	(25)	Favourable variance owing to less civic expenses and conference fees during the year.
32	Trade Union	(13)	The favourable variance is owing to less staff time recharged against union duties.
2	Training & Equality	(1)	Minor variances.
2,090	Legal, Governance and HR Total	(2)	

HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT for 2023/24 as at 31st March 2024

4.1 Appendix F

2022/23 OUTTURN		2023/24 BUDGET	2023/24 Actual Outturn	VARIANCE	COMMENTS
£'000		£'000	£'000	£'000	
	Income				
(1,399)	Dwelling Rents	(1,524)	(1,637)	(113)	Additional income from new Brenda Road units as a consequence of the scheme coming on-line sooner than originally budgeted. There is also a reduction in loss of income from void properties due to lease contracts negotiated in recent months.
(28)	Non-dwelling Rents - Other Income	(31)	(13)	18	
(5)	Charges for services and facilities	(3)	(3)	0	
(1,432)	Income sub total	(1,558)	(1,653)	(95)	
	Expenditure				
202	Repairs and maintenance	265	506	241	Adverse variance reflects increase in maintenance issues arising from damp and mould in the final quarter owing to the persistent wet weather and increased governmental oversight.
397	Supervision and management	411	517	106	Includes additional costs relating to Golden Meadows.
27	Rents, rates, taxes and other charges	22	24	2	
45	Provision for bad or doubtful debts	20	(86)	(106)	The debt position was reviewed at year and there was deemed to be an over provision for bad debts. The provision was reduced and released back to the HRA resulting in a favourable variance.
406	Depreciation (Major Repairs Allowance)	370	349	(21)	The favourable variance reflects a reduction in the voluntary contribution to the Major Repairs Allowance in order to mitigate the impact of increased costs in relation to maintenance issues arising from damp and mould as outlined above.
3	Discretionary Housing Payments	2	1	(1)	
10	Debt Management costs	12	10	(2)	
337	Net Interest payable	456	332	(124)	Favourable variance reflects revised profile of capital schemes and additional borrowing costs now profiled into future years.
1,427	Expenditure sub total	1,558	1,653	95	
(5)	HRA (Surplus) / Deficit for the year	0	0	0	
	Movement on the HRA Reserve				
(495)	HRA Reserve Opening Balance		(500)		
(5)	(Surplus)/Deficit for the year		0		
(500)	HRA Reserve Closing Balance		(500)		

HRA CAPITAL MONITORING REPORT PERIOD ENDING 31st March 2024

Project Code	Scheme Title	A	B	C	D	E	F	Type of Financing	2023/24 COMMENTS
		Full Budget £'000	2023/24 Budget £'000	2023/24 Actual as at 31/3/24 £'000	Expenditure Rephased into Future Year £'000	(C+D+E) 2023/24 Total Expenditure £'000	(F-B) 2023/24 Variance from Budget £'000		
S106	Affordable Housing	1,171	1,171	0	861	861	(310)	GRANT	S106 Developer Contributions - see separate Appendix M for further details and also schemes 7450 and 7726. The favourable variance reflects the allocation of funding for the appropriation of land prior to sale in relation to the Golden Meadows Development.
7182	Empty Homes - Phase 3	1,167	1,064	0	515	515	(549)	GRANT	Existing funding approval - individual business case approval required for scheme. Favourable variance reflects realignment of empty homes funding to the Afghan Resettlement Scheme following development of the business case.
7450	Hill View Development	2,240	58	0	58	58	0	S106	Final account still to be confirmed. Funded from S106 contributions.
7620	Brenda Road - Phase 1	2,133	937	937	0	937	0	MIX	Scheme complete.
8106	New Build	693	692	0	255	255	(437)	UDPB	Existing funding approval - individual business case approval required for scheme. Favourable variance reflects allocation of funding for appropriation of land prior to sale to developer re Golden Meadows Scheme.
8799	Major Repairs	210	210	34	176	210	0	MIX	Expenditure as per 2023/24 HRA requirement.
7726	Resettlement Accommodation	855	855	1,194	210	1,404	549	MIX	Properties purchased, slippage reflects refurbishment works required that will be completed in 24/25. Adverse variance reflects movement of funding from Empty Homes budget following development of the Afghan Resettlement business case.
	Golden Meadows Appropriation	0	0	747	0	747	747	MIX	Adverse variance reflects funding movements required to fund appropriation of land prior to sale to developer re Golden Meadows Scheme..
	Golden Meadows	1,315	1,315	1,315	0	1,315	0	GRANT	Reflects recognition of houses received in exchange for sale of land at Golden Meadows.
9294	HRA Adaptations	10	10	10	0	10	0	RCCO	
9317	Social Housing Decarbonisation	451	451	83	368	451	0	MIX	Profiled expenditure in line with latest multi-year scheme forecasts.
SOCIAL COUNCIL HOUSING - CAPITAL SCHEMES		10,245	6,763	4,320	2,443	6,763	0		
7220	Private Sector Housing Grants	66	66	2	64	66	0	GRANT	Self funded via recycled contributions. Budget has increased compared to Q3 owing to receipt of additional funding.
7066	Avondene Student Accommodation	67	67	0	67	67	0	RCCO	Earmarked for major repairs. Budget has increased compared to Q3 owing to contribution to sinking fund in line with the Avondene revenue budget.
CAPITAL SCHEMES - HOUSING		133	133	2	131	133	0		
DEVELOPMENT, NEIGHBOURHOODS & REGULATORY SERVICES, TOTAL HOUSING CAPITAL		10,378	6,896	4,322	2,574	6,896	0		

MAJOR REGENERATION SCHEMES

CAPITAL MONITORING REPORT PERIOD ENDING March 31st 2024

Project Code	Scheme Title	A	B	C	E	F	G	Type of Financing	2023/24 COMMENTS
		Full Budget £'000	2023/24 Budget £'000	2023/24 Actual as at 31/03/24 £'000	Expenditure Rephased into Future Years £'000	(C+D+E) Total Expenditure £'000	(F-B) Variance from Budget £'000		
8958	A19/ Elwick Road/ North Lane Junction and Elwick Road/Hartlepool Western Link Project	24,497	694	238	456	694	0	MIX	Expenditure rephased reflects the latest position following granting of planning permission which was necessary to progress compulsory purchase orders.
7550	CIP - Highlight	34,650	4,747	2,773	1,974	4,747	0	MIX	Start on site date was revised from November to January 2024 following letting of contract.
9101	CIP - Borough Hall Improvement	3,000	164	6	158	164	0	MIX	Project delayed with various condition assessments and surveys being undertaken. A revised project timeline is being developed.
9159	CIP - Wingfield Castle works	4,027	697	424	273	697	0	MIX	Dam board works completion date moved from July 2024 to October 2024, subject to mooring solution for HMS Trincomalee. Emergency works to Wingfield completed and now developing Phase 2 tender.
9161	CIP - NMRN & Museum of Hartlepool	8,500	1,442	20	1,422	1,442	0	MIX	Project still at the development stage, budget rephased in to 2024/25.
7536	CIP - SEMH Free School Access Road	857	806	413	393	806	0	MIX	Rephased budget relates to Street Lighting installation planned for 2024/25.
9130	CIP - Business Park Investment	760	720	411	309	720	0	MIX	Delays resulting from contractor capacity and availability of materials have extended the completion timescale of the scheme.
TBC	CIP - Bowling Club Refurbishment	600	0	0	0	0	0	MIX	Pending Mandate.
TBC	CIP - Brierton Sports Complex	700	0	0	0	0	0	MIX	Pending Mandate.
9165	Towns Fund - Middleton Grange	13,860	8,789	8	8,781	8,789	0	GRANT	Project on hold until wider development plan is agreed
9231	Towns Fund - Waterfront Connectivity	6,200	2,061	275	1,786	2,061	0	GRANT	Delivery capacity impacting scheme timeline. The second phase of works is under development, this now needs to take account of recently released development plans from other land owners in the area.
7715	Towns Fund - Wesley Chapel	1,400	1,312	314	998	1,312	0	GRANT	Scheme is behind schedule due to the arson attack on 7 November 23, but reclamation has been concluded. Construction work is already back underway and current estimate is a 3 - 6 month delay.
9234	Towns Fund - Health and Social Care Academy	1,250	1,164	180	984	1,164	0	GRANT	Contractor appointed and work commenced 8th January. Rephased expenditure reflects latest profile.
9235	Towns Fund - Civil Academy	2,250	1,022	1,022	0	1,022	0	GRANT	Budget of £297k brought forward from 2024/25 to support accelerated spend on scheme.
9247	Levelling Up - Screen Production Village	16,673	8,369	2,284	6,085	8,369	0	GRANT	The budget has been rephased to reflect the extended output milestones agreed with DLUHC. The full year budget has been increased to include an additional £86k rec'd from DLUHC Capacity Fund.
Major Regeneration Schemes		119,224	31,987	8,368	23,619	31,987	0		

Key

RCCO	Revenue Contribution towards Capital	GRANT	Grant Funded
MIX	Combination of Funding Types	CAP REC	Capital Receipt
UCPB	Unsupported Corporate Prudential Borrowing	UDPB	Unsupported Departmental Prudential Borrowing
SCE	Supported Capital Expenditure (Revenue)	CORP	Corporate Resources

CAPITAL MONITORING REPORT PERIOD ENDING March 31st 2024

Project Code	Scheme Title	A Full Budget £'000	B 2023/24 Budget £'000	C 2023/24 Actual as at 31/03/2024 £'000	D Expenditure Rephased into 2024/25 £'000	E (C+D) 2023/24 Actual plus Rephased Expenditure £'000	F (E-B) 2023/24 Variance from Budget £'000	Type of Financing	2023/24 COMMENTS
Adult & Community Based Services									
7212	Capital Grants to Care Homes	46	30	30	0	30	0	MIX	
7218	Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG)	1,673	1,673	1,651	22	1,673	0	GRANT	Adjusted 23/24 budget inclusive of £59k client contributions. £22k grant rephased in to 2024/25
7232	Museums Acquisitions	7	7	7	0	7	0	MIX	Acquisition of art works funded from ringfenced reserve and grant
7522	Stranton Cemetery Flood Alleviation	600	93	76	17	93	0	MIX	
7576	Seascapes - Seaton High & Lowlight	100	90	90	0	90	0	MIX	Scheme complete and budget reduced to outturn cost.
7711	Carlton Adventure Centre	434	434	8	426	434	0	UDPB	Start date to be confirmed.
7716	Seaton Library refurbishment	255	255	82	173	255	0	MIX	Arts Council LIF funding; Budget also includes provision for roof works.
7785	Burn Valley Garden Play Area	29	2	2	0	2	0	MIX	
7811	Summerhill Cycle Hub	514	16	0	16	16	0	MIX	Balance of funding to support further cycling infrastructure improvements.
8108	Centre for Independent Living	50	50	0	50	50	0	UDPB	Funding retained as 'Sinking Fund' to maintain building.
8393	Stranton Cemetery Cremators	255	16	0	0	0	(16)	MIX	Remaining balance reallocated to Stranton Chapel Refurbishment scheme
9212	Relocate Cemetery Office	90	53	45	8	53	0	CAP REC	Fencing works delayed.
8088	Community Hub South - Kitchen Replacement	52	51	43	8	51	0	MIX	
8088	Community Hub Central - Internal Alterations	61	22	0	22	22	0	RCCO	
9213	Library Classroom Refurbishment	1	1	1	0	1	0	RCCO	Additional scheme funded by revenue contribution
8534	Church Street Townscape Heritage	511	490	490	0	490	0	GRANT	
9232	Playground Equipment - Levelling Up Parks Fund	97	76	52	24	76	0	GRANT	Additional grant of £5k rec'd in-year for scheme
9310	Changing Places - Summerhill	62	62	2	60	62	0	MIX	
9311	Changing Places - Community Hub Central	105	105	76	29	105	0	MIX	Additional £5k allocated towards scheme from DFG
Allot	General Allotment Schemes	193	173	24	149	173	0	UDPB	Capital expenditure plan approved by A&CBS Committee 7th September 23.
8700	Waverley Allotments - Adult Education Scheme	52	52	50	2	52	0	GRANT	
8828	Stranton Chapel Refurbishment	828	803	283	536	819	16	MIX	Variance to be funded from balance of Stranton Cemetery Cremators.
Total Adult & Community Based Services		6,015	4,554	3,012	1,542	4,554	0		

Key

RCCO Revenue Contribution towards Capital
 MIX Combination of Funding Types
 UCPB Unsupported Corporate Prudential Borrowing
 SCE Supported Capital Expenditure (Revenue)

GRANT Grant Funded
 CAP REC Capital Receipt
 UDPB Unsupported Departmental Prudential Borrowing
 CORP Corporate Resources

CAPITAL MONITORING REPORT PERIOD ENDING March 31st 2024

Project Code	Scheme Title	A	B	C	D	E	F	Type of Financing	2023/24 COMMENTS
		Full Budget	2023/24 Budget	2023/24 Actual as at 31/03/24	Expenditure Rephased into 2024/25	(C+D) 2023/24 Actual plus Rephased Expenditure	(E-B) 2023/24 Variance from Budget		
		£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000		
Children's and Joint Commissioning Services									
7384	Devolved Schools Capital	293	193	97	96	193	0	GRANT	Includes £94k 23/24 allocation.
9238	Energy Efficiency Capital Funding	195	129	64	65	129	0	GRANT	£59k of 23/24 allocation transferred to energy efficiency activity on other live schemes
7355	CECA IT Infrastructure and Technology	42	24	0	24	24	0	GRANT	
7355	CECA TVCA Grant Unallocated	31	31	0	31	31	0	GRANT	
7142	Schools General - Fire Safety Modifications (Conditions)	53	53	0	53	53	0	GRANT	Schemes to be identified.
7142	Schools General - Fire Safety Modifications (Conditions) 23/24	418	418	0	418	418	0	GRANT	Schemes to be identified.
7142	Kingsley - Fire Safety Modifications	246	178	3	175	178	0	GRANT	Scheme on hold.
7142	Throston - Fire Safety Modifications	257	131	106	25	131	0	GRANT	Scheme on-going
7474	High Tunstall 3G Pitch	23	1	0	1	1	0	UDPB	
7478	High Tunstall Grass Pitch	15	15	0	15	15	0	UDPB	
9097	Brierton Campus Windows	1	1	1	0	1	0	RCCO	Scheme works complete.
7521	Two Year Old FNE Capacity Funding	23	23	0	23	23	0	GRANT	
7770	St Helens Primary School Main Entrance Access	50	41	39	2	41	0	GRANT	Scheme on-going
7786	St Helens Primary School Storm Damage to Conservatory	4	4	4	0	4	0	RCCO	
9148	Springwell Special School Increase Capacity	424	76	3	73	76	0	GRANT	Scheme on-going
7661	Catcote Secondary Special School Alternative Provision 6th Form	323	287	287	0	287	0	GRANT	Scheme works complete.
9295	Clavering Primary School Refurbish Boys WC	47	47	46	0	46	(1)	GRANT	Scheme complete. Underspend returned to Unallocated Conditional Funding
9325	Clavering Primary School Roofing Works	13	13	2	9	11	(2)	GRANT	Scheme complete. Underspend returned to Unallocated Conditional Funding
9295	Fens Primary School Refurbish Boys WC	29	29	29	0	29	0	GRANT	Scheme works complete.
9311	Fens Primary School Rewire Ph4	99	99	99	0	99	0	GRANT	Scheme works complete.
9313	Golden Flatts Primary School Demolish Caretakers Bungalow	32	32	13	19	32	0	GRANT	Scheme to be completed 24/25
9315	Horizons School Replace Roof Lights	5	5	4	0	4	(1)	GRANT	Scheme complete. Underspend returned to Unallocated Conditional Funding
9314	Horizons School Rewire	76	76	71	0	71	(5)	GRANT	Scheme complete. Underspend returned to Unallocated Conditional Funding
9295	Kingsley Primary School Refurbish Boys WC	26	26	26	0	26	0	GRANT	Scheme works complete.
9292	Kingsley Primary School Lighting Replacement	32	32	30	0	30	(2)	GRANT	Scheme complete. Underspend returned to Unallocated Conditional Funding
7725	Kingsley Primary School Heating, DHW Boiler Plant Renewal	115	115	124	0	124	9	GRANT	Scheme complete. Overspend from Unallocated Conditional Funding.
9313	Lynnfield Primary School Roofing Works	50	50	27	23	50	0	GRANT	Scheme on-going
9310	Lynnfield Primary School Refurbish Boundary Wall	27	27	25	0	25	(2)	GRANT	Scheme complete. Underspend returned to Unallocated Conditional Funding
9315	Lynnfield Primary School Heating Renewal	44	44	20	24	44	0	GRANT	Scheme on-going
7177	Rift House Primary School Heating, DHW Boiler Plant Renewal	94	94	90	0	90	(4)	GRANT	Scheme complete. Underspend returned to Unallocated Conditional Funding
9293	Rossmere Primary School Fire Doors	35	35	35	0	35	0	GRANT	Scheme works complete.
9314	Springwell Special School Oven and Hob Induction	13	13	12	0	12	(1)	GRANT	Scheme complete. Underspend returned to Unallocated Conditional Funding
9312	Throston Primary School Heating, Pipework, radiators and fan replacement	52	52	42	10	52	0	GRANT	Scheme on-going
NEW	Throston Primary School Heat Source	25	25	0	25	25	0	GRANT	Scheme in design stage.
7724	Throston Primary School Emergency Boiler Replacement	24	24	23	0	23	(1)	GRANT	Emergency works, used contingency unallocated funding. Underspend returned to Unallocated Conditional Funding
9324	Throston Primary School Emergency Boiler Replacement 2	21	21	21	0	21	0	GRANT	Emergency works, used contingency unallocated funding.
9243	Rossmere Youth Centre Refurbishment	1,270	121	54	67	121	0	GRANT	Awaiting outcome of tender process.
7727	Throston Youth Project Centre Refurbishment	96	5	5	0	5	0	GRANT	Scheme in design stage.
9244	High Tunstall School MLD ARP	968	968	966	0	966	(2)	GRANT	Scheme complete. Underspend returned to Unallocated Special Provision
7399	High Tunstall School Schools Led Premises Work	222	222	222	0	222	0	RCCO	Capital Schemes funded by schools revenue funding brought in to capital programme
7399	Rift House School Schools Led Premises Work	61	61	61	0	61	0	RCCO	Capital Schemes funded by schools revenue funding brought in to capital programme
9009	Schools ICT	156	156	156	0	156	0	RCCO	Capital Schemes funded by schools revenue funding brought in to capital programme
7732	PRU Relocation	142	142	0	142	142	0	GRANT	PRU capacity - feasibility and planning
9312	Clavering Primary School - Forest School	34	34	34	0	34	0	RCCO	Capital Schemes funded by schools revenue funding brought in to capital programme
9324	Golden Flatts Primary School RAAC Remedial Works	18	18	18	0	18	0	GRANT	Capital Schemes funded by DFE grant funding brought in to capital programme
9330	High Tunstall Forest School	72	72	72	0	72	0	RCCO	Capital Schemes funded by schools revenue funding brought in to capital programme
7731	Early Years Capital Funding	121	121	0	121	121	0	GRANT	Early years capacity grant funding
9004	Schools General - Conditions unallocated	57	57	0	63	63	6	GRANT	Unallocated Funding to be used for 24/25 Condition schemes.
9004	Schools General - Contingency	46	46	0	49	49	3	GRANT	Unallocated Funding to be used for 24/25 Condition schemes.
9004	Schools General - Suitability Unallocated (SEMH)	743	743	0	743	743	0	RCCO	Use of funding is being considered in the High Needs Block review.
9004	Schools General - Special Provision	1,183	1,183	0	1,186	1,186	3	GRANT	Additional 23/24 in-year allocation of £665k added to budget available
9004	Schools General - Basic Need	899	899	0	899	899	0	GRANT	
7149	New Children's Homes	269	128	128	0	128	0	UPDB	Additional £53k revenue contribution to fund final scheme return
857397149	The 'STAR' Centre	700	700	257	443	700	0	UPDB	Children's Home investment approved by Council December 2023.
8072	Integrated Children's Services Case Management Improvement	37	37	0	37	37	0	MIX	
7768	Supporting Treatment and Recovery Together (START) – Hartlepool's Substance Misuse Service	3,027	3,027	0	3,027	3,027	0	UPDB	
9246	Children's Centre Family Hub	75	75	4	71	75	0	GRANT	2022/23 and 2023/24 allocation of Capital expenditure to support the development of Family Hubs
Total Children's and Joint Commissioning Services		13,453	11,279	3,320	7,959	11,279	0		

Key			
RCCO	Revenue Contribution towards Capital	GRANT	Grant Funded
MIX	Combination of Funding Types	CAP REC	Capital Receipt
UCPB	Unsupported Corporate Prudential Borrowing	UDPB	Unsupported Departmental Prudential Borrowing
SCE	Supported Capital Expenditure (Revenue)	CORP	Corporate Resources

CAPITAL MONITORING REPORT PERIOD ENDING December 31st 2024

Project Code	Scheme Title	A Full Budget £'000	B 2023/24 Budget £'000	C 2023/24 Actual as at 31/03/2024 £'000	D Expenditure Rephased into 2024/25 £'000	E (C+D) 2023/24 Actual Plus Rephased Expenditure £'000	F (E-B) 2023/24 Variance from Budget £'000	Type of Financing	2023/24 COMMENTS
Finance & Policy Committee									
8306	Schools - Kitchen Refurbishment	249	249	22	227	249	0	RCCO	Funds earmarked for replacement of equipment. £12k budget released to revenue in line with schools catering funding strategy.
Finance & Policy Committee Sub Total		249	249	22	227	249	0		
Regeneration Committee									
S106	Developers Contribution Fund	5,753	5,753	71	5,682	5,753	0	GRANT	Budgets adjusted for Developer contributions received and funding utilised.
Regeneration Committee Sub Total		5,753	5,753	71	5,682	5,753	0	GRANT	
7222	Sustainable Warmth LAD3	2,202	1,264	1,264	0	1,264	0	GRANT	Funding is for works on low income households heated by mains gas.
7272	Wheelee Bin Purchase	77	77	77	0	77	0	MIX	Actual funding required less than budget allocation therefore borrowing will be reduced accordingly (budget reduced by £13k)
7272	Food Waste Collection Capital Transitional Grant	807	807	0	807	807	0	GRANT	New grant provided by government in-year
7344	NIP - Brougham (was Hindpool Close) Play Area	77	74	2	72	74	0	UDPB	Contractor appointed for 1st phase but delay on start due to ground conditions.
7437	NIP - Sinking Fund	62	62	0	62	62	0	UDPB	Funds earmarked for replacement of play equipment.
7440	NIP - Central Park	120	91	85	6	91	0	MIX	S106 Funded
7553	Seaton Toilets	470	365	232	133	365	0	MIX	Budget increase in-year by £10k funded from RCCO
7561	Green Homes Grant - LAD2	663	22	19	3	22	0	GRANT	Retention.
7878	Community Safety CCTV Upgrade	79	9	9	0	9	0	UDPB	
8996	NIP - Improvements to Parks	276	36	11	25	36	0	MIX	Overall budget reduced to reflects transfer of Thirteen remaining contributions to Brougham Close Play Area scheme above Q2
9147	NIP - CCTV in parks	34	25	7	18	25	0	GRANT	
9170	Sustainable Warmth HUG1	223	117	117	0	117	0	GRANT	
9233	SEASCAPES - Coast to Clavering route	0	0	0	0	0	0	GRANT	Scheme complete and managed through revenue (£20k). Minor underspend of £2k on grant.
NEW	Waste Transfer Station	200	200	0	200	200	0	GRANT	Funding from redemption of SITA shares transferred to capital to support future capital scheme.
NEW	Grounds Commuted sum	22	22	0	22	22	0	GRANT	
7466	DSO Vehicle Purchase	11,135	6,856	1,058	5,798	6,856	0	UDPB	The expenditure rephased figure is consistent with previous forecasts following a recent review and estimate of likely delivery dates. £24k budget increase in relation to insurance income.
7577	Hartlepool North NDIP Study	50	50	0	50	50	0	UDPB	Scheme pending announcement of additional funding.
7900	EDM Hartlepool Marina - North Pier	479	475	0	475	475	0	GRANT	Awaiting outcome of Environment Agency report. Additional funding rec'd.
7902	EDM Hartlepool Drainage Schemes	36	30	0	30	30	0	MIX	
8444	EDM Town Wall Strengthening	46	21	0	21	21	0	MIX	
8578	EDM Management Unit Study	28	28	0	28	28	0	GRANT	Potential for future spend if match funding identified for larger scheme.
LTP	Local Transport Plan (LTP) Schemes	4,340	4,340	2,971	1,369	4,340	0	GRANT	Various Highways & Traffic schemes. Additional funding received in Quarter 4
NEW	Energy from Waste Development	49	49	49	0	49	0	UCPB	Energy from Waste preparatory tasks 23/24
NEW	Safer Streets	146	146	146	0	146	0	GRANT	2023/24 Safer Streets grant utilisation (rec'd in-year)
Neighbourhoods Committee Sub Total		21,621	15,166	6,047	9,119	15,166	0		
Development, Neighbourhood & Regulatory Services Total		27,623	21,168	6,140	15,028	21,168	0		

Key
RCCO Revenue Contribution towards Capital
MIX Combination of Funding Types
UCPB Unsupported Corporate Prudential Borrowing
SCE Supported Capital Expenditure (Revenue)

GRANT Grant Funded
CAP REC Capital Receipt
UDPB Unsupported Departmental Prudential Borrowing
CORP Corporate Resources

CORPORATE

4.1 APPENDIX L

CAPITAL MONITORING REPORT PERIOD ENDING March 31st 2024

Project Code	Scheme Title	A Full Budget £'000	B 2023/24 Budget £'000	C 2023/24 Actual as at 31/03/24 £'000	E Expenditure Rephased into Future Years £'000	F (C+D+E) Total Expenditure £'000	G (F-B) Variance from Budget £'000	Type of Financing	2023/24 COMMENTS
7036	Uncommitted Corporate Capital Fund	222	222	0	222	222	0	MIX	
		210	210	0	210	210	0	RCCO	Budget reduced by £28k to fund revenue related maintenance expenditure. £50k allocated to Crematorium rewire scheme
7041	Corporate Capital Pot								
7065	Fire Risk Assessments	100	85	0	85	85	0	MIX	
7200	Civic Centre Capital Project	75	62	0	62	62	0	UDPB	
8970	Historic Quay Dilapidation Work	97	97	0	97	97	0	RCCO	Budget relates to the lease to NMRM.
7771	Borough Hall - Lighting Replacement	60	45	26	19	45	0	RCCO	Scheme on-hold
7730	Art Gallery - Roof Replacement	72	72	33	39	72	0	RCCO	Scheme on-going
NEW	Art Gallery - Drainage Replacement	33	33	0	33	33	0	RCCO	Scheme on-going
7728	Exmoor Grove - Replace external windows and doors	50	50	2	48	50	0	RCCO	Scheme slipped to 24/25 owing to weather conditions.
9329	Crematorium - Rewire	50	50	2	48	50	0	RCCO	Additional scheme funded from Corporate Capital Pot
NEW	Printer Unit - Equipment	65	65	0	65	65	0	MIX	Additional scheme for replacement printers for Print Unit
		25	25	25	0	25	0	RCCO	Additional scheme - funded by IT contract provider (NEC) but assets utilised by HBC
7623	IT Provider (NEC) Equipment								
7623	IT Provider (NEC) Equipment 23/24	210	210	210	0	210	0	MIX	Additional scheme - funded by IT contract provider (NEC) but assets utilised by HBC
	Corporate Total	1,269	1,226	298	928	1,226	0		

Key

RCCO Revenue Contribution towards Capital
MIX Combination of Funding Types
UCPB Unsupported Corporate Prudential Borrowing
SCE Supported Capital Expenditure (Revenue)

GRANT Grant Funded
CAP REC Capital Receipt
UDPB Unsupported Departmental Prudential Borrowing
CORP Corporate Resources

RESERVES FORECASTS (EXCLUDING SCHOOL BALANCES, HRA AND UNUSABLE RESERVES)

4.1 APPENDIX M

	Forecast Use of Reserves							
	Balance as at 31st March 2023	2023/24 Actual	Balance as at 31st March 2024	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	Forecast Balance as at 31st March 2028
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Revenue Reserve	4,417	1,084	5,501	0	0	0	0	5,501
Budget Support Fund (BSF) 24/25-26/27	10,549	(2,602)	7,947	(3,166)	0	0	0	4,781
BSF - Transformation Costs	0	2,000	2,000	(1,000)	(500)	(500)	0	0
BSF - Invest to Save	0	1,000	1,000	(500)	(500)	0	0	0
Revenue Grants Unapplied	6,852	(552)	6,300	(3,385)	(1,693)	(721)	(501)	0
Business Rates Risk Reserve	3,000	250	3,250	0	0	0	0	3,250
Insurance Fund	2,406	559	2,965	(50)	(50)	(50)	(50)	2,765
Children in our Care Reserve	751	479	1,230	(653)	(577)	0	0	0
Treasury Management Income	0	1,150	1,150	(650)	(500)	0	0	0
Asset Management Reserve	0	1,000	1,000	(500)	(500)	0	0	0
Earmarked Revenue Reserves under £1m	12,730	(5,319)	7,411	(3,167)	(1,381)	(719)	(194)	1,950
Revenue Reserves Total	40,705	(951)	39,754	(13,071)	(5,701)	(1,990)	(745)	18,247
Earmarked Capital Reserves	9,635	(29)	9,606	(3,952)	(192)	0	0	5,462
Capital Grants Unapplied	8	16,303	16,311	(13,798)	(2,513)	0	0	0
TOTAL	50,348	15,323	65,671	(30,821)	(8,406)	(1,990)	(745)	23,709

<h1 style="margin: 0;">FINANCE AND POLICY COMMITTEE</h1> <h2 style="margin: 0;">25 June 2024</h2>



Subject: MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY (MTFS)
2025/26 TO 2027/28

Report of: Director of Finance, IT and Digital

Decision Type: Budget and Policy Framework

1. COUNCIL PLAN PRIORITY

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

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

2.1 The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the Council’s medium term financial planning position and enable Members to approve the timetable for the 2025/26 budget.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 The current MTFS position was presented to Finance and Policy Committee and the 2024/25 budget was approved by Council in February 2024, as part of the annual budget setting process. The MTFS does not stand still and continuously evolves based on latest information,

intelligence and changing circumstances, including the previous financial year's outturn budget position.

- 3.2 The updated MTFS covers the three financial years 2025/26 to 2027/28. However, in consideration of the position over this period, it is important to recognise that the Council needs to be financially sustainable beyond this 3 year period. Decisions taken should reflect the position beyond the medium term and in to the longer term. Based on current information, there is no indication that the overall pressures facing the Council will reduce. Whilst we continue to make the case for additional funding and await the long delayed fair funding review, we cannot say with any certainty that funding will increase in the short to medium term. Fundamentally, the financial position is challenging and is likely to remain so.
- 3.3 The historical context to the financial challenges facing the Council is included elsewhere on today's agenda as part of the 'Financial Position Statement' report. This includes details of the significant real terms government funding reductions suffered by the Council since 2010.

4. BUDGET PRESSURES

- 4.1 The Council must plan for a range of spending pressures and commitments in setting its budget over the MTFS period. At this stage it is proposed to include provision in the budget planning, for items shown in the table below, with commentary provided in the subsequent paragraphs.

	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m	2027/28 £m	Total £m
Spending Pressures				
Pay and Price Inflation	4.998	3.569	3.083	11.650
Childrens Social Care	0.500	0.510	0.520	1.530
Waste Disposal	1.500	0.530	0.041	2.071
Capital Financing	0.250	0.250	0.250	0.750
Total Spending Pressures	7.248	4.859	3.894	16.001

Pay and Price - Pay Award Inflation

- 4.2 A national pay award for 2024/25 is yet to be agreed. A pay claim for 2024/25 was issued at the end of February 2024 by the Trade Union side of the National Joint Council (NJC). The claim was for an increase of at least £3,000 or 10% (whichever is the greater) on all spinal column points. The National Employers side of the NJC issued their response on the 16th May 2024, making an offer of a £1,290 increase to all spinal points from 2-43 and an increase of 2.5% for those grades above point 43. This was noted as having an average impact of a 4.03% increase on the national pay bill.

- 4.3 Budget provision equating to £1,925 for all spinal column points was included within the Council's 2024/25 budget, which was in line with pay awards agreed for 2022/23 and 2023/24. At present the employers offer would be able to be met from our 2024/25 provision, whereas the trade unions requested increase would cause an additional budget pressure in 2024/25 and future years. The position will be monitored closely over the coming months, during which period Trade Union member ballots are likely to take place.
- 4.4 Given the reducing inflationary levels in the economy, the MTFS has a pay award assumption for 2025/26 of 3% and then 2% in subsequent years. The inflation forecasts and associated pay assumptions in relation to these financial years, will also be kept under review throughout the budget setting process.

Pay and Price - General Price Inflation

- 4.5 The Consumer Price Index (CPI) measure of inflation fell to 2.3% in April 24 from 3.2% in March 24. The Bank of England's Monetary Policy Committee May 2024 report, forecast that CPI inflation is expected to return to the 2% target in the near term, but to increase slightly in the second half of this year, to around 2½%, owing to the unwinding of energy-related base effects. There continues to be risks to the near-term inflation outlook from geopolitical factors, although developments in the Middle East have had a limited impact on prices so far.
- 4.6 Given the general lower inflationary environment, the current provision for contract inflation at 2% over the MTFS period remains reasonable. Bespoke inflation is included for specific contracts where differing inflation indices are used and provision for identified minor pressures has also been included.

Pay and Price – Adult Social Care Contracts

- 4.7 The net budget for packages of care is approximately £30m and annual increases to care home fees and home care rates are determined using an established formula. The annual inflation uplift is based on a range of factors and recent increases have been driven predominantly by increases in the National Living Wage (NLW) and the level of non-pay inflation.
- 4.8 The NLW currently stands at £11.44 an hour (April 2024) and the latest Low Pay Commission (LPC) projections for 2025/26 set out an increase to £11.89 (3.9%) from April 2025 (with a range of £11.61 and £12.18). The LPC projection is based on the Government's remit to the LPC for 2024, which asks them to recommend a rate which keeps the NLW at two-thirds of median pay.
- 4.9 A prudent, but reasonable assessment of fee uplifts has been included within the MTFS, this is in excess of prior planning assumptions. This

remains an area of risk until uplifts are agreed based on confirmed data. Effectively every 1% increase or decrease in fees has a c£0.300m impact on the budget position.

Pay and Price - Income

- 4.10 For budget planning purposes at this stage in the process, it is assumed that all discretionary fees and charges will increase in line with the inflation assumptions used for general contract inflation. Actual increases to fees and charges will be informed by prevailing CPI rates later in the financial year, coupled with the need to maximise income generation.

Energy Inflation

- 4.11 The unprecedented increase in energy prices experienced over recent years has had a significant impact on residents, businesses and public bodies alike. Responding to this challenge, the Council progressed a twofold strategy of increasing the revenue budget for anticipated long term prices coupled with use of an energy reserve for the shorter term spike. This approach has served the Council well during 2022/23 and 2023/24.
- 4.12 The Council purchases its energy via the regional North East Purchasing Organisation (NEPO), with a forward purchasing strategy in place where it is deemed prudent. At present, approximately half of the energy requirement for 2024/25 has been purchased.
- 4.13 At this stage it is too early to firm up the position in relation to the MTFS period, not least as only 10% of 2025/26 energy has been purchased. Whilst there is the potential for unit cost reductions in 2025/26, concerns also remain that prices could increase linked to international conflicts. To that end, at this stage it is prudent to apply normal inflation increases to the energy budget, with the position monitored and updated further in future budget reports. The energy reserve will continue to be held as the buffer for 2024/25 and future years should provision allow.

Children's Social Care

- 4.14 The recent Ofsted inspection rating of 'Outstanding' provided confirmation that the Children's Social Care service is performing at a high level. Notwithstanding this, the budget pressures in this area continue to be of significant concern for our Council, and many across the region and country. Many areas of expenditure relating to children in our care are experiencing significant and on-going inflationary pressures, these include; external placements, independent foster agency (IFA) placements and allowance payments.
- 4.15 The costs of children in our care within external placements has increased over the past few years and continues to grow. More fundamentally from a financial perspective, the increasing complexity of children's needs and finite capacity in the residential market is leading to ever increasing prices

being charged for accommodation. The average weekly cost of a placement has increased by over 40% over the last three years. The average cost of a new external placement since January 2024 has been £6,320 per week, with the highest current external placement cost being £13,000 per week.

- 4.16 The Council continues to try and mitigate pressures through; promotion of in-house fostering including as part of a large scale regional recruitment initiative, recently opening new Local Authority run homes within Hartlepool and also working in partnership with local providers to secure local, lower cost placements. In addition, increased staffing resource, funded by invest to save reserves, is being provided during 2024/25, through the creation of an additional team to provide further support to families who are at risk of having children enter the care system.
- 4.17 Despite this approach and additional resource of £4.5m being added to the budget in 2024/25, the budget is already experiencing significant pressure in the current financial year. At this stage in the budget planning process an additional provision of £1.5m, phased over the three year period, has been included within the MTFS. This will be revisited as the year progresses.

Waste Disposal

- 4.18 Hartlepool has entered into a partnership with six other Local Authorities in the region to procure a new Energy from Waste facility. The procurement process is on-going, with an anticipated go-live date during 2029. The Council has benefitted from very competitive gate fees with the current incumbent, however, these fees are forecast to step up significantly for the 2025/26 year as part of the contract extension arrangement.
- 4.19 The financial due diligence work continues in relation to the above. The forecast budget impact of £2m remains within the MTFS period, and the latest understanding of the phasing is incorporated within the MTFS.

Capital Financing

- 4.20 A recurring annual saving of £2m has previously been taken over a 12 year period (2017/18 to 2028/29) following a change to the Council's Minimum Revenue Provision policy. This saving unwinds to £1m, with a reduction in 2029/30 of £0.6m and a further £0.4m in 2030/31. To avoid these cliff edge impacts on the MTFS, a capital financing pressure of £0.150m per annum was previously introduced in the MTFS in recognition of a future reduction in Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) savings. This pressure was increased to £0.250m to reflect the approved borrowing requirement for the Highlight leisure facility.

5. GOVERNMENT FUNDING

- 5.1 The Local Government Finance Settlement 2024/25 continued the trend of one-year settlements for councils, which continues to significantly hamper financial planning and sustainability. It provided Hartlepool with a 7.2% increase in Spending Power, although this percentage increase was predicated on full use of Council Tax and ASC flexibility, which wasn't enacted locally. Given the one-year settlement for 2024/25, there is no indication of individual council level resource allocations for 2025/26 or beyond. This uncertainty and risk is compounded as the government's future years departmental expenditure limits are of concern, with limited or potentially no inflationary growth for non-protected areas like local government. Given the absence of detail and the pending national election, the previous MTFs assumptions for government grant funding are unchanged at this stage with a basic inflationary uplift applied to those grants normally subject to some form of inflation. Government announcements and election impacts will be monitored closely over the budget setting period.
- 5.2 In addition and disappointedly the government continues to stall on delivering the long awaited fair funding review and a reset of the business rates retention system. Given the current political uncertainty and the time frames required for consultation on such a review, it is now expected that changes will not take place until 2026/27 at the earliest, should the newly formed government wish to deliver such change. This review was first promised in 2016 and is envisaged to create a fairer formula for the allocation of government funding.
- 5.3 A key safeguard in the Business Rate system is that any accumulated growth in the system should have been redistributed into a new baseline funding position for each Council. Councils that are significantly above the current baseline will lose funding to be redistributed to those councils closer to the baseline or below the baseline. Hartlepool is one of a small number of Councils below our baseline position, in part due to the reduced valuation of the Nuclear Power Station since the business rates system was introduced.
- 5.4 Until a baseline reset is undertaken accumulated growth and therefore funding resides with those authorities generating the growth rather than it being redistributed to Councils based on need, such as ours.
- 5.5 The approach from the post-election government to a Fair Funding Review and the Business Rates baseline reset will be important. Whilst there is no certainty, the Council has a reasonable expectation of a net increase in funding from these exercises.

Revenue Support Grant (RSG)

- 5.6 Over recent years this grant has increased in line with the preceding September's CPI. The assumed MTFs increase of 2% is based on the

Bank of England target inflation level. There remains a risk that the national quantum of funding available results in a lower or no increase.

Social Care Funding

- 5.7 The final local government settlement 2024/25 provided for additional social care funding. It is assumed that all ring fenced Social Care grants which have been introduced and increased over recent years to support care pressures, will continue in to the medium term.
- 5.8 Social Care Grant – this grant can be used to support both children’s and adult social care. The MTFs assumes no increases to this grant level for 2025/26 and beyond.
- 5.9 ASC Market Sustainability & Improvement Grant – is intended to enable Councils to make improvements in adult social care, particularly to address discharge delays, social care waiting times, increasing fee rates and workforce pressures. This is a ring-fenced grant for adult social care, requiring a number of conditions to be met, and is retained by the Adult & Community Based Services department to support meeting the objectives of the grant.
- 5.10 ASC Discharge Fund – is provided to Councils to “ensure those people who need to draw on social care when they are discharged from hospital can leave as soon as possible, freeing up hospital beds for those who most need them”. This funding has to be pooled into the Better Care Fund.
- 5.11 The improved Better Care Fund has no assumed increase applied in the MTFs budget model.

Public Health Funding

- 5.12 The Council received its 2024/25 allocation for the Public Health grant on the 9th February 2024. The allocation was in line with the previously noticed estimate of £9.794m and has been allocated to Public Health priorities. The MTFs assumes an increase of 2% per annum for 2025/26 and future years.

New Homes Bonus (NHB)

- 5.13 This grant was extended for a further year as part of the 2024/25 Settlement, but its future remains uncertain. Due to housing growth and bringing empty properties back in to use in Hartlepool, an increased grant for 2024/25 was confirmed. The allocation increased from £0.447m in 2023/24 to £1.224m in 2024/25. Due to the sporadic nature and uncertainty of this grant, the grant assumed from 2025/26 has reverted to £0.447m within the MTFs. The position will be kept under review, although based on recent years uncertainty with this grant, a full understanding of the position is unlikely to be known until the provision local government finance settlement is published at the end of the year, as such it remains a risk.

Services Grant

- 5.14 This was a new grant introduced by government in 2022/23, with £822m nationally and the distribution formula included an element for deprivation which was favourable for Hartlepool. For 2023/24 the grant was reduced to £464m. For 2024/25 the grant has been significantly reduced further to £77m, to fund increases elsewhere in the overall settlement.
- 5.15 For the Council the grant reduced from £1.964m in 2022/23 to £1.107m in 2023/24, and has further reduced to £0.199m for 2024/25. The MTFS currently assumes that the grant will remain at the 2024/25 level, although this remains a risk, especially given prior year reductions.

Business Rates Top Up Grant

- 5.16 The Business Rates multiplier and Top Up grants have historically increased in line with September CPI inflation. At this stage it is assumed the same approach will be adopted and as such the Top Up Grant has been increased by the government's 2% target inflation level.

6. LOCAL FUNDING

Business Rates

- 6.1 Under the current Business Rates funding regime, the Council retains locally 49% of Business Rate income. Inherent in the system is an annual uplift usually based on September CPI and this has been factored into the position at an assumed 2%. All other assumptions impacting Business Rates have remained unchanged i.e. provision for Appeals, uncollectable debt and discretionary reliefs will remain broadly consistent.
- 6.2 There remains a risk that the Council will enter a safety net position should we experience significant appeals or reductions to our business rates base. In simple terms this comes about if the collectable business rates falls below 92.5% of the baseline. Funding will be provided by government to support the Council in such a scenario, albeit there will be an increased cost of circa £1.1m a year until any reset is enacted. A reserve is held to mitigate this possibility.
- 6.3 Generally, the impact of inflationary cost pressures and reduced consumer demand may impact on the collectability of business rates. The position will be kept under review and adjusted should the need arise.

Council Tax

- 6.4 The Council has a track record of Council Tax base growth in recent years. Whilst new build continues to be positive, the position continues to be under pressure from exemptions and discounts, including the Single Person Discount (SPD). Hartlepool is not unique in facing these pressures. Regarding SPD, the Council has established a small team to

focus on potential SPD fraud to support efforts to reduce the pressure SPD has on our base position.

- 6.5 Whilst housing growth continues to look positive, there remains a risk that the wider economic environment may have a detrimental impact on growth as well as collectability of Council Tax should household incomes continue to be under strain. At this stage growth in the base of 438 is allowed for in the budget model for 2025/26. This reflects the increases anticipated following “holiday home” premiums to be introduced in 2025/26 as well as our efforts to reduce SPD fraud. The increases prudently revert to 200 per year from 2026/27 onwards.
- 6.6 There are currently no indications from Government regarding Council Tax and ASC referendum limits from 2025/26, although the increase limit has totaled 5% in recent years. Council Tax decisions will be made later in the budget process, therefore no assumption of an increase is factored in to the MTFS at this stage for 2025/26 and future years.

7. RESERVES

- 7.1 The Council holds reserves for a variety of purposes, including those allocated for known commitments and risks, including capital schemes, the MTFS budget position, our insurance fund and business rates appeals risks. The reserve position has been volatile in recent years given the significant inflationary and demand pressures experienced. The only unallocated reserve is our general fund reserve, which serves as a reserve of last resort.
- 7.2 Reserves have fallen over the 2023/24 financial year, albeit by less than forecast. To a certain extent this reflects timing of spend, but also our in-year spend control actions, in addition to proactive Treasury Management that enabled the Council to take advantage of positive investment rates. Details of reserves held can be found within the draft Statement of Accounts and at **Appendix B**.
- 7.3 The use of one-off reserves to balance the on-going revenue budget position is not a financially sustainable basis to set our budget. However, the volatility of local government finances over recent years has necessitated we do so, but in a planned and carefully managed way. A Budget Support Fund is available to smooth the budget deficits where possible, as well as to meet one-off costs associated with generating on-going efficiencies.
- 7.4 For the 2024/25 budget setting £3.166m of the Budget Support Fund was used to support the overall budget position. The one-off nature of reserves means that the budget position is detrimentally hit in subsequent years as their use unwinds.
- 7.5 The Council’s reserves are reviewed on a regular basis in light of changing priorities and emerging pressures. The 2023/24 Outturn report

elsewhere on today's agenda details the most recent reserves review and forecast movements in future years.

8. STRATEGY FOR BALANCING THE BUDGET POSITION

- 8.1 Based on the position outlined in sections 3 to 7 above, the consolidated budget position to be addressed over the 3 year MTFS period is shown below. The gap to be addressed for 2025/26 is currently forecast to be £9.985m, with a three year gap to 2027/28 of £15.658. As Council Tax decisions will be made later in the budget setting process the position does not currently take any increase for 2025/26 or future years in to account. For every 1% increase in Council Tax, the Council receives circa £0.500m of additional income.
- 8.2 The position presented has both uncertainty and risk given the current economic and political uncertainty, but also the medium term duration. **Appendix A** provides greater detail of the main risks and associated sensitivities impacting on the position.

	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m	2027/28 £m	Total £m
Spending Pressures				
Pay and Price Inflation	4.998	3.569	3.083	11.650
Childrens Social Care	0.500	0.510	0.520	1.530
Waste Disposal	1.500	0.530	0.041	2.071
Capital Financing	0.250	0.250	0.250	0.750
Total Spending Pressures	7.248	4.859	3.894	16.001
Government Grant Changes	0.131	(0.658)	(0.671)	(1.197)
Gap Before Local Funding	7.379	4.202	3.223	14.804
Business Rates	(0.465)	(0.474)	(0.484)	(1.423)
Council Tax - Base Increase	(0.869)	(0.397)	(0.397)	(1.663)
Collection Fund (Surplus)/Deficit	0.124	0.000	0.000	0.124
Gap Before Current Use of Reserves	6.169	3.330	2.343	11.842
Temporary Use of Budget Support Fund (reversal)	3.166	0.000	0.000	3.166
Temporary Use of Investment Income (reversal)	0.650	0.000	0.000	0.650
Bottom Line Gap to be Addressed (before Council Tax increases and Savings)	9.985	3.330	2.343	15.658
Cumulative Gap (before Council Tax increases and Savings)	9.985	13.315	15.658	

- 8.3 As noted in section 5 of the report, the required financial planning is taking place in likely the most uncertain government funding environment experienced in recent times. This uncertainty being driven by the pending UK election, and the outcome of that on future local government finance settlement resource limits and their distribution.
- 8.4 Where possible, a strategic and transformational approach to financial planning will be adopted, repositioning the Council within the resources available. Alongside this, given the size of the budget gap for 2025/26

there will inevitably need to be savings enacted more quickly which may mean the significant reduction or full cessation of some front line services delivered by the Council.

- 8.5 The Council's Transformation Plan elsewhere on today's agenda outlines the approach and principles the Council will adopt to achieve the Target Operating Model for the council.
- 8.6 The Council will continue to work on developing savings plans, which will be reported to future meetings. This will include seeking to accelerate "back-office" / no impact savings to support the in-year budget position, invest in transformation and protect reserves.

Use of Reserves

- 8.7 As previously set out, the use of one-off reserves to balance the on-going revenue budget position is not a sustainable approach to setting the budget. Whilst it shunts some of the budget gap back a year, it presents a danger that the Council simply utilises one-off money on delaying decisions. In addition, this approach reduces the scope for the Council to invest and innovate in order to generate recurring savings. However, the budget position generally, significant pressures in children's social care and future uncertainty on government funding may continue to necessitate use of some reserves where possible over the period.
- 8.8 The aim of setting the Council's budget is that it should be sustainable over the medium term period, with recurring spend funded by recurring income. Decisions on use of reserves should be made consistent with that aim. As such it is essential that any use of reserves should be done on a diminishing basis.
- 8.9 The Council holds a Budget Support Fund (BSF) to help to smooth the budget position over the MTFS period as well as to meet any one off costs associated with budget reductions e.g. redundancies. The current position of the BSF is set out in the table below. The position reflects the need to use £3.166m to balance the 2024/25 budget position as agreed as part of the annual budget setting process. After taking account of the commitment for 2024/25, a BSF balance of £4.781m is forecast to remain to support future years.

	BSF £m
Balance as at 31 March 2024	7.947
Less	
Use of reserve to support 2024/25 budget	(3.166)
Use of reserve to support 2025/26 – 2027/28 budget	TBC
Forecast uncommitted balance over the period	4.781

9. BUDGET TIMETABLE

- 9.1 The following table details the key tasks and indicative reporting timescales. The timetable may need to be amended in response to the outcome of the planned general election and any related impact on funding announcements for local government.

Timescale / Committee	Task / Report
Finance and Policy Committee – June	MTFS update and commencement of 2025/26 budget process
Finance and Policy Committee - November	<p>MTFS Update report including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updated position based on latest intelligence and inflation rate • Consideration of savings proposals • Review of reserves <p>Set Council Tax Base 2025/26</p> <p>Local Council Tax Support Scheme</p>
Individual Policy Committee – November / December	Consideration of savings proposals referred from Finance and Policy Committee
Full Council - November	<p>Local Council Tax Support Scheme consideration of recommendations from F&P</p> <p>Council Tax Base 2025/26 consideration of recommendations from F&P</p>
Finance and Policy Committee February	<p>MTFS Update report including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updated position based on provisional Local Government Finance Settlement latest intelligence and inflation rate • Consideration of feedback from policy committee on savings proposals • Determine budget proposals (including Council Tax and ASC precept) to be referred to full Council. <p>Capital Programme</p>

Audit and Governance – February	Treasury Management strategy report
Full Council - February	MTFS Update referral from F&P committee including budget proposals and agreement on Council Tax and ASC precept Approve final budget and Statutory calculations

10. LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

10.1 The following issues are relevant in relation to this report:

- the Local Government Finance Act 1992 requires local authorities to set a balanced budget – this report starts the budget process and further reports will enable budget proposals to be approved and then referred to Council to meet this requirement;
- the Local Government Act 2003 requires local authorities to consider the advice of their Section 151 Chief Finance Officer (the Director of Finance, IT and Digital) when making budget decisions. This advice must include details of the robustness of the estimates made for the purposes of the calculations and the adequacy of the proposed financial reserves. These requirements will be addressed in future reports.

11. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Risk Implications	These are outlined in Appendix A and will be further considered as MTFS and savings proposals are developed and will be reported to future meetings.
Financial Considerations	As set out in the main body of the report
Subsidy Control	Will be addressed as MTFS and savings proposals are developed and will be reported to future meetings if appropriate.
Child / Family Poverty Considerations	Will be addressed as MTFS and savings proposals are developed and will be reported to future meetings, with impact forms completed as appropriate.
Equality and Diversity Considerations	Will be addressed as MTFS and savings proposals are developed and will be reported to future

	meetings, with impact forms completed as appropriate.
Staff Considerations	Will be addressed as MTFS and savings proposals are developed and will be reported to future meetings if appropriate.
Asset Management Considerations	Will be addressed as MTFS and savings proposals are developed and will be reported to future meetings if appropriate.
Environment, Sustainability and Climate Change Considerations	Will be addressed as MTFS and savings proposals are developed and will be reported to future meetings if appropriate.
Consultation	Will be addressed as MTFS and savings proposals are developed and will be reported to future meetings. This will include member, Trade Union, staff, Business and public consultation if applicable.

12. RECOMMENDATIONS

12.1 It is recommended that Members:

- i) Note the report;
- ii) Note the initial assessment of the forecast budget gap and proposed approach to address this gap in Section 8.
- iii) Note the risks and scenarios outlined in the report which may impact upon the financial position presented as part of future MTFS updates; and
- iv) Note the proposed budget timetable.

13. REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

13.1 To enable the Finance and Policy Committee to approve the proposals to progress the development of the MTFS.

14. BACKGROUND PAPERS

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

- Finance and Policy Committee - Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) 2024/25 to 2026/27 – 22nd January 2024;

- Council - Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) 2024/25 Statutory Budget and Council Tax determination – 22nd February 2024.

15. CONTACT OFFICER

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Sign Off:-

Managing Director	Date: 27 May 2024
Director of Finance, IT and Digital	Date: 27 May 2024
Director of Legal, Governance and HR	Date: 27 May 2024

Appendix A

MTFS 2025/26 to 2027/28 Initial Risk Assessment

Key risks or issues that may impact on assumptions made and impact 2025/26.

Issue and Risk	Reasonable Upside Scenario 2025/26	Reasonable Downside Scenario 2025/26	Rationale
Inflation does not reduce as forecast.	£0.250m	£0.500m	Reasonable assumptions based on latest forecasts have been made for inflation during the period. Upside scenario based on inflation reducing by more than expected. Downside scenario based on additional inflation risk on general and Social Care inflation.
Inflation varies from expected in September 2024 for grant increase.	£0.325m	£0.150m	Inflation may not move as expected over the coming months and be higher or lower than expected in September. The upside estimate on government grant assumptions assumes an additional 1% inflation and the downside 0.5% below the assumed 2%.
Pay Award is different from budgeted assumption	£0.600m	£0.600m	Provision included in the MTFS based on recent pay offers and then historic norms. No contingency is built in for a higher award. The estimate is broadly based on the forecast being 1% higher or lower than the budget provision.
Government Grant Changes - NHB	£nil	£0.447	There is a potential that NHB will be totally discontinued by government. The current assumption is that this will be replaced on a broadly like for like basis, however, there is no guarantee this will occur.
Government Grant Changes - General	£1.500m	£0.650m	Depending on the approach to local government finance from a newly formed government, there is a risk there is a government grant cash freeze or a more favorable directing of funding based on need. The downside forecast is based on removing the 2% assumed grant increase and the upside an arbitrary estimate.
Council Tax Base	£0.100m	£0.200m	A slowdown in the housing market and / or increased discounts or exemptions may impact on the assumptions included on Base growth.
Income Budget	£nil	£0.250m	The wider economic conditions and legacy impact of the Covic-19 pandemic has created uncertainty over the achievability of key income budgets, including car parking.
Capital Programme Borrowing Costs	£nil	£nil (2025/26 minimal, but may impact more in later years)	Increased cost and/or interest rates may impact on borrowing costs. The impact is mitigated by pro-active Treasury management strategy and planned delay in borrowing decisions.
Social Care Charging Reform	£nil	£nil	Risk as to how this reform is now funded if / when government introduce the reform.

RESERVES FORECASTS (EXCLUDING SCHOOL BALANCES, HRA AND UNUSABLE RESERVES)

4.2 APPENDIX B

Forecast Use of Reserves

	Balance as at 31st March 2024	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	Forecast Balance as at 31st March 2028
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Revenue Reserve	5,501	0	0	0	0	5,501
Budget Support Fund (BSF) 24/25-26/27	7,947	(3,166)	0	0	0	4,781
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	(3,385)	(1,693)	(721)	(501)	0
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	(3,167)	(1,381)	(719)	(194)	1,950
Revenue Reserves Total	39,754	(13,071)	(5,701)	(1,990)	(745)	18,247
Earmarked Capital Reserves	9,606	(3,952)	(192)	0	0	5,462
Capital Grants Unapplied	16,311	(13,798)	(2,513)	0	0	0
TOTAL	65,671	(30,821)	(8,406)	(1,990)	(745)	23,709

<p>FINANCE AND POLICY COMMITTEE</p> <p>25TH JUNE 2024</p>
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Subject: DEVELOPING THE NEW COUNCIL PLAN 2024 – 2029

Report of: Managing Director

Decision Type: Key decision (DNRS 03/24)

1. COUNCIL PLAN PRIORITY

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.

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

2.1 The purpose of this report is to share the findings of the Big Conversation, the Borough-wide consultation and engagement exercise, with Finance and Policy Committee and to seek their agreement to the strategic priorities for the new Council Plan 2024/25 – 2028/29.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 Finance and Policy Committee at their meeting on 18th September 2023 agreed the process for developing the new Council Plan 2024/25 – 2028/29 including a Borough-wide Big Conversation consultation and engagement exercise. The final survey and the detailed consultation and engagement plan

were developed by a Steering Group of Officers from across the Council and were agreed by the Executive Leadership Team on 24th October 2023.

- 3.2 The Big Conversation launched on 22nd November 2023 and ran for 12 weeks until 14th February 2024. A progress update was shared with Finance and Policy Committee at their meeting on 19th February 2024.

4. BIG CONVERSATION – FINDINGS REPORT

- 4.1 The Big Conversation consultation and engagement exercise closed on 14th February 2024 and in total there were over 1,600 engagements. This included:

- 662 public survey responses (including paper, online and easy read versions)
- 48 business survey responses
- 149 responses to the quick poll
- 522 postcard responses
- 266 attendances registered at face to face discussions supported by officers from the Council
- 18 face to face discussions held by the Council or other public, voluntary, community and social enterprise partner organisations

- 4.2 The Big Conversation focused on a series of open-ended questions to give people the opportunity to share their own, individual views. The analysis has therefore been a significant undertaking with each individual comment considered and coded to enable emerging themes to be identified. Three documents have initially been produced and are attached to this report for Elected Members information:

- **Big Conversation – Emerging Themes** - This document brings together the range of responses that were made across all of the questions and from each of the different engagement activities to identify a set of emerging themes from the Big Conversation.
- **Data Report** - document provides a question by question summary of the points raised in the Big Conversation by each type of engagement activity (survey, postcard, face to face discussion etc).
- **Appendix 3 Big Conversation – Methodology**. This document summarises how the Big Conversation was delivered, who was involved and how it was promoted.

- 4.3 Further analysis reports will be produced over the coming months including a summary for the Long Term Plan for Town's programme themes. In addition work will be undertaken to identify if there are any variances in the survey

responses based on the demographic information provided and a variance report will be produced if required.

5. NEW COUNCIL PLAN 2024/25 – 2028/29

5.1 The Big Conversation has confirmed what is important to residents of Hartlepool and the emerging themes identified are unsurprising as they remain consistent with other consultation and engagement activities that have been undertaken in recent years. This includes those activities that informed the development of our previous Council Plan. It should be noted that a number of the points raised in the Big Conversation are outside of the remit and control of the Council. These points will be shared with partner organisations where possible to enable them to consider and respond.

5.2 Within the Big Conversation we asked whether the 6 priorities from the 2021/22 – 2023/24 Council Plan were still the right ones for Hartlepool for the next 5 years and overall the feedback was yes:

	Yes	No	Don't know
Public survey respondents	71%	16%	13%
Face to face respondents	96%	0%	4%
Business survey respondents	69%	7%	24%

5.3 When asked what was missing from the existing priorities that should be included in the future public survey respondents identified:

- **Action not words** – they felt that the Council had the right priorities but that it was not always clear what the Council was going to deliver so that they could hold us to account and also to see things being delivered on the ground rather than talked about.
- **Reduce crime and Anti-Social Behaviour**
- **Bring back hospital services** (not within the remit or control of the Council)
- **Everyone should feel safe** – comments related to community safety and also that it shouldn't just be those who are identified as vulnerable who feel safe.
- **Jobs and employment opportunities** – improving the types of jobs available in Hartlepool so that people don't move away and attracting new employers in.
- **Council Tax** – concerns around how much Council Tax costs and the services that the average resident receives.

- **Clean the town** – comments related to the local environment including litter and weeds.
- **Facilities, services and opportunities for children and young people** – giving our children and young people things to do to and opportunities to have successful futures within Hartlepool.
- **Police** (not within the remit or control of the Council)
- **Transport** – across Hartlepool and between Hartlepool and the Tees Valley / wider region.

5.4 Based on the findings of the Big Conversation it is therefore proposed that the existing Council Plan priorities remain in place for the next 5 years with the following changes:

- a minor amendment to the second priority so that it is more inclusive and responds to the feedback received that everyone should feel safe;
- as all community safety activity will now be covered within the second priority 'safe' has been removed from the fourth priority;
- the addition of 'connected' to the fourth priority to respond to the feedback received about the need for transport connections across Hartlepool and between Hartlepool and the Tees Valley / wider region.

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.

6. NEXT STEPS

6.1 In order to respond to the points raised in the Big Conversation it is proposed that a new Performance Assurance Framework (PAF) is developed. This will be progressed over the summer by the Executive Leadership Team in

consultation with Policy Committee Chairs and Vice Chairs and partner organisations. The PAF will include the following:

- Annual Action Plan – setting out clearly what the Council intends to deliver over the next 12 months for each of the 6 priorities;
- Strategic Risk Register - reviewed and refreshed to ensure it sets out the key risks to the delivery of the new Council Plan;
- Performance Indicator Set – reviewed and refreshed to ensure that it includes indicators that will demonstrate the progress that the Council is making against the 6 priorities.

6.2 The PAF will be brought to Finance and Policy Committee for approval and a programme for regular progress updates will be agreed.

7. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS/IMPLICATIONS

<p>RISK IMPLICATIONS</p>	<p>The Council agreed the Risk Management Framework in June 2019 and this ensures that appropriate arrangements are in place for the management of the Council’s key strategic risks. Embedding the identification and management of risk supports the achievement of our Council Plan and provides assurance to elected members that these risks are being appropriately managed. The Strategic Risk Register forms part of the Performance Assurance Framework for the Council.</p> <p>The Strategic Risk Register is monitored regularly to enable early identification and reporting to Members of any emerging risks which might prevent delivery of the strategic priorities identified in the Council Plan. The Strategic Risk Register will be reviewed and refreshed as part of the development of the new Council Plan.</p>
<p>FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS</p>	<p>The Council Plan is prepared alongside the Medium Term Financial Strategy and the 5 year Capital Plan as three parts of a single plan to ensure the links between the three are strengthened. In addition, effective risk management arrangements should help improve the use of valuable and limited financial resources.</p>
<p>SUBSIDY CONTROL</p>	<p>No implications.</p>
<p>LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS</p>	<p>Whilst there are no legal requirements to have a Council Plan it is good practice to have one in place.</p>

CHILD AND FAMILY POVERTY	The priorities identified in the Council Plan include work to reduce child and family poverty within Hartlepool. A new Child and Family Poverty Impact Assessment will be included as part of the development of the new Council Plan Performance Assurance Framework.
EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY CONSIDERATIONS	Since the 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 demonstrates that equality and diversity is a core part of what we do as an organisation and not an add on activity. The strategic priorities identified in the Council Plan aim to have a positive impact on the whole population of Hartlepool and those with protected characteristics. Specific equality objectives and a new Equality Impact Assessment will be included as part of the development of the new Council Plan Performance Assurance Framework.
STAFF CONSIDERATIONS	No implications.
ASSET MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS	No implications.
ENVIRONMENT, SUSTAINABILITY AND CLIMATE CHANGE CONSIDERATIONS	No implications.
CONSULTATION	The new Council Plan will be informed by the Big Conversation, an extensive, 12 week, consultation and engagement exercise between November 2023 and February 2024. This consultation included Elected Members through a dedicated Members Seminar in January 2024.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1 Finance and Policy Committee are requested to:

- note the findings of the Big Conversation consultation and engagement exercise;
- agree to renew the 6 strategic priorities for the new Council Plan 2024/25 – 2028/29 with the proposed amendments in paragraph 5.4;
- note the next steps including the development of a new Performance Assurance Framework for the Council Plan which includes development of a detailed annual action plan, Performance Indicator (PI) set and updated Strategic Risk Register.

9. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

9.1 Finance and Policy Committee have overall responsibility for Performance and Risk Management and the Council Plan.

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

10.1 Developing the new Council Plan 2024-2029 – Proposed timetable and first stage consultation process report to Finance and Policy Committee on 18th September 2023.

Developing the new Council Plan 2024-2029 – Progress Update report to Finance and Policy Committee on 19th February 2024.

11. CONTACT OFFICERS

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 Managing Director
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 01429 523001

Sign Off:-

Managing Director	Date: 12 June 2024
Director of Finance, IT and Digital	Date: 12 June 2024
Director of Legal, Governance and HR	Date: 12 June 2024

FINANCE AND POLICY COMMITTEE

25 JUNE 2024



Subject: SEXUAL HEALTH SERVICE REPROCUREMENT
Report of: Director of Public Health
Decision Type: Key CJCS147/24

1. COUNCIL PLAN PRIORITY

Hartlepool will be a place:

- Where people are enabled to live healthy, independent and prosperous lives.

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 2.1 To agree the reprocurement of sexual health services for Hartlepool as part of a collaboration between the four Tees Local Authorities led by Stockton Borough Council and the NHS.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 There is a statutory duty incumbent on Local Authorities, Integrated Care Boards and NHS England and NHS Improvement to commission or provide sexual and reproductive health services¹
- 3.2 Sexual Health Commissioning Responsibilities from 1st April 2013 are set out in figure 1

¹ Commissioning responsibilities: <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/making-it-work-a-guide-to-whole-system-commissioning-for-sexual-and-reproductive-health-and-hiv> Public Health England 2015

Local authorities	CCGs	NHS England
<p>Comprehensive sexual health services. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contraception, including implants and intra-uterine contraception devices and all prescribing costs, but excluding contraception provided as an additional service under the GP contract • Sexually transmitted infections (STI) testing and treatment, chlamydia screening as part of the National Chlamydia Screening Programme (NCSP) and HIV testing • Sexual health aspects of psychosexual counselling • Sexual health specialist services including young people's sexual health, outreach, HIV prevention and sexual health promotion, services in schools, colleges and pharmacies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most abortion services • Sterilisation • Vasectomy • Non-sexual health elements of psychosexual health services • Gynaecology, including any use of contraception of non-contraceptive purposes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contraception provided as an additional service under the GP contract • HIV treatment and care including drug costs for PEPSE and PREP • Promotion of opportunistic testing and treatment for STIs and patient-requested testing by GPs • Sexual health elements of prison health services • Sexual Assault Referral Centres • Cervical screening • Specialist fetal medicine services

Figure 1: commissioning responsibilities for sexual health services. (DH Commissioning for sexual health services and interventions)

3.3 Sexual Health Commissioning across Tees is delivered through a collaborative commissioning partnership made up of six commissioning partners:

- Hartlepool Borough Council
- Middlesbrough Borough Council
- Redcar and Cleveland Borough Council
- Stockton-On-Tees Borough Council
- NHS North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board.
- NHS England & NHS Improvement (North East and Yorkshire)

3.4 Across Teesside, HCRG Care Group are currently commissioned to deliver sexual health services until July 2025.

This model of delivery includes the following:

1. Integrated model – providing Contraception and Sexual health (CASH) and Genitourinary medicine (GUM) the investigation and treatment of STIs, the diagnosis and management of both HIV and HIV associated conditions.
2. Community based – hubs and subcontracted providers in each locality.

3. Specialist Service – dual trained workforce, consultant led.

- 3.5 A review of the current service was conducted in 2023 (**Appendix 1**) with recommendations and areas for improvement in the current service and further recommendation for future commissioning.
- 3.6 A sexual health needs assessment was also undertaken in 2023 which has informed future commissioning (**Appendix 2**)

4. PROPOSALS/OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

- 4.1 Following consultation events and findings from reviews and needs assessments outlined in section 3.4 and 3.5 the following model is proposed (see figure 1) to deliver a comprehensive and inclusive sexual health service across Tees that meets the needs of local people.

The model also recognises the changes required following the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic response and the potential for associated continuing changes. These included prioritising access to physical clinics for those in greatest need, increasing remote and online provision, and managing the redeployment of healthcare staff to support the pandemic response.

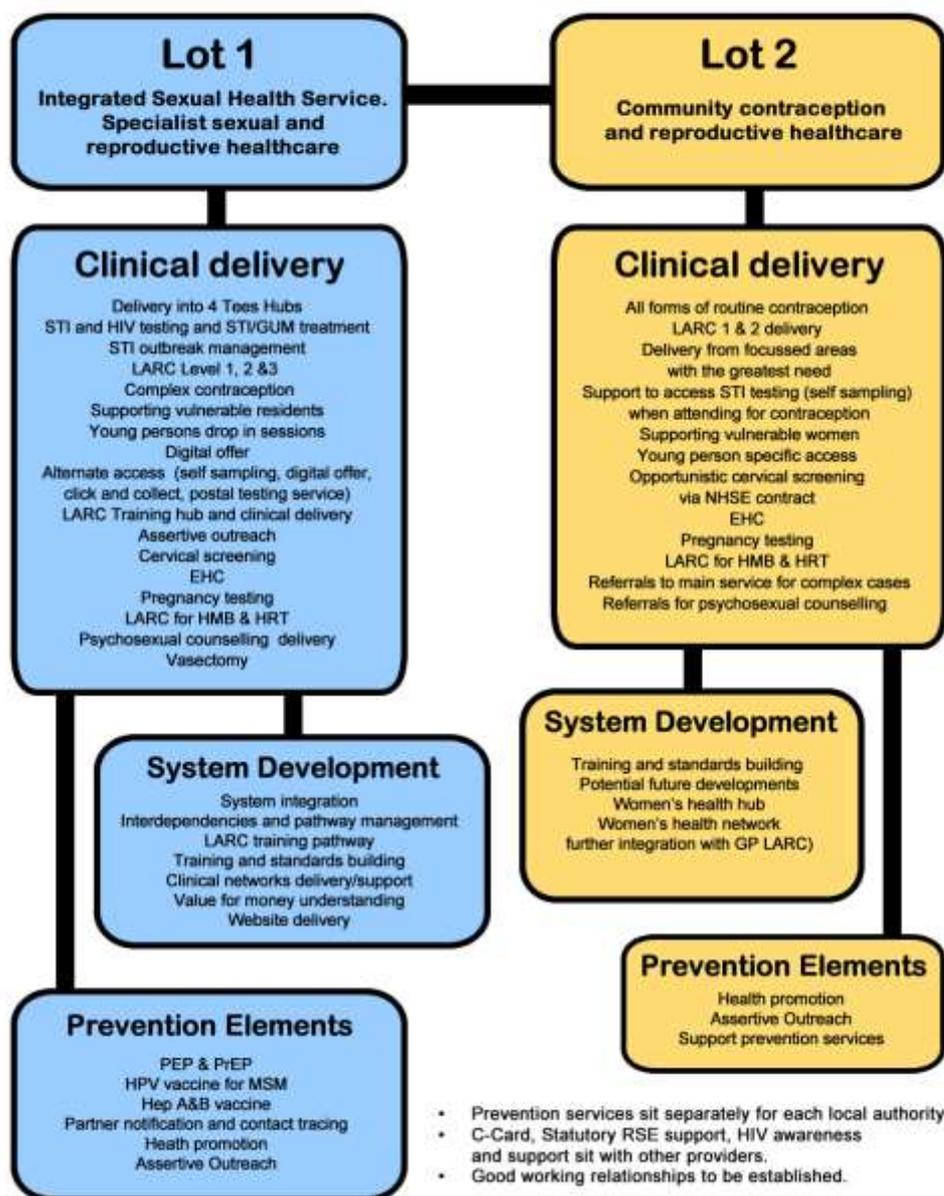
The commissioning of human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) became routine during 2020, and the National Chlamydia Screening Programme (NCSP) announced changes in 2021.

The Tees Integrated Sexual Health Service - Will provide a confidential, open-access, genito-urinary (GUM) and Family and Sexual Health (FSH) service in each local authority area in Teesside and will also provide NHS commissioned sexual health services across Teesside

The Community Contraception Service –The Community Contraception Service will provide comprehensive contraception advice and support with a focus on the delivery of level 1 and 2 Long-Acting Reversible Contraception (LARC) and Emergency Hormonal Contraception (EHC). There will be an interdependency with hormonal contraception commissioned from and provided in primary care.

These will be commissioned in two lots. The total budget contribution from Hartlepool will be an annual cost of £579,179.80

Figure 2 - Teesside Sexual Health service model (2025)



4.2 Current sexual health prevention and education contracts delivered by Brook and Terrence Higgins Trust are not included within the scope of this contract and will be commissioned separately.

4.3 **TIMESCALE FOR PROCUREMENT**

Pre procurement Feb – September 2024	service specifications / model / timeline - signed off
Procurement Sept – Nov 2024	Publish tender Tender submission
Post procurement April – August 2025	Mobilisation/Transition Phase Contract commencement

5. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS/IMPLICATIONS

RISK IMPLICATIONS	<p>The key risks identified for the service review and re-procurement of sexual health services across Teesside are held in a central risk register.</p> <p>The following are a list of key risks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of market interest which may require negotiation with the incumbent provider • Re-procuring in a short timescale <p>There is a risk that if Hartlepool does not engage with the Tees commissioning process that Hartlepool will not be able to fulfil its duties in relation to sexual health. The funding that Hartlepool contribute to the Tees integrated service is not enough to commission a sexual health service in isolation and this is a service areas where the councils need to collaborate to benefit from economies of scale.</p>
FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS	Sexual health services will be required to be funded through the ring fenced Public Health Grant. The cost to Hartlepool will increase annually based on the national uplift of the Public Health grant.
SUBSIDY CONTROL	N/A
LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS	Stockton Borough Council are leading this procurement however we will need HBC legal to input into any contract documents
CHILD AND FAMILY POVERTY	Appendix 3
EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY CONSIDERATIONS	Completed across Tees – Appendix 4
STAFF CONSIDERATIONS	N/A
ASSET MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS	N/A
ENVIRONMENT, SUSTAINABILITY AND CLIMATE CHANGE CONSIDERATIONS	N/A

CONSULTATION	Please see Appendix 1 which was commissioned by Stockton Borough Council also further workshops have been held across Tees with staff and wider colleagues
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6. RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 To agree with the proposal set out in section 4 to re procure sexual health services across Hartlepool.

7. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 The council has a statutory duty to provide significant elements of this service. The council would not be able to provide such a comprehensive service if the council commissioned this service independently. A Tees Integrated Service is the most effective way to provide the service to ensure that it is seamless to service users and is value for money.

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS

8.1 **Appendix 1** - Review of Sexual Health Services
Appendix 2 - Sexual Health Needs Assessment
Appendix 3 - Child and Family Poverty (impact assessment)
Appendix 4 - Equality and Diversity (impact assessment)

9. CONTACT OFFICERS

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Sign Off:-

Managing Director	Date: 12 June 2024
Director of Finance, IT and Digital	Date: 4 June 2024
Director of Legal, Governance and HR	Date:

1. Is this decision a Budget & Policy Framework or Key Decision? Yes Key Decision				
If YES please answer question 2 below				
2. Will there be an impact of the decision requested in respect of Child and Family Poverty? No				
If YES please complete the matrix below				
GROUP	POSITIVE IMPACT	NEGATIVE IMPACT	NO IMPACT	REASON & EVIDENCE
Young working people aged 18 - 21	x			The needs assessment identified the numbers of young people accessing sexual health services along with the current KPI monitoring for the existing service. This also identified unmet needs in relation to this group. The service model takes account of the needs of young people and looks at making services more accessible by creating a range of online and face to face options.
Those who are disabled or suffer from illness / mental illness	x			The new model looks at delivering services in a range of venues and providing a digital offer to ensure the service is as accessible as possible
Those with low educational attainment			x	Not directly however a proportion of the population as identified within the needs assessment will have low educational attainment
Those who are unemployed			x	Not directly however a proportion of the population as identified within the needs assessment will be unemployed
Those who are underemployed			x	As above
Children born into families in poverty			x	Although this service will no directly impact on this group it will provide services to families living in poverty

Overall impact of Policy / Decision				
POSITIVE IMPACT			ADJUST / CHANGE POLICY / SERVICE	
NO IMPACT / NO CHANGE			STOP / REMOVE POLICY / SERVICE	
ADVERSE IMPACT BUT CONTINUE				

Examples of Indicators that impact of Child and Family Poverty.
Economic
Children in Low Income Families (%)
Children in Working Households (%)
Overall employment rate (%)
Proportion of young people who are NEET
Adults with Learning difficulties in employment
Education
Free School meals attainment gap (key stage 2 and key stage 4)
Gap in progression to higher education FSM / Non FSM
Achievement gap between disadvantaged pupils and all pupils (key stage 2 and key stage 4)
Housing
Average time taken to process Housing Benefit / Council tax benefit claims

Number of affordable homes built
Health
Prevalence of underweight children in reception year
Prevalence of obese children in reception year
Prevalence of underweight children in year 6
Prevalence of obese children in reception year 6
Life expectancy

Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)

Tees Sexual Health Service

September 2023 (updated March 2024)

1. Background and Context

While sexual relationships are essentially private matters, good sexual health is important to individuals and to society. Reducing rates of teenage pregnancy, protecting vulnerable groups from sexual abuse and exploitation, and improving the late diagnosis of HIV all have an impact on the quality of life for those affected, as well the resources required to respond to poor sexual health. The Tees Integrated Sexual Health Service is central to achieving good sexual health across Teesside.

The commissioning of Genitourinary Medicine (GUM) and Contraception Sexual Health Services (CaSH) are mandatory services for Local Authorities. Under the Health and Social Care Act 2012, local authorities have a duty to secure the provision of open access services for contraception and for testing and treatment of sexually transmitted infections (STIs) for their residents. This is mandatory and entails the key principles of providing services that are free, confidential, open access and not restricted by age.

In 2021, Hartlepool Borough Council (HBC), Middlesbrough Borough Council (MBC), Redcar and Cleveland Borough Council (RCBC) and Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council (SBC) with NHS commissioners, ICB and NHSE, procured an integrated clinical sexual health (SH). The SH service commenced on 1st August 2023 for a period of three years initially with the option to extend for a further 3 x 12-month periods on an annual basis at the sole discretion of the Councils. In 2023 the contract was extended for 12 months and will now run until 31 July 2025.

The new service will deliver evidence based Integrated Sexual Health Services that meet national guidance and fulfils the Council's statutory duties. The service will submit regular reports detailing performance (including service user feedback) and equalities data which will be monitored by the Council on a regular basis to ensure the Provider is meeting its contractual obligations.

The service will be clinically led by specialists in Sexual and Reproductive Healthcare and Genitourinary Medicine. It will be open access to all (universal) in line with statutory requirements and the national specification issued by the Department of Health will deliver the following:

- An open access basis and available to anyone requiring care, irrespective of their age, place of residence or GP registration, without referral.
- Provide a full range of sexual health services to women, men and children aged 13 years and above, taking into account safeguarding responsibilities.
- Provide non-judgemental, evidence based care centred on recognised national best practice guidance where this exists.
- Have walk-in and appointment clinics, including evenings and Saturdays.
- Improved sexual health outcomes in relation to the incidence of sexually transmitted infections.
- Reduced incidence of late diagnosis of HIV.
- Improved access and availability of contraception and reduced numbers of unwanted pregnancies.

2. The Equality Act 2010

There are 10 protected characteristics; these are:

1. Age
2. Disability
3. Sex / gender
4. Ethnicity/Race

5. Religion/Faith
6. Sexual orientation
7. Gender reassignment
8. Marriage/civil partnership
9. Pregnancy, maternity and paternity
10. Socio-economic status

Though not included in the Equality Act 2010, South Tees Public Health recognises that socio-economic disadvantage is a significant contributor to inequality across Tees and therefore regards this as an additional factor.

3. The Public Sector Equality Duty 2011

The public sector equality duty came into force on 5 April 2011. On 8 November 2023, The Equality Act 2010 (Amendment) Regulations 2023 came into effect 1 January 2024, and their purpose is to update the existing legislation, and enshrine protections from EU law, which would otherwise have ceased. Amongst the amendments to the legislation, for example, are:

- Clarification that discrimination relating to breastfeeding amounts to sex discrimination within the workplace, and that more favourable treatment on the grounds of maternity is permitted.
- Discrimination claims for the protected characteristic of pregnancy and maternity discrimination may arise where the individual has an entitlement to maternity leave which is equivalent to compulsory, ordinary or additional maternity leave.
- Clarification of the definition of disability, to confirm that the ability to 'carry out normal day-to-day activities' should be considered with reference to the individual's ability to participate in their professional life 'on an equal basis with other workers'.

The following clauses are within the current Tees Integrated Sexual Health contract:

B5.1 The Parties must not discriminate between or against Service Users, on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation or any other non-medical characteristics except as permitted by the Law.

B5.3 In performing this Contract the Provider must comply with the Equality Act 2010 and have due regard to the obligations contemplated by section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 to:

- a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010.*
- b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic (as defined in the Equality Act 2010) and persons who do not share it; and*
- c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic (as defined in the Equality Act 2010) and persons who do not share it,*

and for the avoidance of doubt this obligation shall apply whether or not the Provider is a public authority for the purposes of section 149 of the Equality Act 2010.

4. Equality Act Protected Characteristics

4.1 Age

Age: Consider the full range of age groups

<i>Please tick (☐) the relevant box:</i>		Overall impact: The Tees sexual health service (SHS) is accessible to all ages (13 years and above) and will therefore have a positive impact on this protected characteristic. There can be health inequalities in the sexual health of young people as 15 to 24 years old carry the highest burden of STIs with the exception of HIV. However, all age groups are welcome to access the SHS for their contraception or STI screening and treatment needs (with the exception of HIV treatment), this is carried out in Infectious Diseases unit at the James Cook Hospital, part of STNHSFT.
Positive	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Neutral	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Negative	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Evidence

The Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH) profiles were first developed by Public Health England, now The Office for Health Improvement and Disparities (OHID), to support local authorities, public health leads and other interested parties to monitor the sexual and reproductive health of their populations. The profiles are presented as tables providing the most recent snapshot of sexual and reproductive health in local authorities.

Age range	Hartlepool		Middlesbrough		Redcar and Cleveland		Stockton-on-Tees		North East region		England	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
0-4	2,554	2,417	4,524	4,357	3,402	3,345	5,330	5,272	68,211	65,062	1,565,696	1,492,521
5-9	2,854	2,686	5,026	4,689	4,029	3,780	6,399	5,974	77,366	72,744	1,710,243	1,630,019
10- 14	3,063	2,884	4,861	4,640	4,123	3,902	6,652	6,412	79,253	75,399	1,752,411	1,667,559
15-19	2,679	2,604	4,413	4,187	3,784	3,448	5,594	5,310	75,973	73,001	1,653,142	1,568,914
20-24	2,552	2,628	5,193	4,762	3,259	3,288	4,922	4,637	82,015	79,986	1,711,704	1,695,709
25-29	2,593	2,865	5,140	5,132	3,614	3,821	5,808	6,086	78,549	81,442	1,810,328	1,884,580
30-34	2,745	3,149	5,038	5,195	3,713	4,192	6,330	6,706	80,874	86,906	1,908,342	2,042,024
35-39	2,605	2,925	4,620	4,878	3,563	4,120	6,432	6,746	79,667	84,632	1,844,108	1,958,800
40-44	2,434	2,660	3,966	4,086	3,449	3,803	6,038	6,102	74,745	78,263	1,760,008	1,835,140
45-49	2,642	2,674	3,886	3,992	3,814	4,006	5,891	6,053	76,497	80,074	1,761,736	1,810,082
50-54	3,131	3,476	4,166	4,501	4,742	5,155	6,909	7,001	89,414	93,682	1,921,130	1,983,187
55-59	3,411	3,671	4,619	4,768	5,201	5,524	6,798	7,271	94,118	98,299	1,875,968	1,944,024
60-64	3,197	3,164	4,227	4,499	4,702	4,900	6,242	6,597	85,925	90,218	1,613,608	1,667,283
65-69	2,574	2,681	3,505	3,752	4,122	4,402	5,357	5,506	74,499	77,779	1,346,839	1,429,812
70-74	2,462	2,615	3,132	3,334	4,092	4,569	4,914	5,371	71,379	77,295	1,328,957	1,461,165
75-79	1,484	1,781	2,032	2,372	3,063	3,397	3,298	3,709	48,332	55,080	969,353	1,115,553
80-84	1,027	1,438	1,324	1,880	2,001	2,487	2,156	2,823	31,643	41,410	626,251	796,438
85-89	596	902	770	1,228	1,007	1,463	1,135	1,763	17,406	26,631	357,538	526,811
90+	218	530	336	704	463	871	511	975	7,379	15,624	164,983	344,453
All ages	44,821	47,750	70,778	72,956	66,143	70,473	96,716	100,314	1,293,245	1,353,527	27,682,345	28,854,074

Table 1: Age profiles for Tees Local Authorities compared to the North East and England population. Source Fingertips Data.

Table 1 above displays the age ranges from 0-4 up to 90+ for the four Tees local authorities compared to the North East and England.

48.9% of the population in Teesside is male and 51.1% is female. 23.8% of the population is aged 15-34yrs with 19.7% aged 65yrs or older.

All age groups are eligible to access the SH service should they need it for their contraception or STI screening and treatment needs. Services and outreach for young people is available in the form of walk-in clinics.

ONS Mid-year 2021	Hartlepool	Middlesbrough	Redcar & Cleveland	Stockton-on-Tees	Totals
Females ALL	47,750	72,956	70,473	100,314	291,493
Females 15-44years	16,831	28,240	22,672	35,587	103,330
Males ALL	44,821	70,778	66,143	96,716	278,458
Males 15-44years	15,608	28,370	21,382	35,124	100,484

Table 2: Population of Teesside split by male/female. Source ONS Mid-year estimates 2021.

Table 2 above shows the numbers of the population cross Tees by male / female and those females in the 15-44year old age group.

Table 3 below show the total number of attendees attending the SH service in on year split by age ranges.

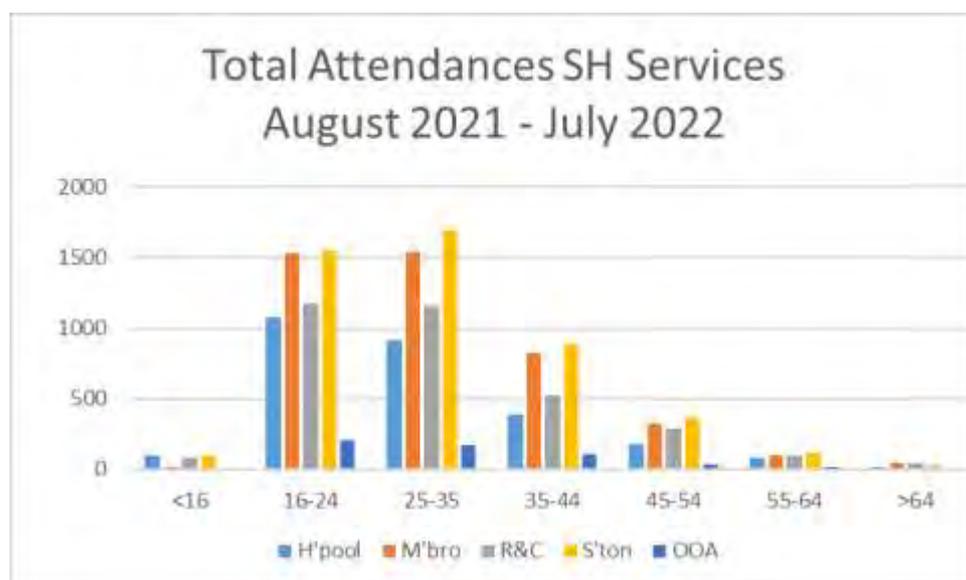


Table 3: Total Attendances at SH service August 2021 to July 2022, by age ranges. Source SH Service Data.

The greatest number of attendees were in the 16-24 age range (5,549), followed by the 25-35 age range (5,483), the 35-44 age range (2,723), the 45-54 age range (1,187), the 55-64 age range (407) then the >64 age range (128).

The greatest number of attendances were by Stockton residents, followed by Middlesbrough, Redcar & Cleveland then Hartlepool, which follows the local authority population sizes.

The 13–24 age group is targeted by SH prevention services across Tees delivered by Brook and THT as well as the SH service. Brook and THT both promote safe sex messages and Brook support SRE provision to young people in educational setting.

Much of the promotion of sexual health services is currently aimed at under 25's.

Free condoms are available for 13-24yrs olds.

The use of online services for 16-24yrs enables that age group to access services more conveniently if they are asymptomatic.

The SH service still needs to complete the development of outreach provision to ensure that young people are not at risk of disproportional disadvantage due to the move to The Fens. A review of end of year activity for contract year one (CY1) - August 2021 to July 2022 - showed that 8.71% of attendances at The Fens in CY1 were by patients aged under 18, compared with 9.14% attendance for the previous contract year when the service was based at Hartlepool One Life.

Whilst there is a need for service access for older people, the burden of STIs sits with the 15-24 year old age group and contraception is only required for ages up to 44 on average. Therefore, young people remain a priority in accessing the service and attendance will continue to be monitored.

Sources used:

- Sexual and Reproductive Health Profiles, OHID
- ONS Population Mid-year Estimates for 2021
- Tees Sexual Health Data 2021-2022

4.2 Disability

Disability:

Consider the full range of disabilities, including physical, mental, sensory and progressive conditions

Please tick () the relevant box:

Positive

Neutral

Negative

Overall Impact:

This service has a neutral impact on disabilities. The service is contracted to meet all requirements around the Equality Act 2010 to ensure their services are accessible to disabled people. The contract outlines in detail the requirements of the Provider to comply with the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty and ensure that their staff are trained and competent in equality and diversity issues.

Evidence

2021-2024 Tees Sexual Health Contract Clauses:

B5.1 The Parties must not discriminate between or against Service Users, on the grounds of age, **disability**, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation or any other non-medical characteristics except as permitted by the Law.

B5.3 In performing this Contract the Provider must comply with the Equality Act 2010 and have due regard to the obligations contemplated by section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 to:

- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010;
- advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic (as defined in the Equality Act 2010) and persons who do not share it; and
- foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic (as defined in the Equality Act 2010) and persons who do not share it,

and for the avoidance of doubt this obligation shall apply whether or not the Provider is a public authority for the purposes of section 149 of the Equality Act 2010.

B7.1 (d) Staff are aware of and respect equality and human rights of colleagues and Service Users; and

At present, there is a lack of specific data on the sexual health and reproductive health needs of individuals with disabilities. The service captures disability data when patients are happy to disclose whether they have a long-term disability.

All sexual health clinics are DDA compliant. (Disability Discrimination Act 2005).

The service can offer telephone appointments for consultation for various appointment types including psychosexual counselling.

There is also access to BSL interpreters for patients with hearing loss as well as hearing loops installed at reception desks.

The service has an online booking system to help people with disabilities who may find it difficult to use the telephone.

The service has online home testing kits, contraception options, emergency contraception and online condoms (16+yrs) and other additional provision, making access easier for people, including those with disabilities who may have difficulty travelling to clinics to have items delivered to their home address.

The SH service is continuing to trial of the Accurx system, which allows patients to have video consultations through a secure system. This has commenced with psychosexual counselling with the view to introducing it to more appointment types if trials go well and feedback is positive. This is making access easier for people, including those with disabilities who may have difficulty travelling to clinics.

The services new web portal has new features, ReachDesk that simplifies the text on a web page and removes 'clutter' on the web page for anyone with learning disabilities

KPIs within the SH contract to support this protected characteristic:

KPI 7.1

Evidence of at least one user experience survey annually per local authority to demonstrate that user involvement is fundamental to service development, provision, monitoring and evaluation for all service provision including cervical screening, HMB, vasectomy provision and psychosexual counselling.

KPI 7.3

Adopt the You're Welcome criteria for each clinic setting.

You're Welcome" criteria are used as a guiding principle and ensures that services are friendly to young people.

Negative impacts identified

Impact: Communication with people with sensory impairments and learning disabilities.

Supporting evidence: The contract requires the Provider to provide evidence that they can address accessibility issues, which is ongoing.

Sources used:

- The Service Specification for the Provision of an Integrated Tees Sexual Health Service, 2021-2024.
- The Teesside Sexual Health Website [Sexual Health & STI Clinics in and near Teesside | HCRG Care Group \(thesexualhealthhub.co.uk\)](https://thesexualhealthhub.co.uk)

4.3 Sex/Gender

Sex/Gender:	
<i>Please tick (☐) the relevant box:</i>	<p>Overall impact: The integrated sexual health service has a positive impact on this protected characteristic. The service aims to ensure that it has open access to care and that all patients can request a choice of gender in respect of staff and can access use of chaperone support where required.</p> <p>Historically, within the SH service, approximately 75% of attendees at sexual health services have been female and 25% male.</p> <p>The Provider demonstrates that the service is contributing to the delivery of local priorities, including those that focus on particular groups of women and men identified at being at risk of sexual exploitation and those that focus on groups experiencing poor sexual health, including MSM (men who have sex with men), lesbian and bi-sexual women.</p>
Positive	<input type="checkbox"/>
Neutral	<input type="checkbox"/>
Negative	<input type="checkbox"/>

Evidence

ONS Mid-year 2021	Hartlepool	Middlesbrough	Redcar & Cleveland	Stockton-on-Tees	Totals
Females ALL	47,776	72,956	70,473	100,314	291,519
Females 15-44years	16,831	28,240	22,672	35,587	103,330
Males ALL	44,805	70,778	66,143	96,716	278,442
Males 15-44years	15,578	28,370	21,382	35,124	100,454

Table 4: Population of Teesside split by male/female. Source ONS Mid-year estimates 2021.

Table 4 above shows the numbers of the population cross Tees by male / female and those females in the 15-44year old age group.

The three tables below show the gender split of male and females plus the total number of attendees attending the SH service in on year split by age ranges.

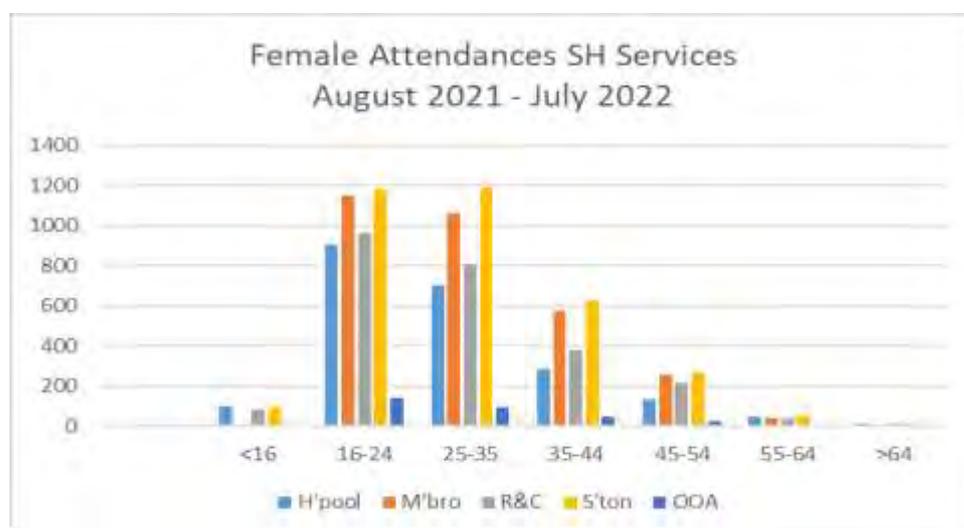


Table 5: Female Attendances at SH service August 2021 to July 2022 by age ranges. Source SH Service

Data.

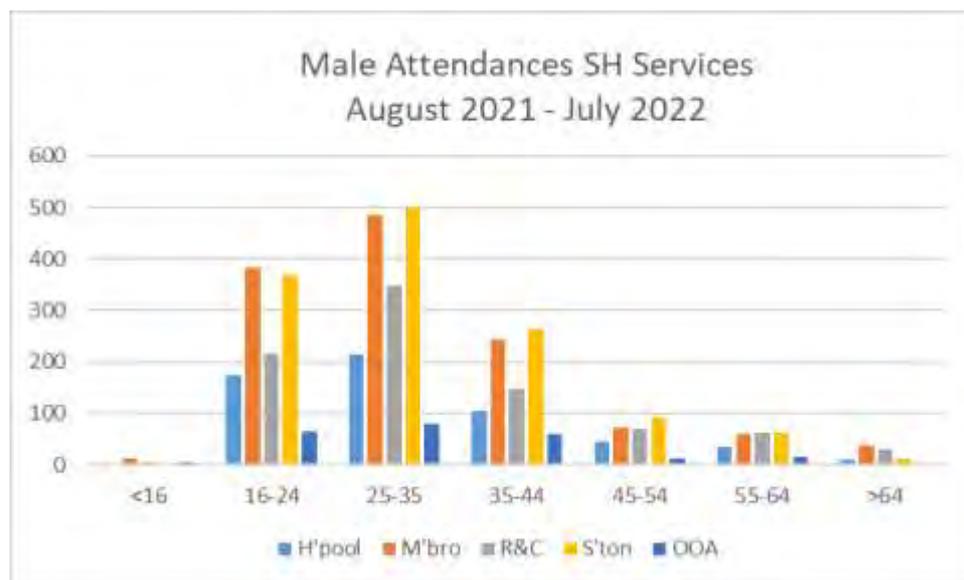


Table 6: Male Attendances at SH service August 2021 to July 2022, by age ranges. Source SH Service Data.

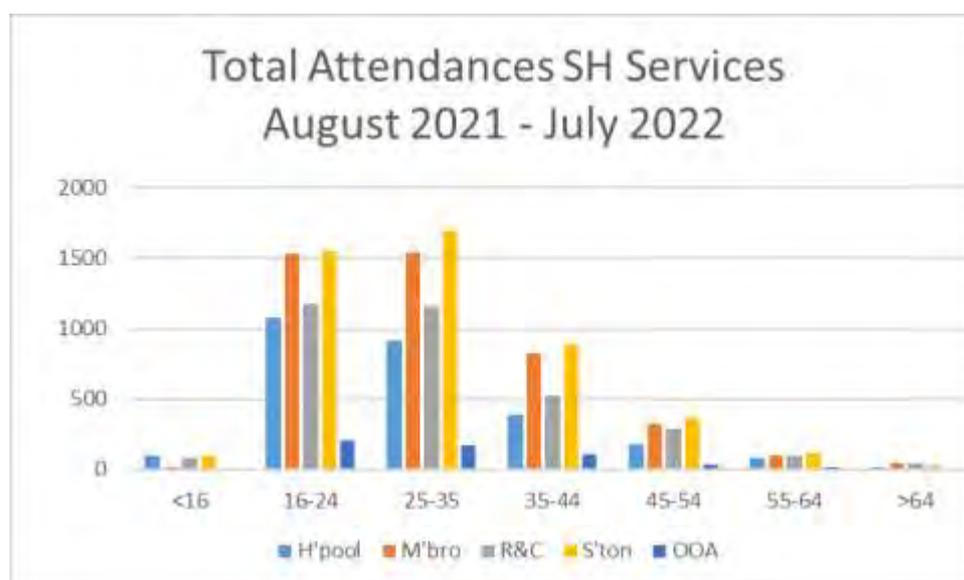


Table 7: Total Attendances at SH service August 2021 to July 2022, by age ranges. Source SH Service Data.

72.9% of attendees were female compared to 27.1% males.

The greatest number of female attendees were in the 16-24 age range (4,345), followed by the 25-35 age range (3,859) then the 35-44 age range (1,905).

In contrast, the greatest number of male attendees were in the 25-35 age range (1,624), followed by the 16-24 age range (1,204) then the 35-44 age range (818).

Within the SH service, the online triage process also has a drug/alcohol use question for <18's when they are requesting testing kits, condoms etc. If they tick yes they use them, they receive a phone call back from a clinician, usually a few days later, to see if they need any help or signposting to support groups.

The greatest number of attendances were by Stockton residents, followed by Middlesbrough, Redcar & Cleveland then Hartlepool, which follows the local authority population sizes.

Funded by the Department of Health, BASHH & Brook's toolkit "Spotting the Signs" is used to allow identification of child sexual exploitation.

Negative impacts identified

Impact: - Men are less likely to access contraception services in the community or GPs.

Supporting evidence:

- There is little formal evidence as to why men access contraception services far less than women, However, an article dated 24th April, 2019, using discourse analysis did identify some perceptions from the study participants which can begin to explain it.
[British Couples' Experiences of Men as Partners in Family Planning - Amanda D. Wilson, 2020 \(sagepub.com\)](#)
- In addition, the contraceptive needs of women are far more complex than for men and as such it is more important clinically for women to access formal contraception services.

Sources used:

- ONS Population Mid-year Estimates for 2021
- Tees Sexual Health Data 2021-2022
- Sage Journals

4.4 Ethnicity/Race

Ethnicity/Race:

		Overall impact: The integrated sexual health service has a positive impact on this protected characteristic. It provides a service that is contributing to the delivery of local sexual health priorities, including those that focus on particular groups from BME (black and minority ethnic) communities. The service also works to increase uptake of HIV testing, and increase awareness of risky behaviours (via it's on line triage process for such things as drug / alcohol use especially for under 18 year olds) such as recreational drug use to ensure reduction in late HIV diagnosis and new infections amongst BME groups.
Positive	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Neutral		
Negative		

Evidence

Data shows that people from black Asian and ethnic minority (BAME) have, depending on the prevalence in their country of origin, a higher risk of contracting sexually transmitted infections (including HIV). Women with African background are more likely to be a victim of female genital mutilation and suffering from the associated consequences and complications.

Ethnicity Data for Teesside

Ethnic Group	Hartlepool	Middlesbrough	Redcar and Cleveland	Stockton-on-Tees
Total Populations	92,335	143,900	136,535	196,590
Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh	1,594	15,085	1,161	9,052
<i>Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh: Bangladeshi</i>	278	595	158	237
<i>Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh: Chinese</i>	213	670	206	690

Appendix 4

<i>Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh: Indian</i>	334	2,803	176	1,810
<i>Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh: Pakistani</i>	297	8,988	283	4,878
<i>Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh: Other Asian</i>	472	2,029	338	1,437
Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or African	444	3,810	269	2,200
<i>Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or African: African</i>	326	3,337	186	1,824
<i>Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or African: Caribbean</i>	58	162	48	127
<i>Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or African: Other Black</i>	60	311	35	249
Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups	676	2,999	1,189	2,742
<i>Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups: White and Asian</i>	240	1,110	461	1,131
<i>Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups: White and Black African</i>	115	650	217	469
<i>Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups: White and Black Caribbean</i>	146	567	272	416
<i>Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups: Other Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups</i>	175	672	239	726
White	89,065	118,541	133,384	180,937
<i>White: English, Welsh, Scottish, Northern Irish or British</i>	87,761	114,423	131,789	177,526
<i>White: Irish</i>	171	430	349	529
<i>White: Gypsy or Irish Traveller</i>	34	157	86	142
<i>White: Roma</i>	18	320	13	143
<i>White: Other White</i>	1,081	3,211	1,147	2,597
Other ethnic group	556	3,465	532	1,659
<i>Other ethnic group: Arab</i>	271	1,450	321	556
<i>Other ethnic group: Any other ethnic group</i>	285	2,015	211	1,103

Table 8: Ethnicity Group in Teesside (total population). Source ONS Mid-year population estimates.

The largest ethnic group in Teesside identifies as White with 521,927 (91.7%). The next largest ethnic group identifies as Asian with 26,892 (4.7%). Followed by Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups 7,606 (1.3%), then Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or African 6,723 (1.2%) and finally other 6,212 (1.1%)

Within the sexual health service, there were 15,941 attendances in contract year 1 (1st August 2021 to 31st July 2022). Of those, 89.5% were White British, 1.8% were Other White making 91.3% in total for white. This compares to 91.7% across Teesside. 4.7% were Asian compared which is the same percentage across Teesside. 1.5% were African, White African, Caribbean or White Caribbean comparing to 1.2% across Teesside.

Therefore, the sexual health service is seeing the same proportion of ethnic groups as within the population in Teesside.

The services new web portal has new features, ReachDesk that:

- Enables the contents of the web pages to be translated into over 30 languages
- Allows the text to be spoken in multiple languages
- Simplifies text for anyone with learning disabilities

Sources used:

- ONS Population Mid-year Estimates for 2021
- Tees Sexual Health Data 2021-2022

4.5 Religion/Faith**Religion/Faith:**

Consider people from different religions or beliefs including those with no religion or belief

		Overall impact: The integrated SH service will have a neutral impact on this protected characteristic. The SH service does not capture any demographic information regarding a patient's faith or religious belief but does provide an open access service that is available to the population of Teesside including those from different religions or beliefs or with no religion or belief. The service is contracted to meet all requirements around the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty. The service also ensures that their staff are trained and competent in equality and diversity issues and are sensitive to situations where religion and/or belief may affect an appointment e.g., being seen by a female clinician.
Positive		
Neutral	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Negative		

Evidence

At present, there is a lack of specific data on the sexual health and reproductive health needs of individuals who hold religious or non-religious beliefs. However, it is assumed religious faith or non-religious beliefs will inform and shape a person's sexual values, attitudes and sexual practices. As the service is an open access, confidential service, there are no obvious barriers for people from different religions or no religion accessing the integrated sexual health service.

Ensuring a wide range of service users' views are taken into account in the delivery and development of the Service will help to inform this protected characteristic.

The service specification states that the Provider will:

- Use the Department of Health's "You're Welcome" criteria as guiding principles and ensure that Services are friendly to young people.
- Promote choice, dignity, privacy, respect, confidentiality and participation of service users
- Ensure services are inclusive and acknowledge and respect a service user's gender, sexual orientation, age, race and religion.

Clause B5.1 states:

The Parties must not discriminate between or against Service Users, on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation or any other non-medical characteristics except as permitted by the Law.

Sources used:

Tees Sexual Health Service Specification for the Provision of an Integrated Sexual Health Service, 2021-2024.

4.6 Sexual Orientation

Sexual Orientation:		Overall impact: The integrated sexual health service has a positive impact on this protected characteristic. The Provider ensures the service is contributing to the aim of reducing health inequalities for those groups that experience poor sexual health outcomes in particular men who have sex with men (MSM).
Positive	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Neutral		
Negative		

Evidence

Until 31 March 2023, the sexual health provider subcontracted Terence Higgins Trust (THT) to provide outreach services to the most vulnerable groups across Teesside including MSM. From 1 April, local authorities directly contracted with THT to continue to provide this service.

Men who have sex with men (MSM) are a key risk group for HIV.

Table 9 below shows graphs for the **percentage testing coverage for gay, bisexual and other men who have sex with men (GBMSM)** considered eligible for a HIV test when attending specialist sexual health services in all 12 north east local authorities.

The twelve graphs below show all four Tees local authorities testing less than the North East at 55.5% in 2022. Hartlepool (52.1%), Redcar and Cleveland (51.9%), Stockton (51.3%), Middlesbrough (51%).

HIV testing coverage, total New data

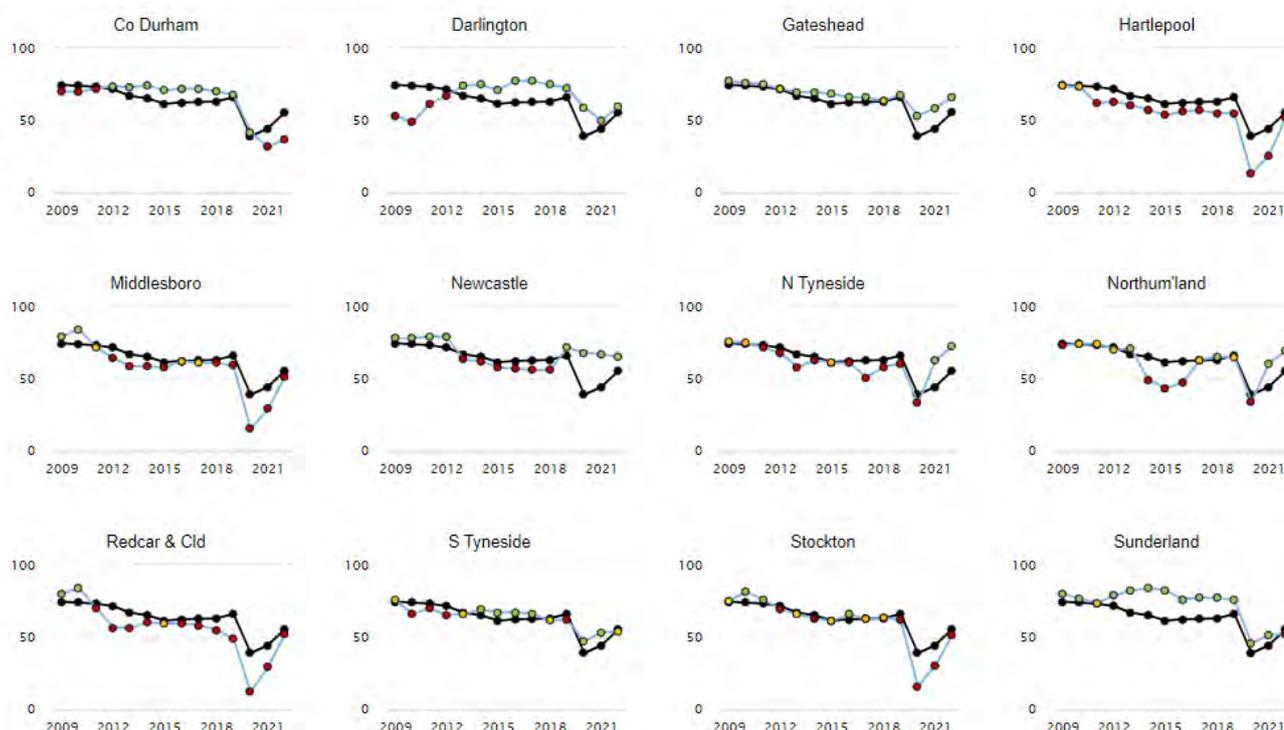


Table 9: HIV testing coverage, gay, bisexual and other men who have sex with men in the North East by Local Authority, 2009 - 2022. Source *Fingertips Data*.

The prevalence of diagnosed HIV per 1,000 people aged 15 to 59 years in 2022 was for Middlesbrough

(1.67), Stockton (1.27), Hartlepool (1.07) and Redcar and Cleveland (0.66). All better than the England rate of 2.34. Middlesbrough and Stockton are both above the North East rate of 1.18, with Hartlepool and Redcar and Cleveland both below. Middlesbrough ranks the highest of the 4 LAs for HIV prevalence at 115 / 150 UTLAs/UAs and Redcar and Cleveland ranks the lowest on Tees and the lowest in England at 150/150.

All local authority areas have increased their HIV testing amongst eligible patients between 2021 and 2022.

Local Authority of Residence	2020	2021	% change from 2021 to 2022 *	Rank with England 2021	Value for England 2021
Hartlepool	56.0	70.0	24.9%	119	77.8
Middlesbrough	39.0	57.9	48.5%	145	77.8
Redcar	28.4	59.5	109.2%	144	77.8
Stockton	32.9	55.8	69%	146	77.8

Table 10: Coverage of HIV testing among eligible patients at specialist SHSs for Teesside and England:2021. Source UKHSA Summary profile of local authority sexual health reports, 01 February 2023.

* Percent change proportional to the value in 2020, not a change in percentage points.

Sexual Health provision is open access and available to all and there is no evidence to show that service provision is prejudiced by the characteristic of sexual orientation.

4.7 Gender Reassignment

Gender Reassignment:

		Overall impact: The sexual health service is likely to have a neutral impact on this protected characteristic. The SH service provides an open access service available to the population of Tees including this protected group. The SH service is expected to meet all service user needs by taking account of equality, discrimination and good relations between protected groups in the way that it deliver services, buy goods and services and employs staff.
Positive		
Neutral	✓	
Negative		

Evidence

The sexual health needs of trans people remain understudied in the UK and internationally. The government 2021 Census development report identified a need amongst a number of data users for information about gender identity for policy development and service planning, especially in relation to the provision of health services.

At present, there is a lack of specific data on the sexual health and reproductive health needs of individuals who are seeking, undergoing or have received gender reassignment surgery, as well as people whose gender identity is different from their gender at birth.

The service does not currently report data regarding numbers of patients who have undertaken gender reassignment but recognises that some patients are likely to utilise regional gender dysphoria clinics.

All staff are fully compliant with equality and diversity training, which includes training on gender reassignment and fluidity.

In 2022/23, the service carried out an audit of suitability, working with the LGBT Foundation, to review how

appropriate / user friendly they are to LGBTQ+ groups. In March 2024, HCRG was awarded Gold from Pride in Practice for excellence in LGBT+ healthcare.

The sexual health contract 2021-2024 states:

B5.1 The Parties must not discriminate between or against Service Users, on the grounds of age, disability, **gender reassignment**, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation or any other non-medical characteristics except as permitted by the Law.

KPIs within the SH contract to support this protected characteristic:

KPI 7.1

Evidence of at least one user experience survey annually per local authority to demonstrate that user involvement is fundamental to service development, provision, monitoring and evaluation for all service provision including cervical screening, HMB, vasectomy provision and psychosexual counselling.

KPI 7.3

Adopt the You're Welcome criteria for each clinic setting.

You're Welcome" criteria are used as a guiding principle and ensures that services are friendly to young people.

Sexual Health provision is open access and available to all and there is no evidence to show that service provision is prejudiced by the characteristic of gender reassignment.

Sources used:

- Tees Sexual Health Service Specification for the Provision of an Integrated Sexual Health Service, 2021-2024.

4.8 Marriage/civil partnership

Marriage/civil partnership: Consider people in a marriage or civil partnership

		Overall impact:
Positive		The SH service is likely to have a neutral impact on this protected characteristic.
Neutral	✓	The Provider will provide an open access service that will be made available to the population of Teesside including this protected group.
Negative		

Evidence

The SH service captures data on all patients in respect of their marital status where they are happy to disclose this information.

Due to the nature of service, each patient is treated as an individual and their marital or civil partnership status is not reflected in the level or quality of the service they receive. Partner notification of positive STI test results continues to be offered by the service allowing service users to remain anonymous if they choose to.

There is a lack of specific data on the sexual health and reproductive health needs of individuals who are married or in civil partnerships. There are no perceived barriers for people who are married or civil partnership to access the provision of the integrated sexual health service.

Sexual Health provision is open access and available to all and there is no evidence to show that service provision is prejudiced by the characteristic of marriage / civil partnership.

Sexual Health provision is open access and available to all and there is no evidence to show that service provision is prejudiced by the characteristic of marriage / civil partnership

Sources used:

4.9 Pregnancy, maternity and paternity

Pregnancy, maternity and paternity:

		Overall impact: The SH service is likely to have a neutral impact on this protected characteristic. The Provider will provide an open access service that will be made available to the population of Teesside including this protected group.
Positive		
Neutral	✓	
Negative		

Evidence

Teenage Conceptions:

Over the last 20 years, there has been significant progress on teenage pregnancy. The under-18 conception rate has fallen by 64% and the under-16 conception rate by over 65%. Both are now at the lowest level since 1969. This has been achieved through a long term evidence based teenage pregnancy strategy, delivered with concerted effort by local government and their health partners.

There is also a growing recognition that socioeconomic disadvantage can be both a cause and a consequence of teenage motherhood. Teenage pregnancy rates are a well-established and evidence based indicator of deprivation and inequality with 50% of all teenage conceptions occurring in the top 20% most deprived wards in England. Poor self-esteem, lack of aspiration and alcohol misuse increase the likelihood of a teenage girl falling pregnant. It is widely understood that teenage pregnancy and early motherhood can be associated with poor educational achievement, poor physical and mental health, social isolation, poverty and related factors.

The babies of teenage mothers can face more health problems such as premature birth or low birth weight and higher rates of infant mortality; than those of older mothers. Teenage mothers themselves may also have experienced health problems. For example, post-natal depression is three times more common in teenage mothers; smoking in pregnancy is also three times more common in teenage mothers than older mothers and teenage mothers are one third less likely to breast feed.

Building the knowledge, skills, resilience and aspirations of young people, and providing easy access to welcoming contraceptive services, helps them to delay sex until they are ready to enjoy healthy, consensual relationships and to use contraception to prevent unplanned pregnancy. Central to success is translating the evidence into a multi-agency whole system approach.

In 2021, the latest under 18 conception rates (per 1,000 15-17yr old females) show Middlesbrough still has the highest rate in Teesside at 31.5, followed by Redcar and Cleveland at 27.3, then Hartlepool at 19.9 and Stockton at 17.4.

The SH service is a key partner in the South Tees Teen Pregnancy Strategy Group working with wider partners to help reduce unwanted pregnancies.

The SH service's priorities centre on the provision of contraception – full access and choice to the array of contraception provision.

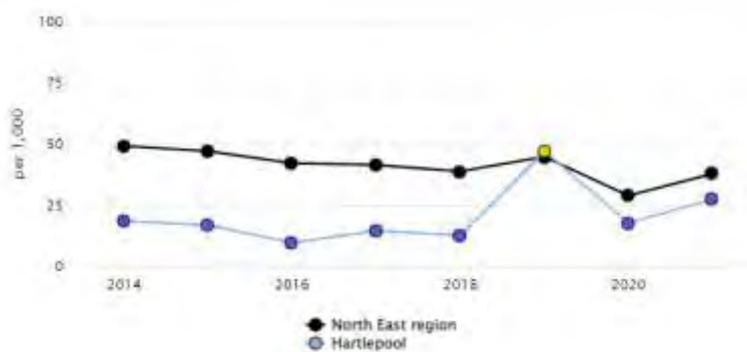
The SH service has develop improved pathways and access to the full range of contraception and sexual health services including STI testing and treatment, aimed at reducing unplanned pregnancies. The SH service refers very few women to TOP services as most are self-referrals.

The SH service has developed appropriate pathways and joint working on both post-partum LARC and syphilis pathways with colleagues from the maternity departments at STNHSFT and NT&HNHSFT.

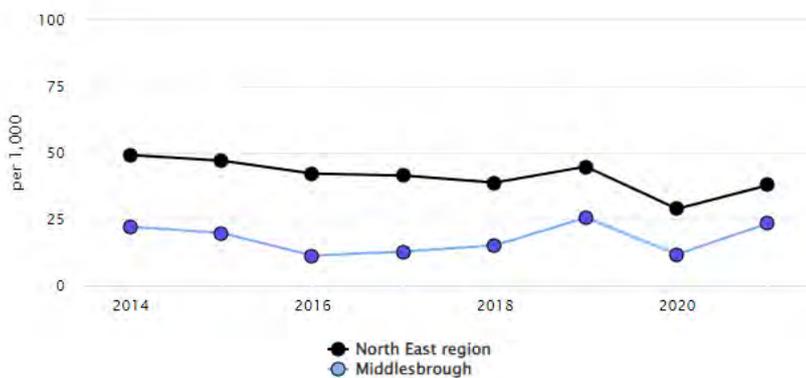
LARC – Total prescribed LARC excluding injections rate /1,000 women 15-44years old,

The four graphs below show the total prescribed LARC excluding injections as a rate per 1,000 women 15-44years old for each local authority across Teesside. All four local authorities are below the North East average.

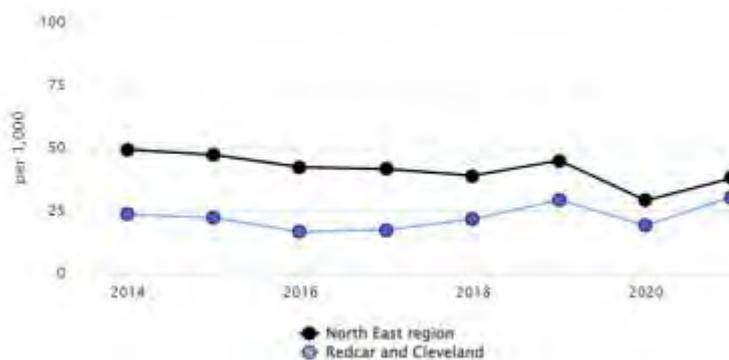
Redcar and Cleveland (30.2) has the highest rate in Teesside, then Stockton (29.4), then Hartlepool (27.3) followed by Middlesbrough (23.4).



Hartlepool's rate is 27.3 compared to the North East Average of 37.8.



Middlesbrough's rate is 23.4, compared to the North East Average of 37.8.



Redcar and Cleveland's rate is 30.2, the highest in Teesside, compared to the North East Average of 37.8.



Stockton's rate is 29.4 compared to the North East Average of 37.8.

KPIs within the contract.

Two LARC KPIs within the contract show achievement of LARC fits for women under 20 years of age and achievement of LARC fits in women over 20 years of age for four months out of six in CY2. In both KPIs activity is increasing from Q1 to Q2 of contract year 2.

LARC < 20 years of age

KPI	Indicator	Target		Aug 22	Sept 22	Oct 22	Nov 22	Dec 22	Jan 23
4.4	Percentage of LARCs prescribed as a proportion of all contraceptives by age (excluding depo) <20 years of age for all LA areas	30%	% Achieved	37.8%	33.3%	41.3%	38.5%	51.9%	44.4%
			Denominator	45	39	46	52	54	45
			Numerator	17	13	19	20	28	20

- Target achieved
- Both numerator and denominator have increased in Q2 from Q1
 - Q1 numerator 49 to Q2 numerator 68
 - Q1 denominator 130 to Q2 denominator 151

LARC > 20 years of age

KPI	Indicator	Target		Aug 22	Sept 22	Oct 22	Nov 22	Dec 22	Jan 23
4.5	Percentage of LARCs prescribed as a proportion of all contraceptives by age (excluding depo) 20 years	50%	% Achieved	52.8%	37.3%	56.0%	53.4%	47.3%	53.1%
			Denominator	108	102	150	174	148	262
			Numerator	57	38	84	93	70	139

of age and above or all LA areas									
----------------------------------	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

- Target achieved for four months out of six.
- Both numerator and denominator have increased in Q2 from Q1
 - Q1 numerator 60 to Q2 numerator 101
 - Q1 denominator 120 to Q2 denominator 195

Abortions:

In 2021, the percentage of conceptions leading to legal abortion reached a record high of 26.5% of conceptions leading to an abortion. This percentage has generally been increasing for all age groups since 2015. Women aged under 16 years and over 40 years were the only age groups to see a decrease in the percentage of conceptions leading to abortion in 2021 (Figure 3). Women aged under 16 years still remain the age group with the lowest number of conceptions and the highest percentage of conceptions leading to abortion, with over half of the conceptions for women aged under 16 years leading to abortion (59.8%). Women aged 30 to 34 years, who had the highest number of conceptions, also had the lowest percentage of conceptions leading to abortion in 2021 (18.3%).

Figure 3: The percentage of conceptions leading to legal abortion has generally been increasing for the majority of age groups since 2015

Percentage of conceptions for women of all ages leading to legal abortion by age group, England and Wales, 1990 to 2021

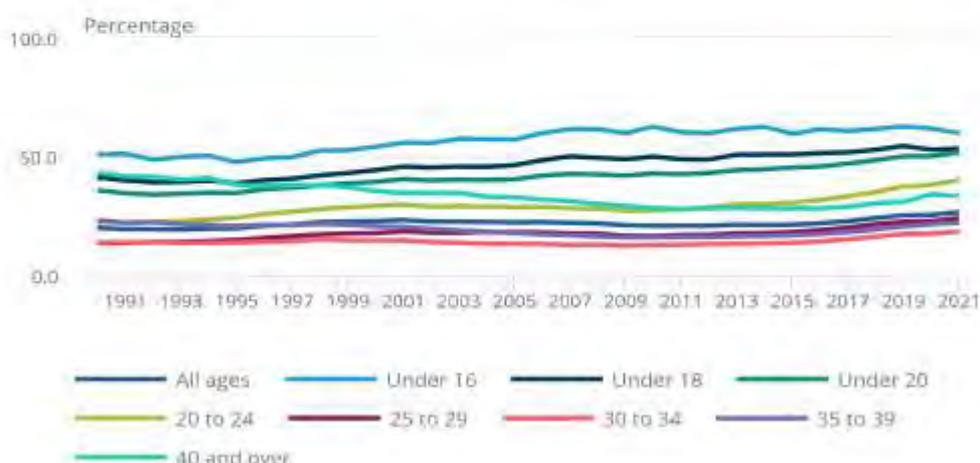
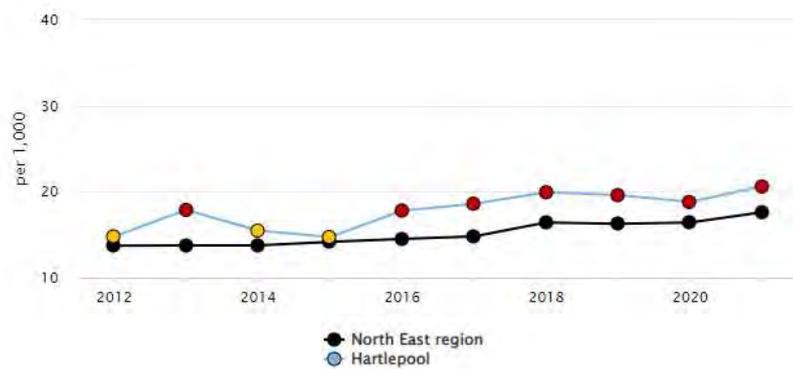
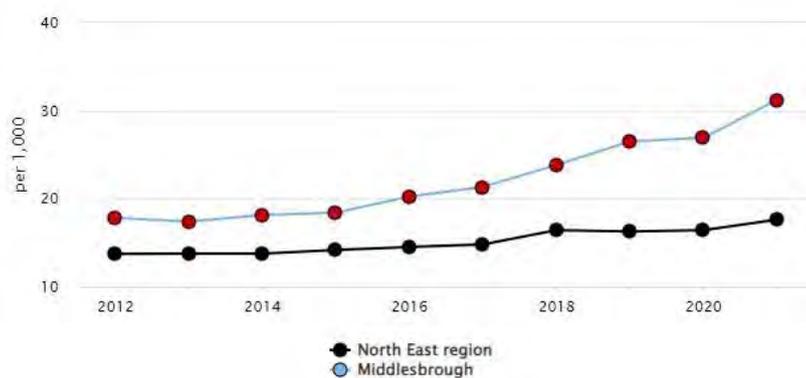


Table 11: Percentage of conceptions leading to abortion. Source ONS Statistics 2021.

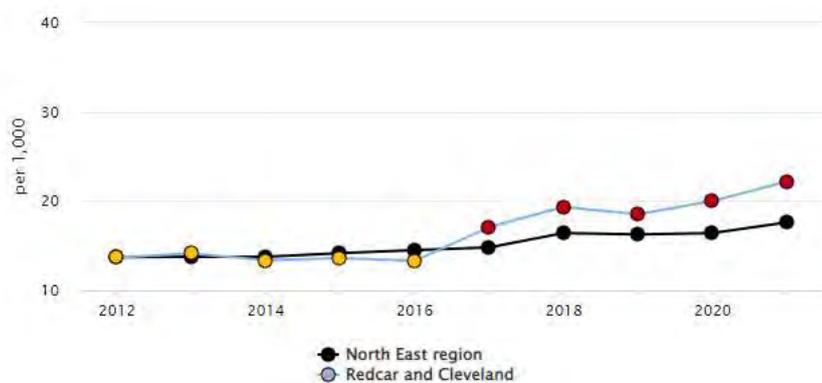
The four graphs below show the crude rate per 1,000 women aged 15-44years old for each local authority across Teesside. Middlesbrough has the highest rate (31.2) in Teesside, then Redcar and Cleveland (22.2), then Hartlepool (20.6) followed by Stockton (19.3).



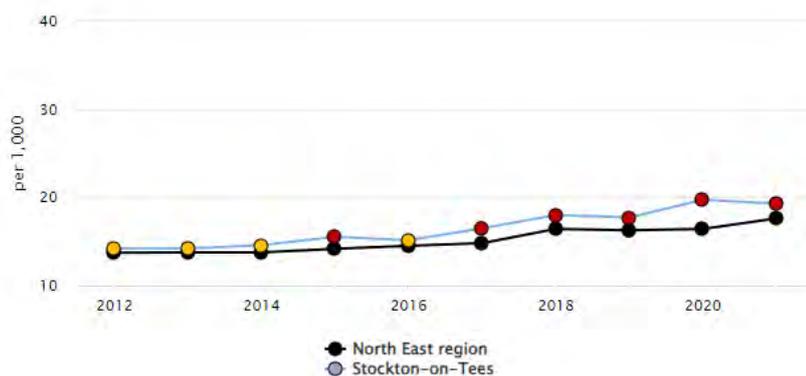
Hartlepool's rate is 20.6 compared to the North East Average of 17.6.



Middlesbrough's rate is 31.2, the highest in Teesside, compared to the North East Average of 17.6.



Redcar and Cleveland's rate is 22.2 compared to the North East Average of 17.6.



Stockton's rate is 19.3 compared to the North East Average of 17.6.

Marriage / Civil Partnerships:

There is a lack of specific data on the sexual health and reproductive health needs of individuals who are married or in civil partnerships. There are no perceived barriers for people who are married or civil partnership to access the provision of the integrated sexual health service.

Sexual Health provision is open access and available to all and there is no evidence to show that service provision is prejudiced by the characteristic of marriage / civil partnership.

Sources used:

- ONS Conceptions in England and Wales 2021
- Teenage Pregnancy Prevention Framework (updated May 2020)

4.10 Socio-economic status

Socio-economic status: Consider those who are from low income or financially excluded backgrounds

		Overall impact:
Positive	✓	<p>As with many health outcomes, sexual health is patterned by socioeconomic inequalities, with those from disadvantaged groups often being more at risk of poor sexual health outcomes.</p> <p>Improving the sexual and reproductive health of the population is therefore a key goal, including addressing inequalities in sexual health by providing information and advice, evidence based behaviour change interventions, access to the most effective forms of contraception to meet needs, and timely access to testing, treatment and follow-up for STIs and HIV, including partner notification.</p> <p>Those groups who are at risk of poorer sexual health outcomes or access include men and women from some black and minority ethnic (BME) groups; gay, bisexual and other men who have sex with men (MSM); young people; male to female transpeople; and people selling sex, among others.</p> <p>Across all groups, deprivation is a major risk factor for poorer sexual health outcomes. Other high-risk populations may emerge, reflecting demographic and behaviour changes within the population.</p>
Neutral		
Negative		

As an integrated sexual health service, the Service must provide open access services accessible to all patients eligible for free NHS treatment, irrespective of borough of residence and socio-economic status. It is therefore likely to have a positive impact on this characteristic. Furthermore, equality is promoted through the service in several ways:

- a) A particular focus on prevention and sexual health promotion among young people – for example, improving sex and relationships education and ensuring provision of free contraception.
- b) A specific objective in the contract to meet the needs of people from high risk groups, including young people, people from black ethnic groups, LGBT people and people with disabilities.
- c) Strengthening community-based services and consideration of alternative methods of service delivery, such as online services and self-testing – with the aim of reducing stigma and encouraging greater use of services, particularly by men and young people.
- d) An objective to ensure that robust safeguarding arrangements are in place, which includes issues such as sexual exploitation and FGM which disproportionately affects women and girls.

Deprivation

Sexual Health is a key Local Authority and Public Health priority area as it can have a significant impact on the population, the communities and individuals across Tees.

Poor sexual health can be a consequence of and associated with other vulnerabilities (e.g., drug and alcohol use), coercion, exploitation and abuse, leading to poor short and long term outcomes. Deprivation and social exclusion also impact on sexual health, with a higher burden of disease in populations who live in more deprived areas. Poorer and more deprived areas are experiencing higher rates of STIs and teenage pregnancies.

Socio-economic Status

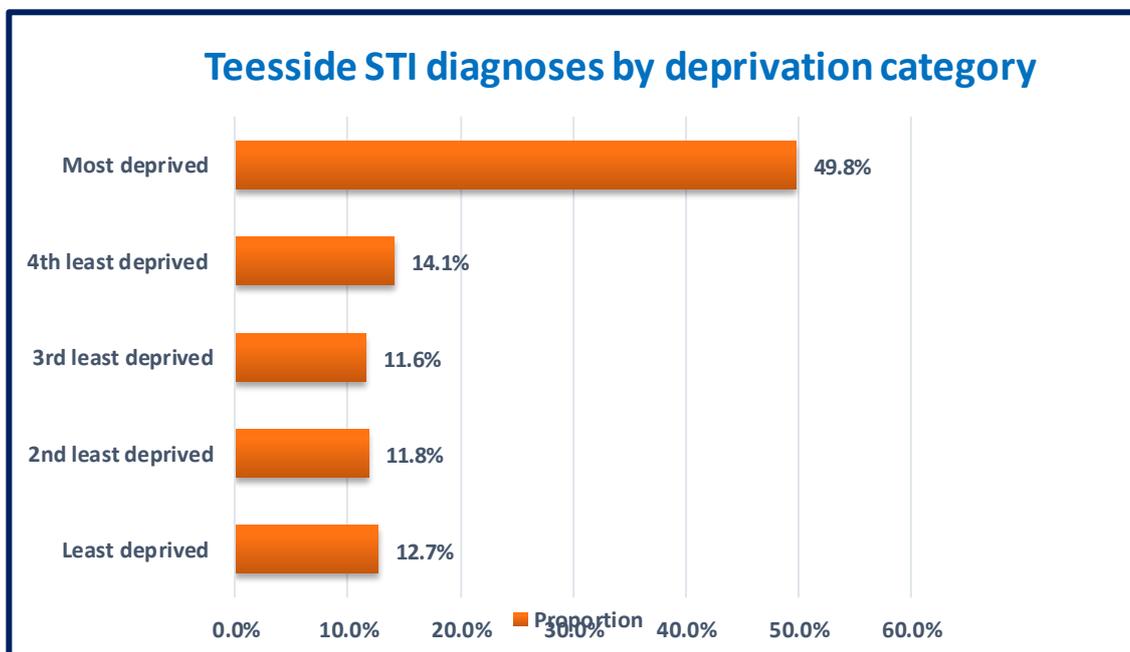
Local authorities in Teesside generally have high levels of deprivation. Middlesbrough has the highest proportion of Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) within the top 10% most deprived in England, as nearly half of all LSOAs fall in this category, with Hartlepool ranked 10th, Redcar & Cleveland ranked 29th, and Stockton-on-Tees ranked 39th.

Deprivation on Teesside 2019		
Area	Proportion of LSOA in 10% most deprived	Rank of proportion of LSOA in 10% most deprived (out of 137 LAs)
Hartlepool	36%	10
Middlesbrough	49%	1
Redcar & Cleveland	24%	29
Stockton-on-Tees	21%	39

Table 12: Deprivation in local authorities on Teesside. Source ONS census 2011

Deprivation is comparably high in Teesside, particularly in Middlesbrough and Hartlepool which are among the 10 local authorities in England with the highest proportion of most deprived LSOAs.

Deprivation is strongly associated with a higher level of STIs. Almost half of all STIs diagnosed in Teesside in 2018 were for people from the most deprived 20% areas.



Tables 13: Proportion of 2018 STI diagnoses in Teesside by deprivation category. LASER Reports 2018.

The Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) identifies areas of deprivation in each local authority areas, and for smaller areas, or neighbourhoods, within each local authority areas. These are known as Lower-layered Super Output areas (LSOAs). The following graphs show areas of deprivation at the LSOA and the rate of new STIs. There is a direct correlation.

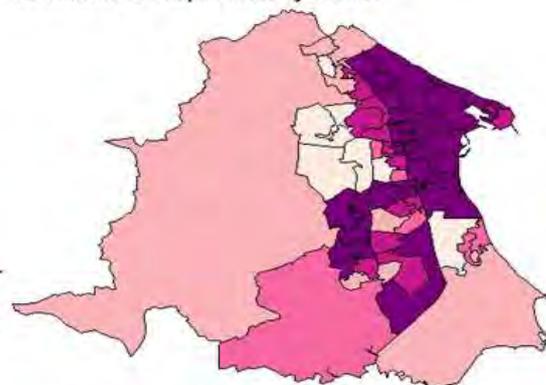
Hartlepool

Distribution of rates of new STI by LSOA



- Rate per 100,000 population
- 2500+
- 2000-2499.99
- 1500-1999.99
- 1000-1499.99
- 500-999.99
- 0.01-499.99
- 0

Distribution of deprivation by LSOA

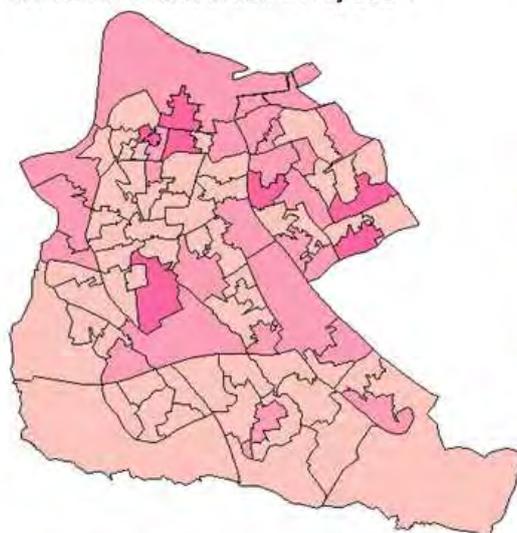


- Deprivation category
- Most deprived
- 2nd most deprived
- 3rd most deprived
- 4th most deprived
- least deprived

Table 14: Rates per 100,000 population of new STIs and deprivation by LSOA in Hartlepool in 2018. LASER Report, 2018.

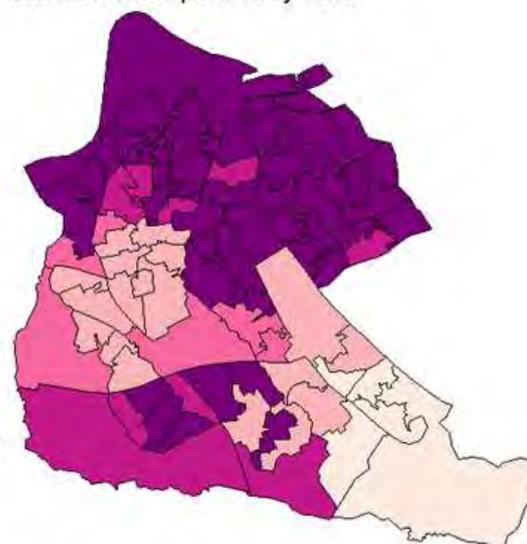
Middlesbrough

Distribution of rates of new STI by LSOA



- Rate per 100,000 population
- 2500+
 - 2000-2499.99
 - 1500-1999.99
 - 1000-1499.99
 - 500-999.99
 - 0.01-499.99
 - 0

Distribution of deprivation by LSOA

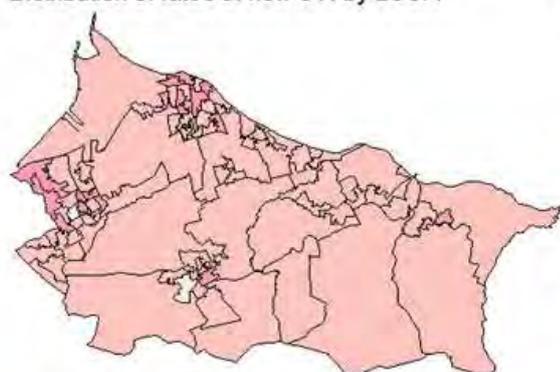


- Deprivation category
- Most deprived
 - 2nd most deprived
 - 3rd most deprived
 - 4th most deprived
 - least deprived

Figure 15: Rates per 100,000 population of new STIs and deprivation by LSOA in Middlesbrough in 2018. LASER Report, 2018.

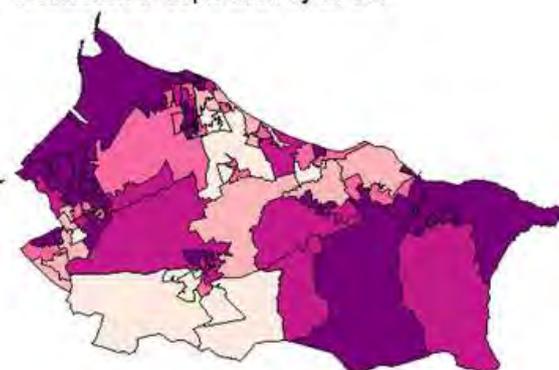
Redcar & Cleveland

Distribution of rates of new STI by LSOA



- Rate per 100,000 population
- 2500+
 - 2000-2499.99
 - 1500-1999.99
 - 1000-1499.99
 - 500-999.99
 - 0.01-499.99
 - 0

Distribution of deprivation by LSOA

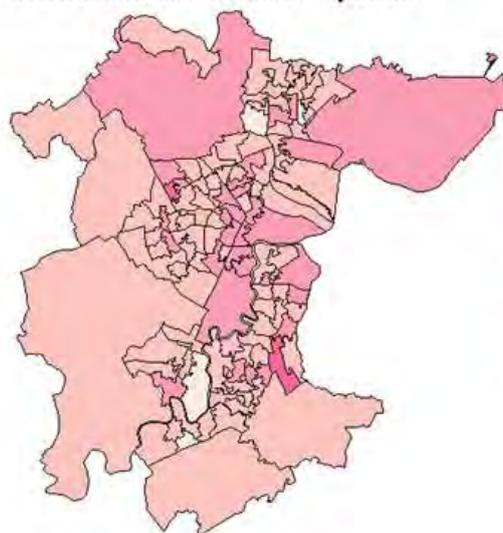


- Deprivation category
- Most deprived
 - 2nd most deprived
 - 3rd most deprived
 - 4th most deprived
 - least deprived

Figure 16: Rates per 100,000 population of new STIs and deprivation by LSOA in Redcar & Cleveland in 2018. LASER Report, 2018.

Stockton-on-Tees

Distribution of rates of new STI by LSOA



Distribution of deprivation by LSOA

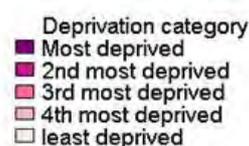
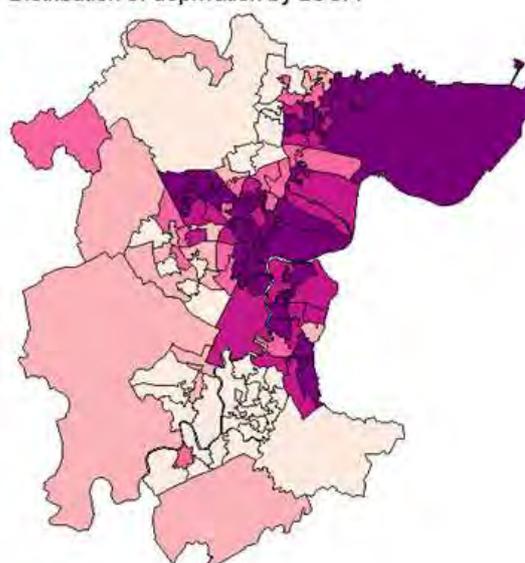


Figure 17: Rates per 100,000 population of new STIs and deprivation by LSOA in Stockton-on-Tees in 2018. LASER Report, 2018.

The latest IMD was published in 2019, by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government.

Each of the 317 local authority areas in England are given a ranking. Middlesbrough has a 'rank of average score' of 5 (an increase of one, from 6 in 2015). This means that it's the fifth most deprived local authority area in England, and that it has become more deprived since 2015.

Of the 20 wards in Middlesbrough since 2015, 15 have become more deprived and five have become less deprived. The more deprived are:

- North Ormesby
- Longlands & Beechwood
- Central,
- Ayresome and Park.

However, North Ormesby and Longlands & Beechwood are 2 of the 6 (30%) of the wards in Middlesbrough that are in the top 1% most deprived wards in England.

Two further wards (Central and Hemlington) are in the top 3% most deprived. This means that Middlesbrough has 8 wards (40%) which are in the top 3% most deprived in England.

50.9% of residents are female and 49.2% male with a British Minority Ethnic population of 11.7% identified in the 2011 census.

Appendix 4

	<p>From the Annual Population survey 2026, 94.6% identify as heterosexual or straight, 1.2% as gay or lesbian and 0.4% as bisexual. Based on</p> <p>The Gender Identity Research & Education Society (GIREs) estimates that 1% of the British population are gender nonconforming to some degree. GIREs estimate around 1,400 of Middlesbrough's population could be gender nonconforming but this is an estimate.</p>
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<h1 style="margin: 0;">FINANCE AND POLICY COMMITTEE</h1> <h2 style="margin: 0;">25 June 2024</h2>



Subject: PRODUCTIVITY PLAN

Report of: Director of Finance, IT and Digital

Decision Type: For Decision

1. COUNCIL PLAN PRIORITY

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

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

2.1 The purpose of this report is to provide members with the proposed “productivity plan” required to be submitted to the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) by the 19 July.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 As part of the Local Government Finance Settlement, the government announced that councils would be asked to produce productivity plans. The request is part of the Governments review of productivity across all public services.

3.2 The purpose of these plans is to help government to understand what is working well, what common themes there are, whether there are any gaps

and what government can do to unlock future opportunities. The government has not issued a formal template, but have provided four themes to consider and as such our productivity plan follows these themes.

- 3.3 The government has stipulated that member oversight and endorsement of the plan is required prior to submission. The plan must also be uploaded to our website. It is also suggested that councils should consider how they will update the plans and report on progress on a regular basis.

4. PROPOSALS

- 4.1 The Productivity plan for submission is detailed at **Appendix A**.
- 4.2 Elsewhere on the agenda are reports detailing the financial outlook for the council in addition to our transformation plan. Both of which are regularly updated and reported. As such a separate exercise to measure productivity on-going is considered overly burdensome given balancing our budget and achieving the aims of our Transformation Plan and Council Plan in themselves demonstrates productivity.

5. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Risk Implications	No relevant issues
Financial Considerations	No relevant issues
Legal Considerations	No relevant issues
Subsidy Control	No relevant issues
Child / Family Poverty Considerations	No relevant issues
Equality and Diversity Considerations	No relevant issues
Staff Considerations	No relevant issues
Asset Management Considerations	No relevant issues.
Environment, Sustainability and Climate Change Considerations	No relevant issues
Consultation	Not required

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.1 It is recommended that Members agree the submission of the productivity plan attached at Appendix A.

7. REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1 To enable the council to comply with the governments stipulation for member oversight and endorsement of our productivity plan and to meet the submission deadline of 19 July 2024.

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 8.1 None

9. CONTACT OFFICER

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 Director of Finance, IT and Digital
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 Telephone: 01429 523093

Sign Off:-

Managing Director	Date: 28/05/2024
Director of Finance, IT and Digital	Date: 28/05/2024
Director of Legal, Governance and HR	Date: 3 June 2024

Hartlepool Borough Council - Productivity Plan

Introduction

As part of the Governments review of productivity across all public services, they have requested that all Councils produce a Productivity Plan.

The purpose of these plans is to help government to understand what is working well, what common themes there are, whether there are any gaps and what government can do to unlock future opportunities.

The government has not issued a formal template, but have provided four themes to consider and as such our productivity plan follows these themes.

The council must comply with its best value duty to 'make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness.'

The recent revision to the best value guidance places emphasis of councils to use Oflog's Local Authority Data Explorer to benchmark performance against similar authorities and collaborate to identify and share best practice across the sector. The council will use this and other data sources to measure productivity.

The scale of the financial challenge facing the council means that the level of savings required cannot be achieved solely through productivity gains. Hartlepool has suffered some of the largest reductions to Core Spending Power (CSP) in the country. In real terms our CSP is 38.4% lower in 2024/25 than it was in 2010/11. If Hartlepool's CSP had increased in line with inflation it would be £48.9m a year higher. If Hartlepool's CSP had decreased in line with the England average (23.4% real terms cut) it would be £19.4m higher. Fundamentally, the council can demonstrate its productivity by the continued balancing of budgets in the face of significant and disproportionate funding reductions coupled with increased demand for our services.

How you have transformed the way you design and deliver services to make better use of resources

The council undertook a significant transformation exercise in the early years of austerity, centralising services, reviewing processes and ultimately reducing our headcount by circa 500 (20% of the workforce). Smaller service transformations have followed, although this becomes increasingly challenging given our efficient operating model.

The council has produced a Transformation Strategy that sets out how the Council will change the way that we use our resources going forward so that we are able to

continue to provide high quality services whilst responding to the difficult financial situation that we continue to face. It builds on the changes that the Council have delivered over the last 10+ years and outlines how we will continue to evolve as an organisation.

In the meantime, the council has recognised that significant savings can be achieved through better use of resources and this has and will help mitigate the impact on front facing services. To that end, as part of our Medium term Financial Planning we included a 'nuts and bolts' workstream to focus on getting the basics right across the council. These are often small and discreet projects, but they add up. They promote increased focus on compliance and discipline and include:

- Asset Management – implementation of a Strategic Asset Management Board to aid asset management efficiency across all council departments. This includes embedding our hybrid working arrangements to save building costs and invest to save projects around energy efficiency and solar panels;
- Contract Hire, Car mileage and route planning to reduce mileage costs and support our net zero agenda;
- Postage – encouraging electronic communications and reinforcing rules around first class postage;
- Council Heartbeat magazine – increased advertising, reductions to print and delivery costs and increasing its online presence;
- Procurement – invest to save through seconding additional expertise to support improvements in procurement activity and processes. This has included the introduction of business partnering workshops to work with service areas to recommend improved or alternative means of procurement;
- Purchasing cards and VAT – providing renewed guidance on usage and VAT reclaim compliance;
- Treasury Management – ensuring returns are maximised whilst adhering to our Investment Strategy, putting security and liquidity first and foremost;
- Council Tax recovery – investing in outward call systems to promote payment prior to summons as well as investing in staff to increase in year collection;
- Council Tax / Housing Benefit Fraud – restructure of, and investment into the team to create a small fraud team to pro-actively identify and address fraud; and
- Staff benefits – refreshed our salary sacrifice staff benefits offer to aid recruitment and retention and provide NI and Superannuation savings for the council.

The senior management team was restructured during 2023, with specific focus on corporate services to give renewed focus and consistency on service improvement and transformation across the council, including in the likes of procurement, IT and HR. The restructure also re-focused the role of the Chief Finance Office and deputy to give greater capacity to financial management and transformation across the council. These changes underpinned the response to the unprecedented financial challenges faced by the council during 2023/24. These challenges continue.

The council continue to make transformation gains using IT and digital and these are detailed later in the submission.

In addition to 'nuts and bolts', the council has a track record of service reviews, engagement and invest to saves to promote more efficient services. Including:

- Childrens Social Care – the council have invested in in-house care home provision to address the increased demand and external provider market failure. We have also entered into block booking arrangements to help reduce the risk for providers and secure better rates. We continue to progress further opportunities to reduce costs;
- Childrens Services – participation in a number of Department for Education pilot schemes whereby grant is received for this transformational work; and
- Adult Social Care – preventative approaches implemented through community led support have reduced waiting lists / times and prevented the need for more costly services. As an example, twice as many people are able to access Occupational Therapy within 10 days since services were provided within Community Hubs, and case studies evidence that people have improved their mobility and become less reliant on medication.

The Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) savings proposals are monitored throughout the year; tracked through our monthly Directorate budget clinics and reported to Finance and Policy committee on a quarterly basis.

Finally the council has recognised that inward investment and economic growth is key to both financial sustainability for the council and the levelling up of the town. As well as a successful track record in bidding for capital funding through levelling up and the towns fund, we have actively engage with the combined authority to establish a Mayoral Development Corporation and are progressing an investment zone within the town. Overall 65% of our capital programme 2024/25 to 2027/28 is funded by external funding sources, therefore limiting the borrowing requirement for the council.

How you plan to take advantage of technology and make better use of data to improve decision making, service design and use of resources

The Council is on a journey to improve its use of technology and to further embed and extend its digital offering.

The council entered into a new IT managed contract in late 2023 that aimed to modernise our IT usage, including through use of Microsoft 365, whilst also providing better value for money for the council. Accompanying this new contract was the appointment of an Assistant Director with a remit to give IT, digital and data use a greater focus.

The council has a positive track record with digital delivery, often achieving channel shift upwards of 70%, particularly in relation to environmental services and achieving numerous awards. However, this has tended to be ad-hoc and incremental, often on a project by project basis. The council has prepared a Transformation Plan that puts digital as a core principle of how we operate both with our customers and internally.

Examples of our digital approach include;

- Adult Social Care – online information and advice provision via Hartlepool Now, including an Equipment Finder option for people requiring low level aids and adaptations in their own home and a virtual Community Hub offer, with Online Financial Assessment being introduced in 2024. This agenda is supported by Digital Navigators who work with people in Community Hubs or their own homes to become more digitally included and confident.
- Adult Social Care – implementation of the Great North Care Record from May 2024 allowing social care staff to have digital access to NHS records.
- Council Tax - we have also recently introduced an improved council tax online system. Sign up has proven challenging, but the aim is to obtain in excess of 50% sign up from households. This will not only reduce printing and postage, but allow a seamless flow of information from customer through to back office systems with minimal intervention. We will also use the data to promote Direct Debit sign up and prompt payment;
- Procurement – being part of the new regional procurement system ‘Open’ in 2024 that affords a streamlines and simplified system to deliver greater value for money for the council; and
- Street Lighting – in partnership with TVCA trialling a smart lamp column roll out designed to improve connectivity and provide greater information to residents.

Hand in hand with digital improvements is a cross cutting Data Intelligence Group. Power BI has been used within our Children’s and Adult Social Care teams to provide real time performance data for managers, creating opportunities for learning from best practice and driving continuous improvement. As an example, team managers use caseload information to support allocation and prioritisation of new work and safeguarding activity data is used to identify areas where proactive preventative approaches will have the greatest impact.

The Council is progressing Artificial Intelligence in a controlled and responsible way. Microsoft Co-pilot is being rolled out to a pilot group of staff to allow use of Generative AI to support report writing, press briefings and bid writing. The approach to AI will be flexed and expanded moving forward as the organisation becomes more technology “stable” following Microsoft 365 rollout and greater use of data.

Finally the council is currently progressing a replacement website that will be more accessible and user friendly. Greater focus will be made on keeping the data

relevant, up to date and with a transaction focus so as to become the council's basis for greater channel shift and use of AI in terms of customer contact.

Your plans to reduce wasteful spend within your organisation and systems

As set out under question 1, the council has a good track record in identifying and tackling "waste" in the organisation. The MTFs drives this requirement – it is a necessity. There is no formal approach to identifying waste, though being small and agile, senior managers have awareness of any areas to address (and these are being addressed). Increased staff messaging around the council's financial challenges also drives ideas and improvements.

The council aims to continue to reinforce and embed all the nuts and bolts projects through increased corporate consistency and compliance. This is supported by our approach to financial management – monthly budget clinics for each Directorate are attended by the Managing Director, Executive Director, Assistant Directors and Finance. These clinics both review the financial position but ensure that savings and transformation plans are being monitored and progressed. Financial management then flows through to quarterly reviews to Finance and Policy Committee. Spend is also monitored outside of these clinics, for example strengthened monitoring and reporting of purchase card spend has improved efficiency.

For high spend areas, for example Adult Social Care, spend is governed through a risk panel and placement authorisation process.

In addition to existing nuts and bolts projects, a number of further projects of various size and scope and aligned to our transformation strategy are progressing;

- Printing – reduction in printing devices by circa 50% and a focus on paperless systems and processes;
- Income generation – a review of policy and practices, particularly in respect of traded services to ensure a consistent approach across the organisation, ensuring costs are covered;
- Adult Social Care Financial Assessments – review of processes to reduce spend and make more timely assessments to support the individual and the councils budget;
- Childrens Social Care – further discussions regarding partnership arrangements to de-risk external children home provision so as to secure preferential rates; and
- Children's Social Care - an invest to save in "edge of care" provision to reduce the demand pressures of children coming into our care.

The council already works closely with other councils, including;

- The Teeswide Safeguarding Adults Board, Tees Community Equipment Service and Integrated Single Point of Access;
- Provision of the Childrens Hub and Hartlepool and Stockton Safeguarding Children Partnership, both led by the council;
- Contribution to legacy services, such as archiving, with other former Cleveland County Council authorities;
- Provision of financial services to schools and Cleveland Fire Authority, including the deputy S151 officer, in order to generate income and provide economies of scale to both organisations;
- Provision of our Human Resources system via North Yorkshire Council to secure best value and also greater business continuity robustness;
- Maximising use of the North East Procurement Organisation (NEPO) a collaboration of all 12 local authorities within the region, plus many other public sector partner organisations to ensure efficient procurement; and
- Trading with a number of local authorities including Catering (Stockton and Durham areas), Construction Team (Middlesbrough) and Design Team (North Tyneside).

Collaborative working is producing real benefits in a number of these areas, for example the Integrated Single Point of Access model within adult social care which has contributed to the local health and social care system having the best Urgent & Emergency Care performance in the country in 2023/24.

Senior officers are actively involved in all regional groups to ensure ideas are discussed and shared and that we both inform and learn from our peers.

Finally, from government correspondence there is a clear expectation that we provide some focus on consultants, agency staff and Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) spend.

The council only employs consultants for specialist one off projects, in the main for capital.

We have been successful in limiting agency spend. This includes having zero spend on adult social workers for in excess of 10 years. Overall agency spend in 2023/24 represented 1.4% of our total pay bill. We continue to invest in apprenticeships and development of our own staff and perform well in terms of retention in some challenging areas such as social work. The recent LGA Healthcheck for registered social workers saw Hartlepool ranked first nationally for the second consecutive year.

Our recent 'outstanding' Ofsted report into Childrens Services commented:

'There is a relentless focus on the ongoing recruitment and retention of frontline managers and social workers, resulting in a stable workforce with very limited use of interim workers.'

The council complies with the Public Sector Equality Duty. Equality and Diversity is a core part of what we do as an organisation and is not an add-on activity. Whilst we have an internal EDI network, we do not employ a specific equality officer.

The barriers preventing progress that the Government can help to reduce or remove

Settlement Funding

As has been set out above, the council is successfully improving productivity and seeking to transform services. The lack of certainty over future funding settlements, coupled with the delay in baseline reset and fair funding review is resulting in significant uncertainty over timelines to the extent that service cuts are needed to address our financial position. In simple terms we do not have the time certainty to progress transformation i.e. we cannot risk continuing to use reserves to any significant extent to balance the budget for fear these will run out before a) we have transformed services and b) we receive a fairer financial settlement. Independent modelling has indicated that HBC is likely to benefit significantly from both the delayed Business Rates baseline reset and progression of a Fair Funding Review.

The council has set aside a reserve explicitly to address and fund transformation including invest to saves. However, we recognise this is insufficient and the challenge will be to accelerate savings to provide further temporary financial capacity.

As such the government should give a clear guarantee around fair funding and multi-year budgets. In addition, the government should consider “bridging” funding to councils such as ourselves who are severely impacted by the baseline reset delay to allow us to invest in service transformation as well as services. It cannot be acceptable that a government delay in re-baselining can leave funding with the “haves” whilst we sit in the “have-not” group waiting.

Short term / Pilot Funding

As already highlighted the council participates in a number of pilot schemes. These are often led by the Department for Education whereby grant is received for this transformational work. Unfortunately these grants are short term and ring fenced with very prescriptive spend which stymies innovation and transformation based on local need.

The government should consider greater flexibility in any pilot schemes and also provide more certainty on funding over a period to ensure the council isn't left with overhanging costs and risks.

Capacity

The council has limited staffing capacity, having lost over 500 posts (20% of the workforce) since 2010. We have a streamlined senior officer structure, often with a

wide remit. Notwithstanding the need to focus on “the day job” this wide remit can often mean key staff are involved in numerous projects running concurrently. This can be exceptionally challenging to retain impetus. The use of consultants to review council operating models / service transformation remains under review, however past experience has not been positive and they can often result in increased drain on resource and yield limited innovation or transformation that has not already been identified internally.

IT and digital transformation, and critically savings, can often be lower for small local Authorities in relation to the upfront cost of investment i.e. software costs are often the same, but the level of savings that result are likely to be lower.

The government could consider providing specific transformation funding to de-risk initiatives for smaller local authorities or consider an investment fund for upfront IT developments targeted at smaller LA's to support the initial investment.

Data Sharing

As the public sector make more use of data, data sharing agreements should be updated to reflect the need to work for the whole of government services and not just central government or even individual departments. This often stems from a fundamental lack of understanding of how local government works by central government departments. The DWP approach to the memorandum of understanding being a critical example.

The government should review all data collection by its departments and sharing arrangements to ensure central and local government works hand in hand for the greater good and not just for the good of central government to the detriment of local government.

Statement of Accounts

Local Government Accounts are complex and have an overly burdensome audit arrangement with significant focus on notional entries such as pension accounting.

The government should streamline the accounts and audit requirement to ensure the accounts are more appropriate to their user and less burdensome to produce and audit.

Hartlepool Nuclear Power Station

Finally, at a local level the greatest barrier to transformation that government could enact would be to remove the nuclear power station from the local rating list onto the national list. Given the significant risk this creates for the council, the council holds a significant reserve of £3m for the possibility of further appeals or forecast decommissioning of the site that would result in us entering the safety net system. Removal of this risk would allow this funding to be invested in transformation to benefit the residents and businesses of Hartlepool.

FINANCE AND POLICY COMMITTEE

25TH JUNE 2024



Subject: TRANSFORMATION PLAN
Report of: Managing Director
Decision Type: Non-Key Decision

1. COUNCIL PLAN PRIORITY

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

- 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 share the Council's Transformation Plan for approval.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Council's Peer Review in 2022 included the following recommendations:

- Refresh the organisational plan for HBC – setting out the next stage of the journey for the Council, linked to a clear approach to transformation and values.
- Strengthen longer-term financial stability by developing an organisational approach to service transformation, procurement and municipal enterprise supported by requisite skills and capacity to support delivery.

- 3.2 In addition, recently published statutory guidance for the Best Value Duty (Local Government Act 1999) identifies the following as a characteristic of a well-functioning authority:

- An organisational-wide approach to continuous improvement, driven by an established transformation function or programme,

with frequent monitoring, performance reporting and updating of the corporate and improvement plans.

4. TRANSFORMATION PLAN

- 4.1 Whilst working to deliver the peer review action plan and the four workstreams identified in the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) the Executive Leadership Team (ELT) recognised that it would be beneficial to develop a Transformation Plan that clearly articulates how we will continue to develop as an organisation and achieve our target operating model.
- 4.2 The Transformation Plan included as **Appendix 1** sets out how the Council will change the way that resources are used so that we are able to continue to provide high quality services whilst responding to the difficult financial situation that we continue to face. It builds on the changes that the Council has delivered over the last 10+ years and outlines how we will continue to evolve as an organisation. The Plan sets out:
- Our target operating model i.e. the type of organisation we want to be in the future;
 - How we will achieve our target operating model and the outcomes that we aim to see as a result;
 - Our transformation principles which will underpin all of the Council's transformation activities;
 - How we will ensure employees, residents, businesses and other partners are part of this work;
 - The governance arrangements for the Plan specifically the role of ELT and Finance and Policy Committee;
 - A transformation template which will be utilised by Lead Officers when preparing to deliver a transformation project.
- 4.3 Any project that contributes to the Council achieving our target operating model could be considered a transformation project. However, the transformation plan and governance arrangements will focus on projects that are either cross cutting and as such need council wide buy in or significant projects in terms of their size and scale.
- 4.4 It is recognised that transformation will be an on-going process for the Council so the intention is that it will be a dynamic plan which will need to be reviewed and updated annually with progress reported to ELT once a month and every 6 months to Finance and Policy Committee.

5. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS/IMPLICATIONS

RISK IMPLICATIONS	An overarching risk has been identified within the Transformation Plan and this will be added to the Council's Strategic Risk Register. In addition individual transformation projects will identify their own risks and these will be regularly monitored by ELT.
FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS	There are no considerations at this stage however the target operating model as set out in the Transformation Plan includes reference to a sustainable financial future.
SUBSIDY CONTROL	No relevant issues.
LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS	Whilst there are no legal requirements to have a Transformation Plan it is good practice to have one in place and demonstrates our organisational-wide approach to continual improvement as set out in the recently published statutory guidance for the Best Value Duty (Local Government Act 1999).
CHILD AND FAMILY POVERTY	No relevant issues.
EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY CONSIDERATIONS	There are no considerations at this stage. Individual transformation projects will identify if there are any staffing considerations under the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion principle of the Transformation Plan.
STAFF CONSIDERATIONS	There are no considerations at this stage. Individual transformation projects will identify if there are any staffing considerations under the Employees / Organisational Culture principle of the Transformation Plan.
ASSET MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS	There are no considerations at this stage. Individual transformation projects will identify if there are any asset management considerations under the Property / Assets principle of the Transformation Plan.
ENVIRONMENT, SUSTAINABILITY AND CLIMATE CHANGE CONSIDERATIONS	There are no considerations at this stage. Individual transformation projects will identify if there are any environment, sustainability and climate change considerations under the Net Zero principle of the Transformation Plan.
CONSULTATION	Consultation will be undertaken on transformation projects as required.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Finance and Policy Committee are requested to approve the Transformation Plan as set out in **Appendix 1**.

7. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 The development of a Transformation Plan for the Council demonstrates our organisational-wide approach to continual improvement as set out in the recently published statutory guidance for the Best Value Duty (Local Government Act 1999).

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS

8.1 Best value standards and intervention: a statutory guide for best value authorities - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/best-value-standards-and-intervention-a-statutory-guide-for-best-value-authorities>

9. CONTACT OFFICERS

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Sign Off:-

Managing Director	Date: 12 June 2024
Director of Finance, IT and Digital	Date: 12 June 2024
Director of Legal, Governance and HR	Date: 12 June 2024

Hartlepool Borough Council Transformation Plan

Introduction and Purpose

This Transformation Plan sets out how the Council will change the way that we use our resources so that we are able to continue to provide high quality services whilst responding to the difficult financial situation that we continue to face. It builds on the changes that the Council have delivered over the last 10+ years and outlines how we will continue to evolve as an organisation.

As a public sector organisation we recognise that we are not alone in facing a number of challenges including:

- Reducing costs by £16m over the next 3 years;
- An ageing workforce and difficulties in attracting and retaining employees when competing against the private sector;
- Unlocking the potential of the data that we hold because of limitations around capacity and available skills;
- Increasing expectations of residents around the services we deliver;
- Long-term and significant levels of poverty and disadvantage within our community.

However, there are also a number of opportunities that we can help us in our transformation:

- Employees that are dedicated to delivering the best services for our residents;
- Access to digital tools including Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Power BI amongst others;
- Strong community representation and good relationships with local Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) organisations;
- Strong partnerships with local businesses and other partners from the public, private and VCSE sectors.

With these challenges and opportunities in mind we have developed this Transformation Plan to clearly articulate how we will develop as an organisation. Our Target Operating Model is one where we:

- Are a modern, innovative and dynamic organisation;
- Have a sustainable financial future;
- Have a skilled and flexible workforce and become an 'employer of choice';
- Deliver more purposeful, high-quality services to meet the needs of our residents as efficiently as possible.

How will we achieve our Target Operating Model?

We will:

- accelerate the process of modernisation across the council, allowing us to deliver high quality, cost-effective services in a challenging environment;
- invest in the Council's employees, assets and technology to create more modern working practices and provide fit for purpose services that are accessible for residents;
- develop ways of working that reduce demand and enable residents to live independent lives with minimal involvement with the Council;
- ensure that as an organisation we have the skills, culture and behaviour to make this change possible;
- engage with our residents, businesses and other partners to ensure that they are at the heart of the services we deliver and the decisions we make;
- make best use of the data and systems that we have available to us to make informed decisions about our future direction and service delivery.

This Transformation Plan will help us to deliver our new Council Plan which sets out our organisational priorities for the next five years. We recognise that transformation will be an on-going process for the Council so this will be a dynamic plan which will need to be reviewed and updated on an annual basis.

We aim to see the following outcomes as a result of our Transformation Plan:

- Improved service quality and value for money;
- More cost-efficient services;
- Purposeful, responsive, customer focussed services;
- Highly trained, flexible employees who are engaged and motivated;
- Further development of a learning and 'can do' culture;
- The best standards of customer care;
- Delivery of financial savings;
- Environmental savings and benefits;
- Increases in the level of income generated;
- Modern, efficient and consistent work processes.

Our Transformation Principles

We have identified the following transformation principles which will underpin all of our transformation activities:

Commissioning and Procurement – being efficient and commercially minded with a consistent approach across the Council.

Communications and Marketing – ensuring clear and consistent messaging and branding from the Council. Actively promoting the Council and Hartlepool to residents, visitors and potential investors.

Data – making the best use of available data to inform decisions and future service delivery. Ensuring that all decisions are based on appropriate data and evidence.

Digital – promoting customer self-service through efficient and IT / Digital enabled processes. Giving employees' access to digital infrastructure that will enable more efficient / effective service delivery and decision making. Utilising Artificial Intelligence in a controlled and responsible manner.

Employees / Organisational Culture – ensuring employees are skilled and empowered to adapt and excel as the organisation evolves. Demonstrating our organisational values and behaviours in all that we do.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion – respecting and valuing everyone's differences and needs. Seeking to address inequalities including poverty and socio-economic disadvantage.

Governance – being a lean organisation with appropriate delegations in place allowing members to set the strategic direction and officers the space and freedom to enact. Ensuring an appropriate Performance Assurance Framework is in place and provides assurance at all levels of the organisation.

Income Generation – ensuring we have a consistent and coherent policy on fees and charges. Undertaking trading activity where it is appropriate, adds value and covers costs. Ensuring that where commercial activity is considered that this is open, transparent and supported by a robust business plan.

Net Zero – ensuring we take all available opportunities to reduce emissions and our carbon footprint.

Property / Assets – making efficient use of council land and property. This will include embedding hybrid working and reducing the need for physical office space. Also, reducing the carbon impact of Council activities.

Residents - enabling residents to live independent lives through empowerment and signposting. Ensuring resident engagement and building trust between the Council and its community.

Resources - making better use of resources / reducing financial costs.

How will we ensure employees and our residents, businesses and other partners are part of the Transformation Plan?

People will need to be at the heart of the process of delivering change and transformation across the Council. Strengthening the culture of the organisation and pace of change will be imperative to ensure the delivery of an ambitious programme that will improve services, as well as making better use of resources.

Employees:

We want to empower our employees to be innovative and creative and to share their ideas for service improvement. It is not just ‘what’ we achieve, it is also about ‘how’ we do it. We want to ensure that our organisational values and behaviours are demonstrated through this process:



Employees will have a range of opportunities to find out more about the Transformation Plan and the role that they have to play in ensuring Hartlepool Borough Council becomes the organisation that we are striving for it to be. This will include:

- The sharing of information and regular updates by email from ELT and on the intranet / Your Say Staff Hub;
- The opportunity to make suggestions and share their ideas – this will include opportunities to do this anonymously;
- Participation in specific projects and service reviews;
- Sharing customer views and feedback;

- Employee surveys and the annual Employee Survey.

Residents:

We want to ensure that residents have a voice and are able to influence the services that the Council delivers. We are keen to work alongside residents to ensure that our services are fit for purpose and meet the needs of our residents whilst being efficient and effective.

Residents will have a range of opportunities to find out more about the Transformation Plan and the role that they can have to play in ensuring Hartlepool Borough Council becomes the organisation that we are striving for it to be. This will include:

- The sharing of information and regular updates through Hartbeat and social media;
- The opportunity to make suggestions and share their views and ideas through the Your Say platform;
- Participation in specific projects and service reviews including co-production opportunities.

Businesses:

We want to ensure that businesses are able to influence the services that the Council delivers. We are keen to work alongside businesses to ensure that our services are fit for purpose and meeting need whilst being efficient and effective.

Businesses will have a range of opportunities to find out more about the Transformation Plan and the role that they can have to play in ensuring Hartlepool Borough Council becomes the organisation that we are striving for it to be. This will include:

- The sharing of information and regular updates through the Hartlepool Economic and Business Forum and other networks;
- The opportunity to make suggestions and share their views and ideas through the Your Say platform;
- Participation in specific projects and service reviews including co-production opportunities.

Partners:

We want to ensure that partners from the public and Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) sectors are able to influence the services that the Council delivers. We are keen to work alongside partners to ensure that our services are fit for purpose and meeting need whilst being efficient and effective.

Partners will have a range of opportunities to find out more about the Transformation Plan and the role that they can have to play in ensuring Hartlepool Borough Council becomes the organisation that we are striving for it to be. This will include:

- The sharing of information and regular updates through partnership groups and networks and VCSE channels;
- The opportunity to make suggestions and share their views and ideas through the Your Say platform;
- Participation in specific projects and service reviews including co-production opportunities.

Governance Arrangements for the Transformation Plan

Progress on the Transformation Plan will be considered by the Executive Leadership Team (ELT) once a month with a Transformation Plan Update Report being taken to Finance and Policy Committee every 6 months.

Transformation Template

Lead Officers will utilise the following template when preparing to deliver a transformation project:

<p>Overall aim of transformation project</p>	<p>Brief summary of the transformation aim that the project will deliver e.g.</p> <p>To exploit the opportunities presented by our hybrid working arrangements to further rationalise the Council’s assets.</p> <p>Or,</p> <p>To review, remodel and improve the X service to ensure that meets the needs of service users and is delivered in a more sustainable and cost-effective way.</p>	
<p>What needs to transform and why?</p>	<p>Explanation of the activity that is the focus of the transformation and why it needs to transform. This should link to strategies or plans that have already been developed e.g. Data Strategy.</p>	
<p>Which transformation principles are relevant to the project?</p>	<p>Principle</p>	<p>Relevant?</p>
	<p>Commissioning and procurement</p>	<p></p>
	<p>Communications and marketing</p>	<p></p>
	<p>Data</p>	<p></p>
	<p>Digital</p>	<p></p>
	<p>Employees / organisational culture</p>	<p></p>
	<p>Equality, diversity and inclusion</p>	<p></p>
	<p>Governance</p>	<p></p>
	<p>Income generation</p>	<p></p>
	<p>Net zero</p>	<p></p>
	<p>Property and assets</p>	<p></p>
	<p>Residents</p>	<p></p>
	<p>Resources</p>	<p></p>

<p>What are the options that have been considered to deliver this transformation project?</p>	<p>Provide a summary of the different options that have been considered as potential ways to deliver this transformation project.</p>
<p>Which is the preferred option and why?</p>	<p>Identify the preferred option and why this has been chosen.</p> <p>Please also explain why the other options have been discounted.</p>
<p>What (if any) additional resources or support are needed to help make it happen?</p>	<p>Outline any additional resources that are necessary for the project to be delivered. This should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Detailed costs of any additional investment required and how this will be funded - Outline of the support needed from the digital team - Outline of the consultation / engagement support needed - Outline of the data / intelligence support needed
<p>What will be achieved / what are the priorities for the next 12 - 24 months?</p>	<p>Provide details of the actions and / or milestones that will be delivered / achieved and the date by which they will be completed.</p>
<p>What will be achieved / what are the priorities for the next 3-5 years?</p>	<p>If the transformation project will take longer than 2 years then please outline the longer term actions and / or milestones that will be delivered / achieved and the date by which they will be completed.</p>

<p>How will the impact of the project be measured?</p>	<p>Provide details of how the impact of the transformation project will be measured. E.g.</p> <p>£x efficiency savings will be made.</p> <p>X% of requests for the service will be made via digital routes an increase of x%.</p> <p>Increase in customer satisfaction (include how this will be measured).</p> <p>Response time / waiting list time for the service will reduce from X to Y.</p> <p>Reduction in staff turnover rate.</p>
<p>What risks are there to the delivery of the project?</p>	<p>Please complete Risk Capture Form(s) identifying the key risks to the delivery of the project.</p>

Transformation Plan Risk

The overarching strategic risk is set out on the following page.

6.2 Appendix 1

RISK TITLE:	Failure to deliver the Transformation Plan leading to a worsening financial situation which limits the Council’s ability to provide high quality services.
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DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF CURRENT RISK:		
CAUSES - what could make it happen?	IMPLICATIONS - what impact would it have if it did?	EXISTING INTERNAL CONTROLS – what are we already doing to reduce the likelihood and/or impact of it happening?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poor or ineffective programme management. • Poor or ineffective management of individual Transformation Projects. • Insufficient officer capacity or skills to deliver Transformation projects. • Delays to delivery of Transformation Projects. • Changes in political leadership (local or national). • Lack of buy in from employees during period of significant corporate / culture change. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Costs of transformation are higher than anticipated. • Savings are lower than anticipated. • Reduced morale. • Increased staff turnover. • New skills and approaches are not adopted consistently across the organisation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transformation Project Template completed for each project. • Senior Officer Lead identified for each Transformation Project. • Monthly consideration of Transformation Plan progress by the Executive Leadership Team. • 6 monthly consideration of Transformation Plan progress by the Finance and Policy Committee. • Clear plan for communication and engagement with employees, residents, business and other partners.

6.2 Appendix 1

CURRENT RISK ASSESSMENT:					
RISK MATRIX		IMPACT			
		NEGLIGIBLE	MINOR	MAJOR	CRITICAL
LIKELIHOOD	ALMOST CERTAIN				
	PROBABLE				
	POSSIBLE			AMBER 6	
	HARDLY EVER				

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	Executive Leadership Team – ELT (Denise McGuckin – Managing Director)
DIVISION	All
DEPARTMENT	All
DATE OF ASSESSMENT	May 2024

FINANCE AND POLICY COMMITTEE

25TH June 2024



Subject: WORKFORCE EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION POLICY

Report of: Director of Legal, Governance and HR

Decision Type: Non-Key

1. COUNCIL PLAN PRIORITY

Hartlepool will be a place:
- 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 update Finance & Policy Committee on key changes to the Workforce Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy and agree for the revised policy to be formally adopted.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Council's Workforce Strategy makes a commitment to ensure our workforce values equality and diversity and that the workforce reflects the Hartlepool community. In addition to this internal commitment, the Council also has statutory obligations in relation to the Equality Act 2010 and in particular the Public Sector Equality Duty.
- 3.2 The Executive Leadership Team have formally agreed the updated policy on 29th April 2024.

4. PROPOSALS/OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

- 4.1 To support the Council to deliver on the above commitment and obligations, the Equality in Employment Policy has been reviewed and refreshed. The

policy is attached as **Appendix 1** and whilst the spirit of the policy remains the same there are some proposed key changes outlined below.

- Title change from Equality in Employment Policy to **Workforce Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy**.
- Includes a zero tolerance approach to any form of discrimination.
- Reflects the 2023 amendment to The Equality Act in relation to disability which has been extended to include reference to being able, on an equal basis to fully and effectively participate in working life.
- Inclusion of an annual action plan **Appendix 2** to ensure Equality, Diversity and Inclusion continue to be embedded into our working practice and is central to our culture.
- Requirement for all new managers to complete Equality, Diversity and Inclusion training.

4.2 The format of the Workforce Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy has been updated by the Communications and Marketing Team to give it a professional, modern and branded look and feel.

5. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS/IMPLICATIONS

RISK IMPLICATIONS	None
FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS	None
SUBSIDY CONTROL	Not applicable
LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS	The policy supports the Council’s statutory obligations in relation to the Equality Act 2010 and in particular the Public Sector Equality Duty.
CHILD AND FAMILY POVERTY	Not applicable
EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY CONSIDERATIONS	This will support and promote EDI principles across the Council in line with the Council’s values and behavior framework.
STAFF CONSIDERATIONS	This is an employment policy for staff to adhere to.
ASSET MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS	None

ENVIRONMENT, SUSTAINABILITY AND CLIMATE CHANGE CONSIDERATIONS	None
CONSULTATION	Internal consultation has been undertaken with Trade Unions with formal agreement being sought at Single Table on 13th June, and with employees through the Council's Staff Equality Network, Equality Officer Group.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.1 That Finance & Policy Committee approve the key changes to the Workforce Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy and agree for the revised policy to be formally adopted.

7. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1 To promote the Council's equality, diversity and inclusion agenda in line with the Council's values and behaviour framework through an agreed action plan to embed and develop best practice ensuring the Council has workplaces free of discrimination and harassment, celebrating diversity and promoting inclusion.

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 8.1 None

9. CONTACT OFFICERS

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Sign Off:-

Managing Director	Date: 13 June 2024
Director of Finance, IT and Digital	Date: 13 June 2024
Director of Legal, Governance and HR	Date: 13 June 2024

Workforce Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy



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1. Introduction

This policy applies to all employees and potential employees of Hartlepool Borough Council together with anyone else working on council premises including, agency & casual workers, contractors, consultants and suppliers.

Hartlepool Borough Council is committed to equality, diversity and inclusion in employment. The policies and practices of the Council aim to promote an environment that is free from all forms of discrimination and values the diversity of all people (see Appendix I for a definition of the terms used in this policy). At the heart of our policy, we seek to treat people equally, fairly, with dignity and respect reflecting the Council's Value and Behaviour Framework.



Our values and behaviours connect us all together and importantly connect us with the local community we serve.



- We are curious and look for ways to improve our services
- We are flexible in our approach
- We look for innovative solutions



- We promote fairness and equality
- We value and include everyone
- We celebrate difference and value diversity



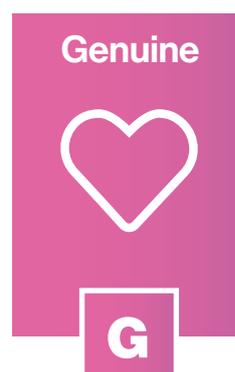
- We work towards our vision for Hartlepool
- We are driven to achieve good outcomes
- We go the extra mile to deliver the best services we can



- We are caring and people-centred
- We grow talent and develop our workforce
- We are supportive of each other and the people we serve



- We are kind and courteous to all
- We listen to and value others
- We involve and communicate with others



- We are honest and act with integrity
- We are transparent and communicate openly to build trust
- We care about our people, our communities and our borough

2. Policy Statement

The council will take every reasonable and practical step to ensure that no person working for the council, job applicants, or any member of the public using the council's premises or services will receive less favourable treatment (direct discrimination) or conditions that cannot be shown to be justifiable (indirect discrimination) which are, or are perceived to be, associated with any of the following protected characteristics:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Pregnancy and Maternity
- Marriage and Civil Partnership
- Race (including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin)
- Religion/belief or non belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

or because of trade union membership or non membership [see Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992], part time working [see Part-time Workers (Prevention of Less Favourable Treatment) Regulations 2000] or fixed term working [see Fixed-term Employees (Prevention of Less Favourable Treatment Regulations 2002)].

In addition to the nine protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act our approach to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion will also give consideration to those who are care leavers and the Armed

Forces Community (as established in our Armed Forces Covenant). We will also consider inequality related to poverty and disadvantage recognising that this relates to individuals as well as children and families. We will develop a single impact assessment process for equality, diversity & inclusion by bringing together the existing Equality Impact Assessment and the Child and Poverty Impact Assessment.

We recognise that we have a moral and legal duty to promote equality, diversity & inclusion, whilst eliminating unlawful practice within the workplace and our services. Affording staff full dignity at work promotes good employee relations and satisfaction, and results in a motivated, productive and creative workforce, that leads to service improvements.

Our Workforce Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy will help all those who work for us to achieve their full potential so that the talents and resources of the workforce are utilised fully to create an environment of opportunity for all.

We welcome and celebrate the diverse cultures, backgrounds, faiths and beliefs of all peoples we engage with and will take proactive steps to ensure that the policy is known to all employees, potential employees and organisations with which we work. It should be clear to all employees that Hartlepool Borough Council has a zero tolerance approach to any form of discrimination.

3. Implementing Equality, Diversity & inclusion

We will ensure that equality, diversity & inclusion is embedded in all our policies, procedures, day to day practices and external relationships. Equality, diversity and inclusion will be promoted throughout the employee life cycle:



Be your whole-self

To enhance team working and the service we deliver to our communities we want to encourage employees to be themselves at work. Through integrity, honesty and openness we want all of our employees to bring their whole-self to work and to be able, on an equal basis, to participate fully and effectively in working life.



Staff Equality Networks

Through our Staff Equality Network we ensure our employees have a collective voice that helps us understand, improve and monitor our policies and ways of working. This gives us vital insight into the employee experiences of inclusion at the Council and ensures those with protected characteristics are supported, protected and encouraged at work.

Data & Governance

We believe it is important that employees are comfortable sharing their equality information in confidence. This helps us to continually improve our policies and work-place and to further encourage inclusion & diversity.

Every employee is responsible for ensuring our activities and interactions at work adhere to this policy. However, the following are responsible for the governance of this: Executive Leadership Team; Corporate Strategy; Human Resources; and our Staff Equality Networks acts as a support & feedback function.



Aim: Encourage the highest quality candidates from all backgrounds to apply and ensure equal and fair treatment throughout the recruitment process.

The Council will strive to ensure that:

- Through recruitment and promotion, our workforce better represents the community we serve
 - All posts including secondment and promotion opportunities are advertised widely in accordance with Council policy to provide equality in employment for all people. Advertising may be restricted (see Procedure for Managing Restructures and Redundancy)
 - All advertisements reflect the job description and person specification and do not use words or phrases which indicate bias (unless there is an occupational requirement to do so)
 - The statement "Hartlepool Borough Council is committed to equality, diversity and inclusion in employment" is included on the Council's recruitment portal together with our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy Statement outlining the Council's commitment to implementing equality, diversity & inclusion, in particular its arrangements in relation to recruitment and selection
 - All applicants complete an equality monitoring form which will not be made available to the selection panel and will be used to ensure the policy is being implemented
 - All job applicants who report a disability and who meet the essential requirements of the person specification will be guaranteed an interview in accordance with the Recruitment & Selection Policy and Procedure. All such candidates will then be considered on their merit and abilities
- 
- All employees are recruited and promoted on the basis of ability, objective and measurable job related criteria are consistently applied to all candidates
 - All employees involved in shortlisting and interviewing will have due regard to shortlisting and interview guidance, including ensuring that at least one member of the interview panel has attended the council training course on Safer Recruitment
 - Selection criteria are applied and scoring related to the selection or rejection of individual candidates is recorded
 - We always ask questions relating to reasonable adjustments that would be needed for an assessment such as an interview or other process designed to assess a person's suitability for a job
 - We only ask questions about reasonable adjustments needed for the job itself after the offer of a job has been made (unless these questions relate to a function that is intrinsic to the job)
 - We ask questions about an employee's health or disability where they relate to a person's ability to carry out a function that is intrinsic to the job prior to an offer of a job being made

Aim: All employees are encouraged to reach their full potential through appropriate fair access to learning, development and career progression opportunities.

The Council will strive to ensure that:

- New employees are made aware of the Council's Workforce Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy during the induction process
- Relevant Equality, Diversity and Inclusion modules are included in learning opportunities, where appropriate, and form an integral part of recruitment and selection training
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion awareness learning is available as part of the Council's learning and development programme to all staff
- All employees are encouraged to invest in their development and consider opportunities to develop their competencies and skills, taking into account a broad range of learning and development options in the Council
- Learning opportunities for employees are appropriate and accessible, in line with organisation and job related needs
- Learning and development opportunities for relevant employees are advertised widely
- Learning and development programmes, where possible, are planned with the needs of part time employees considered as well as those of full time employees
- Learning and development programmes are designed to support this policy and take into account the different preferred learning styles of different groups of employees
- Line Managers, supervisors and leaders responsible for the management of people will be required to complete a New Manager Induction module that includes Equality, Diversity and Inclusion



Aim: All policies covering pay, benefits, grades and terms and conditions are formulated and implemented with regard to equal opportunity.

The Council will strive to ensure that:

- Terms and conditions, including pay arrangements, are non-discriminatory and are applied fairly and consistently to all staff
- The use of flexible working arrangements are promoted wherever possible, to try to balance individual staff circumstances with organisation or operational requirements
- Access to work requirements (reasonable adjustments) for those with a disability are considered in a fair and open manner
- The appropriate use and application of the Council's arrangements for 'Special Leave' are promoted to assist staff who may require time off work for personal or domestic reasons, to ensure the Council meets its statutory obligations



Aim: A working environment that is inclusive and where no form of discrimination is tolerated.

The Council will strive to ensure that:

- Complaints of discrimination, bullying, victimisation or harassment are dealt with in a fair and transparent manner
- Discrimination, bullying, harassment or victimisation of employees or workers will be addressed under the Bullying and Harassment Policy and Procedure this also includes sexual harassment
- All employees have the right to raise any complaint not covered by the Bullying and Harassment Policy and Procedure through the Council's Grievance Procedure
- Prompt action is taken to investigate any employee grievance concerning discrimination, bullying, harassment or victimisation
- Support is provided to any employee who is the victim of discrimination or perceived discrimination, bullying, harassment or victimisation in the course of their employment
- Disciplinary rules and standards are applied consistently to all employees within the Council's employment



Aim: Performance & Attendance issues are addressed in a fair and open manner.

The Council will strive to ensure that:

- Performance or Attendance issues will be addressed in a fair and consistent manner, and will take account of any disabilities declared by employees
- Appropriate support will be provided to employees to ensure they can demonstrate their capabilities and effectively fulfill their job role



Aim: Employees affected by proposed or implemented changes to the composition of the workforce are treated fairly and consistently.

The Council will strive to ensure that:

- Employees affected by any proposed or implemented changes to workforce composition are consulted with, together with Trade Union Representatives, in line with the Managing Restructures and Redundancy Policy and Procedures
- Employees who are affected by changes to the structure of the workforce are treated fairly and with dignity
- Fair and impartial selection criteria will be applied in all redundancy situations
- Every effort will be made to retain skills and abilities within the workforce by redeploying employees who are affected by changes to the structure of the workforce
- An appropriate balance will be reached to comply with legislative requirements, protect employees and provide equality of opportunity when implementing new staffing structures



Aim: That employees leaving the council do so with dignity.

The Council will strive to ensure that:

- Employees who leave the Council on health grounds are dealt with sensitively by Managers
- References provided to future employers will be fair
- Leaver surveys are monitored and reviewed. Also an annual leaver report will be submitted to the Executive Leadership Team for trend analysis



Aim: Regular monitoring and review so that the effectiveness of this policy can be measured and information used to support informed decision making.

The Council will strive to ensure that:

- All policies and procedures which impact on employees are regularly reviewed to ensure they are free from discrimination
- Confidential records of employees and applicants are maintained in order to monitor the progress of equality, diversity & inclusion practices within the Council, and all reporting is anonymised before being made available
- Data collected for the purpose of equality, diversity & inclusion monitoring is reviewed as a minimum on an annual basis so that information on the effectiveness of this policy can be considered
- Reports will be published on Council web pages annually in line with legislation
- Continuous review of our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy to comply with changes in legislation
- Equal Pay Audits are undertaken
- The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy is supported by an equality, diversity & inclusion action plan. This is to ensure EDI is embedded into our working practices and is central to our culture



**WORKFORCE EQUALITY, DIVERISTY AND INCLUSION (EDI) ACTION PLAN
APRIL 2024 – JULY 2026**

ACTION	DUE DATE	ASSIGNEE	PROGRESS
JOINING			
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.	July 2024	JW/LW	
Make all new employees aware of the Staff Equality Network, how to become a member and/or feed in to the group on an ad-hoc basis.	July 2024	JW/LW	
All new managers to complete the Manager's Induction Programme, including attending the mandatory Equality, Diversity and Inclusion training.	July 2024	BS	
Introduce an employee profile tool (Ambitious about Autism) into the recruitment arrangements for apprenticeships. This will enable managers to support new apprentices to transition into the workplace, particularly, those with Autism.	May 2024	JW	
LEARNING			
Improve the EDI learning and development offer for the below and agree which will take place and when: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Deaf/Blind awareness e-learning – recommendation from A&G Scrutiny Enquiry ○ Armed Forces – e-learning ○ Recovery Ally Training ○ Care leavers – understanding trauma ○ Show Racism the Red Card 	April 2024	JW	Complete
Promote e-learning EDI training to all employees	April 2024	JW	Complete

ACTION	DUE DATE	ASSIGNEE	PROGRESS
Create online training for managers to include how they will make sure they foster an inclusive working environment and employee experience where people have a sense of belonging.	March 2025	GR	
Identify, promote and deliver EDI Lunch and Learn Sessions to all employees.	Ongoing	JW/KA	
Identify, promote and deliver EDI campaign programme to all employees to increase awareness and understanding.	May 2024	GR	
WORKING			
Ensure new values and behaviours & EDI are included in workforce policies and procedures to enable them to be embedded into the culture of the Council.	Ongoing	HR	
Promote Apprenticeships to care leavers by working with the Through Care Team as part of the annual apprenticeship recruitment campaign	April 2024	JW	Complete
Develop a policy and process for an annual Work Experience Programme including Care Leavers, individuals with SEND, students and ad-hoc requests.	May 2024	GR	
Acknowledge all holidays to reflect different cultures by creating a visible calendar of all relevant events and communicate.	May 2024	GR	
Undertake campaign to increase the level of Workforce Equality data.	April 2024	JW	On-going
Introduce an annual request to all employees to review and update their personal details and equality information.	April 2024	JW	
Complete Equality Pay Audit	2026	RC	Resource issues
Ensure compliance with the Public Sector Equality Duty by producing the annual Workforce Equality Report.	May 2024	JW	
Promote refreshed EDI policy, action plan and use as engagement driver for data collection.	September 2024	JW	

ACTION	DUE DATE	ASSIGNEE	PROGRESS
Pen picture from staff to share their disability and how it impacts them in the workplace and any support they receive. The aim is to drive inclusion and remove isolation and stigma.	March 2025	JW/Group	
Develop Neurodiversity Guidance	March 2025	TBC	
Promote Employee Benefits through Vivup to enable employees to spread the cost of purchasing goods.	Ongoing	BS	
Promote the Staff Equality Group to encourage new membership and engagement.	Ongoing	JW	
LEAVING			
Increase the number of responses to the Leavers Surveys from employees leaving the Council and identify any EDI feedback.	Ongoing	GR	
Annual employee leaver report to ELT	May 2024	GR	
IMPROVING			
Review feedback on the Annual Employee Survey and agree any actions needed to improve equality.	Annual	RC/BS	
Review feedback from leavers and agree any actions needed to improve equality.	Annual	GR	
Improve Workforce Equality Report to include future actions that are data driven.	May 2024	JW	
Collation of recruitment and selection data to better understand trends and gaps for all protected groups and identify actions to improve.	March 2025	GR	
Explore quality standards for EDI for example Stonewall, the Race Equality Charter and others.	March 2025	JW	
Develop and implement annual EDI action plan	Annually - March	JW	

<p>FINANCE AND POLICY COMMITTEE</p> <p>25TH JUNE 2024</p>
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Subject: WORK EXPERIENCE POLICY
Report of: Director of Legal, Governance and HR
Decision Type: Non-Key

1. COUNCIL PLAN PRIORITY

Hartlepool will be a place:
- 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 ask Finance and Policy committee to approve the revised Work Experience Policy that has an update to include a co-ordinated annual programme of work experience placements across the Council (**Appendix 1**).

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 The Executive Leadership Team have previously approved 3 initiatives that aim to provide work experience placements to care leavers, individuals with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities and students studying T-Levels at Hartlepool College of Further Education. This is in addition to ad-hoc placements received from schools, colleges and university students. The revised policy incorporates prioritising these groups for a planned programme of work experience placements.

4. PROPOSALS/OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

4.1 To support the delivery of the above commitments, enable a co-ordinated approach to work placement activity across the council and to ensure each of the approved initiatives have fair, equal and straightforward access to any

placements available, it is proposed that a more formalised approach is adopted as outlined in the policy (**Appendix 1**) and **Appendix 2 and 3**

5. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS/IMPLICATIONS

RISK IMPLICATIONS	None
FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS	None
SUBSIDY CONTROL	Not applicable
LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS	None
CHILD AND FAMILY POVERTY	Promotes commitment to prioritise work experience for children in care and care leavers.
EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY CONSIDERATIONS	Supports commitment to children in care where the Council is the corporate parent. (Extended protected characteristic).
STAFF CONSIDERATIONS	This is a workforce employment policy that will need to be adhered to.
ASSET MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS	None
ENVIRONMENT, SUSTAINABILITY AND CLIMATE CHANGE CONSIDERATIONS	Not applicable
CONSULTATION	Internal consultation has been undertaken with Trade Unions with formal approval being sought at Single Table on 13 th June. Consultation has also taken place with the Workforce Strategy Departmental Representatives Group.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.1 The current Work Experience and Volunteer Policy and Procedure has been updated and the two elements separated so they are now stand-alone policies. It is recommended that Members approve the Work Experience Policy is approved.

7. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1 The policy provides a framework to manage work experience across the Council on an annual basis ensuring key groups are prioritised for placements.

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 8.1 None

9. CONTACT OFFICERS

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Sign Off:-

Managing Director	Date: 13 June 2024
Director of Finance, IT and Digital	Date: 13 June 2024
Director of Legal, Governance and HR	Date: 13 June 2024



Work Experience Placement Policy and Procedure

HR Service

SCOPE AND PURPOSE

This policy and procedure applies to all Work Experience Placements performing activities directly for Hartlepool Borough Council. The intention of this document is to set out the expectations of the Work Experience Placement and the Council. The introduction of Work Experience Placements in Hartlepool Borough Council is for the mutual benefit of the Hartlepool community, the Council and the placement.

This document also sets out how children in care and care leavers in the authority will take priority in the offering of annually collated Work Experience Placements.

Work experience can be arranged as part of a recognised work programme or a course of study. We prioritise those who might have experienced disadvantage.

Work experience is open to everyone aged **14 years and over** whether you are at school, college, university, returning to work or looking for a career change. It will enable individuals to carry out a particular tasks or duties with the emphasis on the learning aspects of the experience.

DEFINITION

Hartlepool Borough Council defines a Work Experience Placement as a person who, without financial compensation, or expectation of it, performs duties at the direction of and on behalf of Hartlepool Borough Council for the purpose of gaining the experience of work.

Placements offered by Hartlepool Borough Council fall into 2 categories;

- Short term placements - up to 4 weeks.
- Long term placements - 4 weeks plus.

Please see **Appendix 1- Guidance for short and long term Work Experience Placements** for placement criteria.

All work experience activities must be conducted in accordance with this policy and procedure.

1. RESPONSIBILITIES

1.1 Council Responsibilities

- Provide a safe work environment for Work Experience Placements.
- Determine and document the range of activities to be performed during the placement.

- Provide appropriate supervision, instruction and training to enable the Work Experience Placement to safely and effectively perform activities.
- Protect children and vulnerable adults.

1.2 Work Experience Placement Responsibilities

- Comply with the Councils safety policies and procedures.
- Comply with relevant Council policies and procedures.
- Undertake induction or other training required by the Council.

1.3 Manager / Supervisor responsibilities

- Lead and support the Work Experience Placement in their activities.
- Provide feedback to support learning.
- Arrange the resources and equipment required to achieve the activities.
- Ensure that adequate induction, instruction and Personal Protective Equipment have been provided prior to the commencement of the Work Experience Placement.
- Complete all relevant work experience documentation including the work experience risk assessment and agreement letter.
- Consider any situations that may lead to a safeguarding concern and address these through the risk assessment process.
- Provide meaningful placements.
- Conduct pre meeting with Work Experience Placements.
- Keep HR up to date with progress.
- Fully support and check in with Placement daily.
- Completes End of Experience Review Meeting and documents in placement workbook.

1.4 HR Responsibilities

- Collate placement opportunities.
- Share placement opportunities to Through Care Team/ Care Homes then promote to other settings.
- Sends Expression of Interest Form to Managers (non care).
- Sends any decline emails.
- Tracks all placements.
- Report on placement activity and feedback to ELT.

1.5 Through Care Team/ Care Homes Responsibilities

- Match children in care and care leavers to placement opportunities contacting the relevant manager.
- Nominated Through Care Team/ Care Homes support person attends pre meeting with Host Manager and placement.
- Check in during the placement to see how it is going.
- Emergency contact during the placement.
- Attend end of experience review meeting.

2. ACTIVITIES

- 2.1 Work Experience Placements will not replace or remove work by employees, but may compliment and support work undertaken by employees. There should be no expectation from the Work Experience Placement that the placement will lead to employment.
- 2.2 A Work Experience Placement will be responsible and report to a manager or supervisor in the performance of activities but will not replace the role of an employee. **The manager or supervisor will not necessarily be physically present at all times, but they must be working alongside an experienced member of the team and will therefore be supervised at all times.** The manager/supervisor must be an employee of the Council. If the Work Experience Placement has any questions or concerns in relation to activities, they must discuss them with the manager or supervisor.

3. HEALTH AND SAFETY

- 3.1 All activities performed by Work Experience Placements are subject to the provision of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and associated Regulations and any relevant Codes of Practice and Council Safety Procedures. The activities to be performed by Work Experience Placements must be documented and covered by a Work Experience Risk Assessment undertaken prior to the commencement of the placement and appropriate control measures implemented. The Council will supply the required personal protective equipment (PPE) relevant to the Work Experience Placement designated tasks free of charge.
- 3.2 The Work Experience Placement must be briefed on all safety requirements in connection with the planned activity. Where necessary the manager/supervisor must satisfy themselves and appropriately record that the Work Experience Placement has the appropriate competencies before commencing. This is particularly important when the persons reasoning capability through age, mental illness etc. makes some tasks unsuitable for them or the level of required supervision is greater.
- 3.2 In addition if the Work Experience Placement has any medical or behavioural considerations then these must be highlighted by either the Work Experience Placement (or carer) or the school/college/establishment, as these must be taken into account during the risk assessment process.
- 3.4 Relevant Personal Protective Equipment required for activities must be worn at all times.

- 3.5 The Work Experience Placement must report any incidents or injuries sustained while performing activities to the manager/supervisor. They are encouraged to actively participate in improved safety performance by reporting any safety shortcomings or improvements they identify.

4. YOUNG PEOPLE AT WORK (Under 18 years of age)

- 4.1 Students and trainees, including children, on work experience will be facing unfamiliar risks from the activities they will be undertaking and from the working environment. They are seen to be particularly at risk because of their possible lack of awareness of existing or potential risks, immaturity and inexperience. As a **manager** offering Work Experience Placements to young people you must:
- Take into account that young people are likely to be inexperienced, unaware of health and safety risks and physically or mentally immature.
 - Assess risks to all young people under 18 years of age, **before** they start their placement.
 - Where the Work Experience Placement is under the minimum school leaving age (MSLA) then their parents (or appropriate carer who has parental responsibilities) are required to sign the Work Experience Risk Assessment **before** the young person starts work experience.
 - Complete a Work Experience Risk Assessment and ensure the risk assessment takes into account any psychological or physical immaturity, inexperience, and lack of awareness of existing or potential risks particularly if it relates to a young person
 - Put in place measures to control the risks which will remove them altogether or reduce them to the lowest possible level.
- 4.2 The overall rule is that young people under 18 years old must not be allowed to do work which:
- Cannot be adapted to meet any physical or mental limitations they may have.
 - Exposes them to substances which are toxic or cause cancer.
 - Exposes them to radiation.
 - Involves extreme heat, noise or vibration.
- 4.3 Young people who are **over** the MSLA can do this work under very special circumstances, which are:
- The work is necessary for their training.
 - The work is properly supervised by a competent person.
 - The risks are reduced to the lowest level, so far as is reasonably practicable.

Children below the MSLA must never undertake activities involving these risks during their work experience.

5. SAFEGUARDING

- 5.1 Managers will be required to take appropriate steps to understand what safeguarding means in practice in their service area, in the context of the responsibilities they have for their employees and individuals undertaking work experience. Safeguarding will also be included as part of the risk assessment process.

6. INSURANCE

- 6.1 The Council maintains Employers and Public Liability Policies that includes cover in relation to Work Experience Placements. This provides cover against liability for loss, damage or injury caused by the Work Experience Placements whilst on work experience with Hartlepool Borough Council, to the employers property, other employees or a third party, in the same way as that of an employee.

7. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

- 7.1 A Work Experience Placement must adhere to the Council's Corporate Equality and Diversity Policy which describes the Council's commitment to value fully the differences which make each individual resident, visitor, partner, service provider, service user or employee unique. It also describes the Council's commitment to promoting a community and organisational culture that fully respects and values these differences.

8. CODE OF CONDUCT

- 8.1 A Work Experience Placement must adhere to the Council's conduct arrangements whenever they conduct the business of the authority or acts as a representative of the authority.

9. CONFIDENTIALITY AND SUITABILITY

- 9.1 There may be some posts which are not suitable for the Work Experience Placements to undertake either because of the sensitivity of information being handled or the nature of the work being done. There are no clear regulations in this area, but in general terms those roles which would require a DBS check, or are designated as 'risk' activities should be given very careful consideration before being assigned to a Work Experience Placement.

10. DBS

- 10.1 For longer term placements the host manager should determine if a DBS check is required. Please email Workforce Support (workforcesupport@hartlepool.gov.uk) to arrange.

11. SUPPORT

- 11.1 Whilst Work Experience Placements are not employed by Hartlepool Borough Council and are not paid a salary, HBC will treat Work Experience Placements as fairly and equally as it treats its paid employees.

12. INDUCTION

- 12.1 All Work Experience Placements must receive a departmental induction on their first day (Corporate Induction for long term placements as soon as practicable) and any appropriate work related training.

13. TRAVEL EXPENSES

- 13.1 The reimbursement of travel expenses must be approved by the relevant departmental budget holder prior to the commencement of the placement. Any allowances will be paid at the rates/criteria outlined in the Single Status agreement.

14. PROCESS

- 14.1 The Work Experience Flow Chart (**Appendix 2**) sets out how Work Experience Placements are to be recruited and how care leavers will be prioritised.

15. WORK EXPERIENCE PLACEMENT AGREEMENT

- 15.1 For all placements, the Work Experience Placement Agreement must be completed prior to the placement commencing. Once signed by both parties this should be scanned in and emailed to apprenticeships@hartlepool.gov.uk.

Appendix 1

Guidance for Short and Long term Work Experience Placements

	Short term placements	Long term placements
Duration	Up to four weeks	Over Four weeks
Placement requirements	Close supervision at all times. Generally only observe/work shadow placement. Carry out very low risk tasks that require no training.	Close supervision at all times. To complete tasks will require some work related training.
Pre-employment questionnaire	No	Yes
Work Experience Risk assessment	Yes	Yes
Placements for people under the Minimum School Leaving Age e.g. work experience placement for school pupils/student (outside of the corporate arrangements). Brief the work experience organiser as to the hazards the person on the placement will be exposed to. The work experience organiser will deal with parental consent.	Yes	Yes
Work Experience Placements Agreement signed and returned to apprenticeships@hartlepool.gov.uk	Yes	Yes
Corporate Induction	No	Yes
Departmental induction	Yes	Yes
Id badge	Yes (prepared by dept.)	Yes (corporate badge required)
DBS	No	If appropriate
Proof of ID e.g., Passport, Driving License, Photo ID	Yes	Yes

Work Experience Flow Chart

Work Experience Placement Opportunities are collated annually by departments and signed off by departmental management teams (DMT)
(If other opportunities become available during the year these can be raised via Work Experience Coordinator (HR))

Once signed off, the Work Experience Coordinator (HR) sends the list of work placement opportunities to the Through Care Team/ Care Homes. The Through Care Team/ Care Homes offer the appropriate children in care and care leavers in Hartlepool the chance to take on a work placement first and coordinates the initial meeting with the Host Manager

The remaining Work Experience Placement Opportunities are offered to other local settings including education and a link is sent to the webpage where anyone can complete an Expression of Interest Form

The Work Experience Coordinator (HR) sends any Expression of Interest forms sent in to the relevant Host Manager along with a link to all support documents

Suitable for placement?

Yes

No

Short term placement
Follow short term Placement guidance

Long term placement
Follow long term Placement guidance

Discuss with Work Experience Coordinator (HR) who will send out a standard regret letter/ email.

Documentation

HRPP-/F1 Form
HRPP-/G1 Guidance

Policy Review

This Work Experience Policy and Procedure was adopted on 29th April 2024.

This policy will be reviewed on a 3 yearly basis, unless changes necessitate an earlier review. The latest version, which supersedes all previous versions, is available on HBC Intranet.

A history of most recent policy changes can be found in the table below:

Version	Date	Change
2	24/03/2010	Separated from then Volunteer Policy and updated with ELT agreed annual Work Experience Programme



Work Experience Host Manager Guide





What is our approach to Work Experience?

Hartlepool Borough Council provides a co-ordinated, annual programme of work experience placements. As the corporate parent for **children in care and care leavers**, these individuals will **take priority** in the work experience placements we offer, supporting them **to grow in confidence and to get ready for work**.

On an **annual basis**, managers will be asked to confirm if they are able to accommodate a work experience placement within the **12 month period** of April to March. Those that can will be requested to **provide a brief overview of the placement**, the type of activities/tasks that an individual will have the opportunity to experience and the duration and potential dates available. If you engage in any other **ad hoc work experience** activity this guide also applies.

Once the Through Care Team have matched children in care or care leavers to the placements available, work experience placements will be advertised on our **Jobs and Careers webpage**.

Objectives of this guide

- ✓ To help managers to prioritise, support and take ownership of giving our children in care and care leavers **structured and meaningful** work placements.
- ✓ To enable a **co-ordinated approach** to work experience with opportunities for placements advertised annually.
- ✓ To make sure those on work experience placements are well supported with **clear objectives and learning outcomes**.
- ✓ To ensure that everyone has **straightforward access** to any placements available.
- ✓ To create work experience placements that allow the people to understand **what working for the council offers** and the **difference that roles can make to the community**.
- ✓ To be able to offer placements to people of all ages, welcoming applications from **all backgrounds**.



'I thought the Council only put the bins out, I had no idea that so many different types of jobs were available locally, I thought I would need to travel out of the area to find a job'

Student, Hartlepool College



Benefits of well supported meaningful Work Experience Placements

To Hartlepool Borough Council



Enhance our brand



Promote us as an employer



Find new talent



Teams that feel good about giving back



Fulfilling our role as corporate parent



Fresh ideas

To Work Experience Placements



Test career choices



Build confidence



Develop employability skills



Develop new skills



Put skills into practice



Network with people

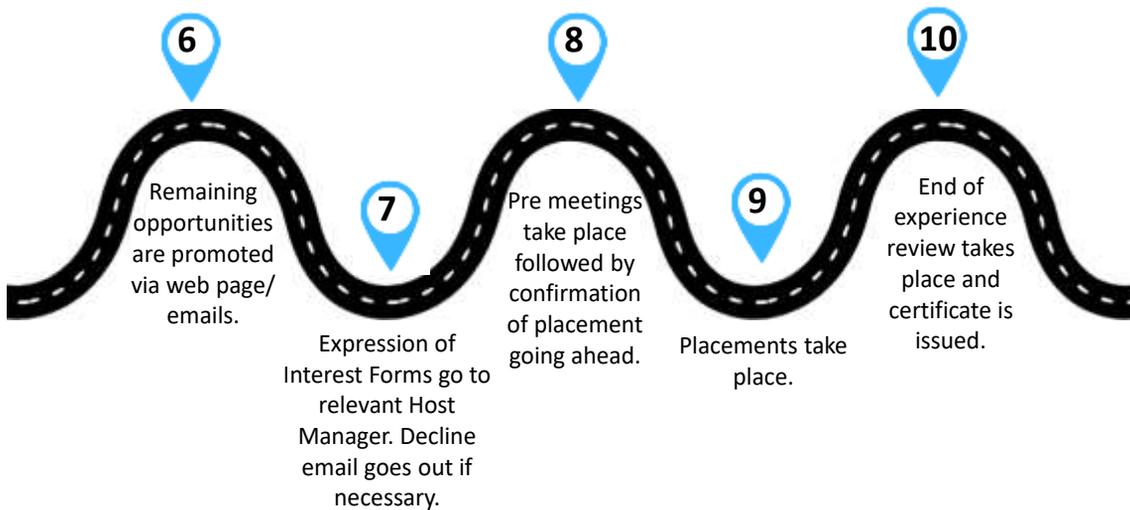


Work Experience Placement Process Overview

Care Leaver Placements

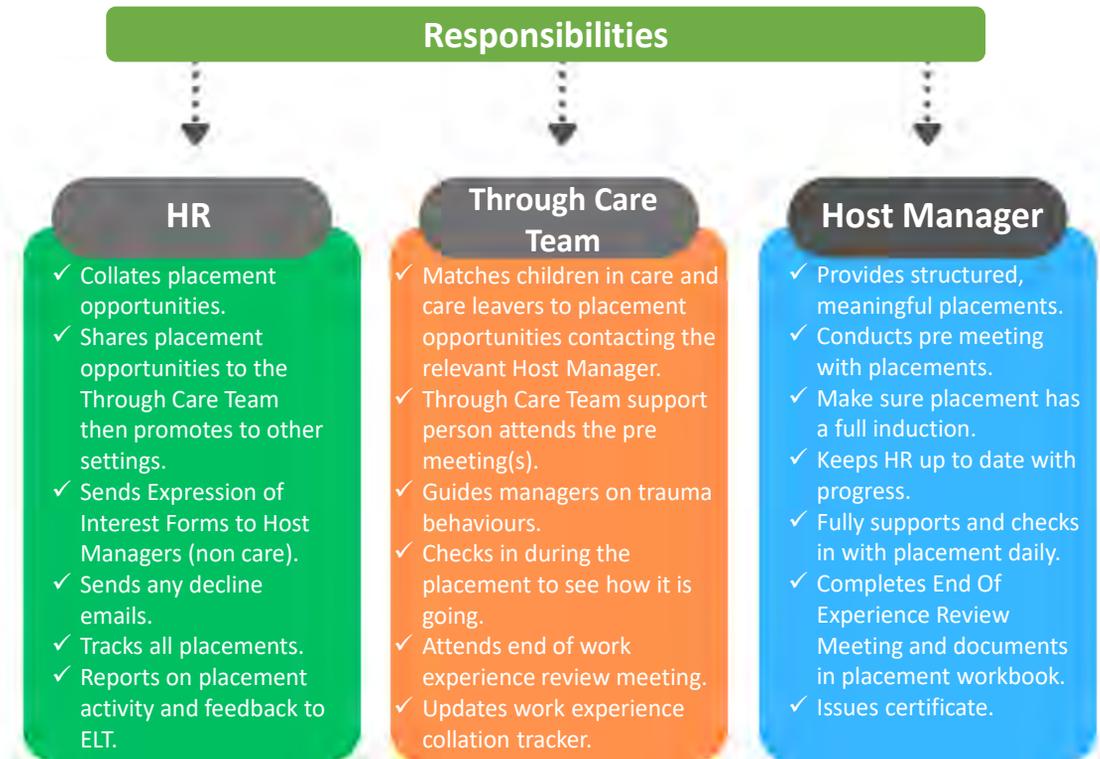


Other Placements





Work Experience Placement Process



1 Work Experience Placement Opportunities are identified

In February each year the HR team will coordinate the collation of opportunities from all departments that they can accommodate across a 12 month period (April to March). This will include:

- ✓ A brief overview of the placement.
- ✓ Activities/ tasks that the individual will have the opportunity to experience.
- ✓ Skills/ knowledge that the individual may gain.
- ✓ Time, location and duration of the placement.
- ✓ Which manager will take responsibility for the placement.

Opportunities put forward will be signed off by the relevant Executive/Director.

Ad-hoc opportunities can also be identified across the year and sent to HR by filling in the same form.



Work Experience Placement Process

2

Through Care Team offer opportunities to Care Leavers and those in care.

As the corporate parent for children in care and care leavers in Hartlepool, we are responsible as a Council for supporting these young people in every way we can. Work Experience can deliver many benefits including; helping them to build confidence and an understanding of how it feels to be in the workplace.

The Through Care Team will offer work experience placements to children in care and care leavers in Hartlepool first. They will make contact with the relevant Host Manager; agree a date for the an initial introduction meeting/ Work Placement Pre Meeting where the placement, Host Manager and a member of the Through Care Team will attend.

3

Pre meetings take place with Through Care Team support.

For children in care and care leavers the pre meeting which includes (which is to be updated in the workbook):

- ✓ Confirming the placement details.
- ✓ Confirming what will be expected of the placement.
- ✓ Completing pages 3-7 of the workbook and agreeing any work adjustments needed – contact HR for any support needed.
- ✓ Completing the relevant Risk Assessment(s).
- ✓ Objectives and learning outcomes should be agreed for the placement and documented in their workbook.
- ✓ Complete the weekly planner with an overview of what will happen each day.



4

Placements take place with Through Care Team support.

During placements for children in care and care leavers:

- ✓ The Host Manager should check in with the placement daily to see how they are getting on.
- ✓ The team should be made aware of any adjustments required (if the placement agrees to this).
- ✓ The Through Care team member should check in twice a week (or at agreed intervals).

5

End of experience review takes place and certificate is issued.

On the last day of the work experience the Host Manager should complete a review of the experience with the placement with the supporting Through Care Team member present.

The Host Manager should then email the certificate to the placement celebrating the completion of the work experience. The placement should complete the feedback survey during this meeting.





Work Experience Placement Process

6 Remaining opportunities sent to other settings who can express their interest via web page.

For remaining Work Experience Placement opportunities HR will share with the appropriate settings in Hartlepool what is available. They will be able to fill in an Expression of Interest Form from the link on our work experience web page.



7 The Expression of Interest Form will be sent to the relevant manager by HR.

If there is good reason for a placement not being suitable this should be discussed with HR and there is a decline email that may be sent.

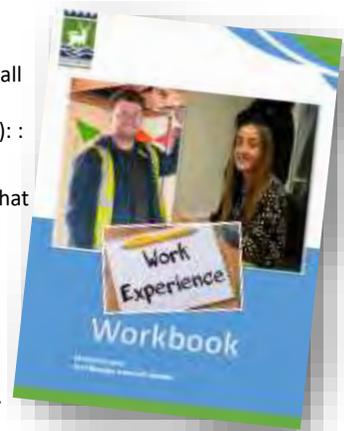
HR will send over a link to all documentation needed by the Host Manager. The Host Manager should arrange the pre meeting with the potential placement.

8 Pre meetings take place followed by confirmation of whether or not the placement is going ahead.

This can be done as two separate meetings (one to check that the experience is suitable for the placement and one to confirm details, or all all as one meeting). The first meeting could be held via TEAMS.

Pre meetings should include (which is to be documented in the workbook): :

- ✓ Going through the Expression of Interest form.
- ✓ Making sure you are able to accommodate the placement (if you feel that you are not able to, contact HR).
- ✓ Confirming the placement details.
- ✓ Confirming what will be expected of the placement.
- ✓ Completing pages 3-7 of the workbook and agreeing any work adjustments needed– contact HR for any support needed.
- ✓ Completing relevant Risk Assessment(s).
- ✓ Objectives and learning outcomes should be agreed for the placement. and documented in their workbook.



9 Placements take place

During placements:

- ✓ The Host Manager should check in with the placement daily to see how the placement is going.
- ✓ The team should be made aware of any adjustments required (if the placement agrees to this).

10 End of experience review takes place and certificate and feedback form are issued.

On the last day of the work experience the Host Manager should complete a review of the experience with the placement. The placement should complete the feedback survey during this meeting.

They should then issue the certificate celebrating the completion of the work experience.



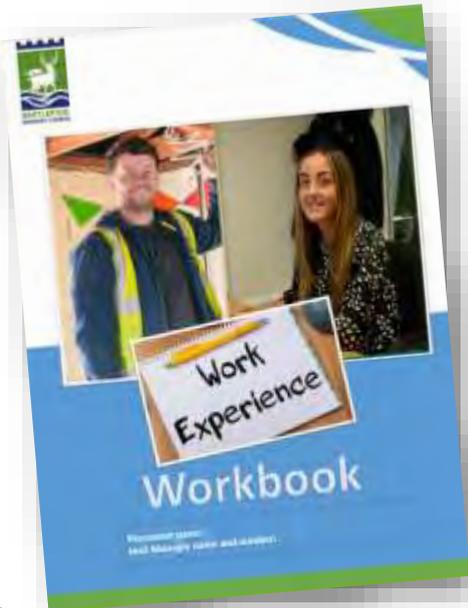
Work Experience Supporting Documentation

Expression of Interest Form

This will be available via a link on our work experience webpage. [Link to document](#)

The document asks:

- What area of work are you interested in?
- What type of work/ activities are you looking to experience?
- What skills and knowledge are you looking to gain?
- Ideally how long would you like your placement to last?
- Please provide some information about your current situation. For example, are you currently out of work or are you training, studying or working?
- Is your placement request linked to a course of study? E.g. T Level. If yes please provide details.
- Why would you like a placement at Hartlepool Borough Council?



Work Experience Placement Workbook

This is available on the Intranet link [here](#).

The document includes:

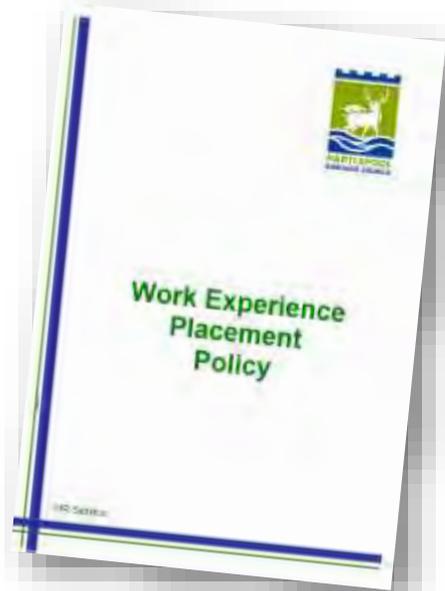
- Pre placement meeting pages to fill in.
- Details of what will happen during the placement.
- An opportunity to set objectives for the placement.
- A learning log for the placement to complete.
- A review at the end of the placement to capture what has been learned.



Work Experience Supporting Documentation

HBC Work Experience Policy

This document sets out the expectations of the Work Experience Placement and the Council.



Risk Assessments

Work Experience Risk Assessment

The document is to be used to assess any risks associated with placements and the work that they will experience.

The Risk Assessment must be completed to identify any risks and appropriate control measures implemented **PRIOR** to the placement starting.

These can be found on the intranet.

Any other appropriate local Risk Assessments for your service area should also be completed for the placement.

As a reminder all placements should be supervised at all times.





Work Experience Supporting Documentation

Email to Host Manager confirming Expression of Interest Form has been received

HR will match (excluding care leavers and those in care) any Expression of Interest Forms received to placements and send this to the Host Manager with instructions of what to do next and links to all documentation required.

The Through Care Team will coordinate pre meetings for care leavers and those in care.



Invite to Pre Placement meeting email template

This can be found [here](#)

The Host Manager can adapt and use this email template to invite potential placements to meetings (this is not needed for care leavers or those in care as the Through Care Team will arrange the meeting).



Work Experience Supporting Documentation

Confirmation of Work Experience email/ letter template and agreement

This needs to be given to the work experience placement, signed and scanned over to apprenticeships@hartlepool.gov.uk as part of the pre placement meeting, once you have confirmed that the placement is going ahead.



Decline email/ letter template

This will be sent by HR when appropriate:

- If it is established that we are not able to offer a suitable placement (non care leavers only)



Work Experience Supporting Documentation

Certificate on completion of Work Experience Placement

This can be found [here](#).

The Host Manager needs to add their signature and email or print it to be given once the experience has been completed.

To add your signature electronically:

1. Edit image
2. Mark up
3. Sign



Review meeting and Feedback Survey

On the last day of the experience a review meeting needs to be held to see how the experience has gone. This meeting includes completion of the Placement Feedback Survey.

Questions on the survey include:

- How would you rate your experience out of 10
- What was good about your experience overall?
- Was there anything that could have been better about your experience?
- How well did the pre meetings prepare you for the experience?
- Was there anything that could have been improved to support you either before or during the placement?
- Was the workbook helpful during your placement?
- Do you now have more knowledge of what Hartlepool Borough Council does?
- Has this experience made you want to work for the Council in the future?
- What difference do you think the Council makes to the community of Hartlepool?
- What have you learned during the experience?
- How has the experience prepared you for work?





Workbook

Placement name:
Host Manager name and contact number:

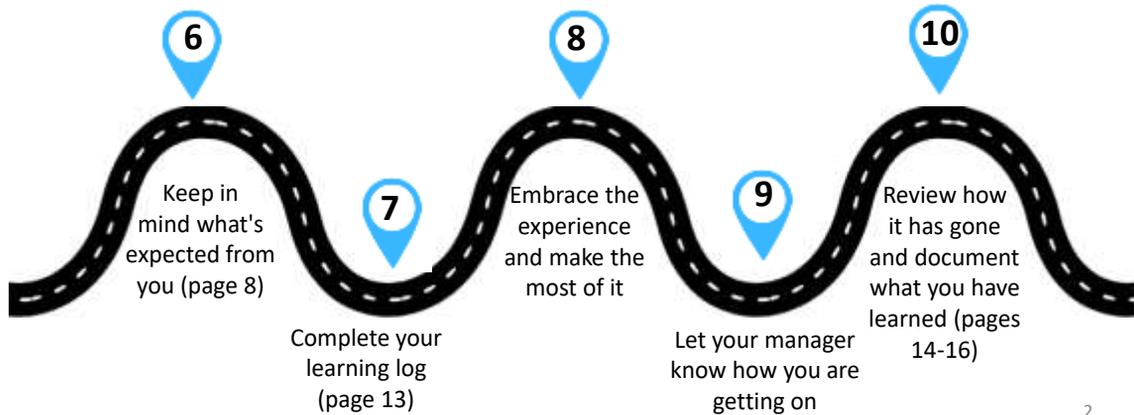


Work Experience Placement Process Overview

Before your work placement



During your work placement



2

Our Values

 Creative C	 Aspirational A	 Respectful R	 Inclusive I	 Nurturing N	 Genuine G
---	---	---	--	---	--



Before you start – Person Profile

We recognise that everyone is different and welcome people of all backgrounds and skill sets. The Person Profile below is for you to tell your Host Manager (the manager that will support you during your placement) all about you. This will allow them to support you with any work adjustments, if they are able to accommodate them, to make sure you get the most out of your experience. Some elements of this profile your Host Manager may support you to develop your confidence in (e.g. answering the phone).

Your profile is a confidential document for you and you can share it with your Host Manager if you wish to.

My skills

Attention to detail (e.g. being thorough, accurate, detecting errors)

Artistic skills (e.g. drawing, visual arts)

Music and sound skills (e.g. creative thinking)

Listening skills (e.g. ability to absorb and retain facts)

A strong sense of morality (e.g. honest, lack of judgemental attitude)

Maintain focus when engaged in repetitive work (e.g. being thorough, accurate, detecting errors)

Conscientious and diligent (e.g. organised, punctual)

Mathematical abilities (e.g. processing numbers, calculations)

Social skills (e.g. face to face interaction with others)

Creative talents (e.g. identifying improvements)

Analysing information (e.g. detecting patterns in data)

Technical abilities (e.g. computer skills, engineering)

Trustworthiness (e.g. doing what you say you are going to do)

Loyalty (e.g. staying with a friend or organisation)

Emotional intelligence (e.g. self awareness, empathy)

Other things I am good at



Before you start – Person Profile

How to prepare me best for my work experience

- I would benefit from receiving a plan, schedule of work or list of tasks I am expected to do each day or week
- I would benefit from visiting my work experience placement area before starting
- I would benefit from understanding the job role, tasks I am expected to undertake and the hours I will be working including breaks
- I would benefit from discussing working flexible work hours so I can make sure I can be at work on time

The best ways to communicate with me at work

- | | |
|---|---|
| I would prefer to be introduced to people one at a time <input type="radio"/> | I do not like making phone calls <input type="radio"/> |
| I prefer to communicate verbally <input type="radio"/> | I may have times when I am focusing and would rather not be disturbed <input type="radio"/> |
| I prefer to communicate via email and written communication <input type="radio"/> | I appreciate frequent feedback <input type="radio"/> |
| I enjoy talking with people <input type="radio"/> | I like to ask lots of questions until I am familiar with a task <input type="radio"/> |
| I prefer them to start the conversation <input type="radio"/> | I benefit from regular meetings with my manager (e.g. weekly) <input type="radio"/> |
| I would prefer it if people didn't talk to me about non work related topics <input type="radio"/> | I would prefer not to attend face to face meetings <input type="radio"/> |
| I prefer to talk to only one person at a time <input type="radio"/> | I would prefer not to attend online meetings <input type="radio"/> |
| I do not like answering the phone <input type="radio"/> | Preferred pronoun <input type="text"/> |

Anything else we can do to support you

4



Before you start – Person Profile

The best ways to give me tasks at work

- | | | | |
|---|-----------------------|---|-----------------------|
| I need instructions backed up in writing | <input type="radio"/> | I need information or questions in advance before discussing them | <input type="radio"/> |
| I prefer visual examples e.g. flow charts and diagrams | <input type="radio"/> | I prefer to concentrate on one task at a time | <input type="radio"/> |
| I need time to record instructions, so that I have the time to process the information | <input type="radio"/> | I am more comfortable completing the same task repeatedly | <input type="radio"/> |
| I need one question or instructions at a time | <input type="radio"/> | I prefer to have a bit of variety in the task that I am undertaking | <input type="radio"/> |
| I need instructions given to me in meetings rather than when I am concentrating on something else | <input type="radio"/> | I need advance notice of changes and help to manage these changes | <input type="radio"/> |
| I need time to process what has been said | <input type="radio"/> | I need help to structure my daily tasks | <input type="radio"/> |
| I may need some extra time to complete tasks or flexibility in relation to deadlines | <input type="radio"/> | | |

My preferred environment

- | | | | |
|--|-----------------------|---|-----------------------|
| I can be distracted by background conversation and other noises | <input type="radio"/> | I benefit from taking frequent breaks | <input type="radio"/> |
| I can find office lighting too bright | <input type="radio"/> | I benefit from having access to quiet space | <input type="radio"/> |
| I can find the temperature too warm | <input type="radio"/> | I use ear defenders, ear plugs or noise-cancelling headphones | <input type="radio"/> |
| I can find the temperature too cold | <input type="radio"/> | I wear tinted glasses or sunglasses in the office | <input type="radio"/> |
| I can be distracted by smells such as string perfume or aftershave, cleaning products or office kitchens | <input type="radio"/> | | |

Anything else we can do to support you

5



Before you start – Person Profile

What you might see me do and what this means

When I am happy I: 😊

- Talk a lot
- Jump up and down
- Move about or dance
- Hum or sing

Add your own:

Add your own:

When I am unsettled I: 😞

- Start fidgeting
- Stop talking
- Leave the room
- Look angry
- Become upset or sad

Add your own:

Add your own:

If I become overwhelmed I need: 😡

- To be left alone
- To be allowed to leave
- To be checked by someone
- To be allowed to sit somewhere quiet

My parents or carers to be contacted

Add your own:

Add your own:

Do you have a disability that needs to be taken into account when planning the placement? YES/NO
If yes please discuss any adjustment requests at the meeting and agree on the next page.

Anything else we can do to support you

If any adjustments are agreed as part of this discussion please document them on the Risk Assessment.



Before you start – Person Profile

Agree workplace adjustments

This section is for the Host Manager to agree any workplace adjustments if applicable

If any adjustments are agreed as part of this discussion please document them to the relevant Risk Assessment.

Placement signed

Date

Host Manager signed

Date



Before you start – What is expected from you

What is expected from you



Communicate with others



Willingness to learn



Share Ideas



Good timekeeping



Build your network



Follow our policy's and procedures



Find out from your manager the below during your pre placement meeting

Pre Placement Meeting

Brief overview of the placement

Activities/ tasks that you will take part in

Skills /knowledge that you may gain



Find out from your manager the below during your pre placement meeting

Pre Placement Meeting- Checklist

Make notes on the below

Discussion point	Notes
Location of where you will be working	
Travel arrangements	
Who to ask for on arrival and their contract details	
Dress code	
Working hours	
Breaks to be taken and lunch arrangements	
Any PPE that you need to wear	
Toilet location	

Manager section



Work Placement Agreement filled in, signed and scanned to apprenticeships@hartlepool.gov.uk



Work Experience Risk Assessment and Risk Assessment(s) for area and scanned to apprenticeships@hartlepool.gov.uk



Explained the importance of data protection and confidentiality



Induction planned including sharing any relevant policies and procedures



10



Pre Placement Meeting- Objective Setting

The below should be discussed and agreed at the pre placement meeting

Agree what three objectives are to be achieved, what are the key three things you would like to get from the work placement? E.g. a specific new skill, getting used to a working day, how to work as part of a team.

What three objectives would you like to get from your Work Experience time?

Is there anything else you would like to get out of your work placement?



During the placement- Weekly planner

Weekly Planner

Week commencing:

	What will you be doing?	Who will be supporting you?	What will you need to bring?
Day 1			
Day 2			
Day 3			
Day 4			
Day 5			



During the placement- Learning log

Weekly learning log

Week commencing:

	What did I learn today?
Day 1	
Day 2	
Day 3	
Day 4	
Day 5	

Manager comments



At the end of the placement – Review Meeting

Take time to review the objectives agreed at the start of the placement, have these been delivered? .

How did you get on with your three objectives?

Objective 1

Objective 2

Objective 3

What else did you learn?



At the end of the placement – Review Meeting

Please allow the placement time to complete the end of placement [survey link](#):

Placement to fill in questions 1-3

1. What have you enjoyed about your placement?

2. What have you learned about yourself (that you are good at or could develop)?

3. How has the experience helped you to prepare for work/ consider career choices?



At the end of the placement – Review Meeting

Host Manager to fill in questions 4-6

4. Feedback on what you have done well

5. Feedback on areas for development

6. Feedback on skills that we have seen that you have

This booklet is for the Work Placement to retain and evidence of the experience.

Host Manager name

Placement name

Host Manager Signature

Placement signature

Date

Date

<h1 style="margin: 0;">FINANCE AND POLICY COMMITTEE</h1> <h2 style="margin: 0;">25TH JUNE 2024</h2>
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Subject: COUNCIL PLAN 2021-2024 – PROGRESS UPDATE
Report of: Managing Director
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 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 To provide an update to Finance and Policy Committee on the progress made on the delivery of the Council Plan 2021/22 – 2023/24. The report also includes the 2023/24 Performance Indicator Report and the latest version of the Strategic Risk Register.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 The Council Plan 2021-24 was agreed by Council on 25th February 2021 and sets out a clear vision for Hartlepool and identifies what the delivery of that vision will mean. This reflects what was identified through consultation with residents, elected members and our public, voluntary, community and private sector partners whilst also recognising the emerging and continually evolving

challenges the Council faces as we continue to recover from the pandemic and manage the impact of inflation and cost of living crisis on Hartlepool residents and the authority itself.

4. PROGRESS UPDATE – MAY 2024

- 4.1 This update outlines the progress made on the delivery of the Council Plan since the last report to Committee in February 2024:

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

Hartlepool Food Partnership (HFP)

The HFP has employed a full time Food Partnership Co-ordinator – the two year post is co-funded by Public Health, PFC Trust and Thirteen Housing. This role will support the steering group and build a network across the food environment to create sustainability which allows people living in Hartlepool to access healthy, nutritious and affordable food.

HFP is now involved in specific pieces of work to address specific concerns: the standard of children and young people’s diet and nutrition has been a reoccurring topic and from these concerns a subgroup to focus on children and young people’s food and nutrition has emerged from the food partnership. An example some of the work initiated is a focus on food growing projects with children and young people (CYP), facilitated by the HFP. Several projects are underway and aimed at creating a greater awareness for children of where food comes from and how it is grown, what food looks like in the raw state and most importantly what happens to it as the CYP cook and eat the produce they have grown – from ‘plot to plate’. The ambition is to embed healthier eating habits from an early age by getting children directly involved and providers to champion healthier eating with parents. So far, 2 nurseries, 4 primary schools and the Hartlepool 6th form college have been recruited in this partnership work with others interested in being part of the scheme.

The Hartlepool Food Council has now merged and become part of HFP, which is a welcome move, retaining the knowledge, expertise and links to communities of Food Council partners to support the work of the HFP.

Substance Misuse

Working together with the Integrated Care Board a respiratory offer which is part of the core 20 plus 5 has now been implemented within START drug and alcohol service mirroring the front end of primary care to reduce health inequalities and support the NHS long term plan of ensuring more patients have access to testing and allowing earlier identification for respiratory related illnesses. This will be a 12 month pilot and will be monitored to review health outcomes. The vape swap to stop offer also went live the beginning of April for adults within the drug and alcohol service therefore this will give adults the opportunity to have smoking cessation available to them which will support the respiratory offer.

Sexual health from the beginning of April began providing services such as confidential support, screening, smears and contraception. This is provided by the sexual health outreach team. The team have offered a flexible approach to assessing individuals in order to maximise a person's health and reduce health inequalities and both services have adopted a collaborative way of working.

From the Behavioural Insights Work poverty proofing was identified as an important factor in affecting health inequalities. Since this time with the support of the Head of Hardship and Welfare Services training has been held with staff within the drug and alcohol service in regards to an understanding of poverty and destitution within Hartlepool, scoping has been completed as to how we could address poverty proofing within the service and next steps will be to speak with the service users themselves to see how they feel this could be addressed. This information will then be communicated to the service leads to understand what potential changes needed to be considered moving forward.

Continuity of care performance is good when compared to the national average. START have visited all NE prisons to promote what we deliver. Our current figures are around 69% whereas the England average is 49%.

Smoking

Work with the Smoking Alliance for Hartlepool continues with contributions from partners to implement the tobacco control strategy and associated action plan for delivery with partners.

Further development of the Vape pilot has now moved into the Swap to Stop project with funding secured for 2024/25. The navigator service has provided 176 people with vapes since April 2023 and of those 32 people have quit both smoking and vaping.

An Advanced Public Health Practitioner has been recruited to lead on Tobacco control and Wider Determinants funded in part through the Public Health core grant and the new funding.

Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) Programme

The HAF programme was delivered during the Easter school holiday by 22 providers offering 34 clubs. There were 4,559 spaces available and 926 children attended the programme. Of these 81% were eligible for free school meals in accordance with the Department for Education criteria for the programme.

Leisure Services

Between January and March 2024 there were 73,400 visits to Active Hartlepool venues and services excluding social use of Summerhill and a social media reach of 86,341.

A new online joining system has been implemented within Active Hartlepool. Since it launched 785 casual users have signed up for an online account to make bookings and 977 customers have signed up for a membership online. The new app has been downloaded 1,475 times.

The capital schemes at Carlton Adventure and Highlight Active Well Being Hub are progressing well.

Health and Social Care Academy (Towns Deal)

The £2.25 million Health and Social Care Academy project is progressing well with a ‘spade in the ground’ event held on site on 23rd January 2024 which was featured in Heartbeat magazine. Works are underway and on track for completion in September 2024.

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

Children’s Services Ofsted

An Ofsted inspection of local authority children’s services took place in March 2024 when the service was judged to be outstanding. Within the inspection, the arrangements for the Contextual Safeguarding hub were examined and the following observations were made: When children are at risk of exploitation or have been missing, effective systems in the multi-agency child exploitation (MACE) service ensure that prompt action is taken. Longer-term risks are being reduced for children because of the strengths-based relationships and determined intervention of workers across all teams. When children go missing, workers in the MACE service ensure that children’s views are captured through timely, high-quality return home interviews. The coordinated information is captured and used effectively to contribute to the highly effective multi-agency work undertaken to disrupt exploitation activity.

Free School

The development of the Free School in Hartlepool continues and remains on schedule to open for pupils in September 2024.

Adult Social Care

Excellent feedback has been received from national surveys of people who use adult social care and carers, demonstrating that Hartlepool continues to be one of the highest rated Councils in the country.

Performance in the annual Employer Standards Healthcheck for Adult Social Workers was the best in the country for the second consecutive year. The survey measures how well employers deliver the Employer Standards for Social Workers, how employees perceive their working environment and the factors that influence them to engage with their work and stay with the organisation.

The Council has successfully launched a Supported Internship Programme with students completing their first placements and providing excellent feedback on the difference the programme is making to their lives.

The Hartlepool Now App has been redesigned, refreshed and relaunched improving access to information and advice.

Weekly face to face huddles have commenced with representation from Tees, Esk & Wear Valleys NHS Foundation Trust, Social Workers, Community Navigators, Impact and Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise sector (VCSE) representatives to improve support to people experiencing emotional distress.

A new overnight home care service has been implemented to support people to stay in their own homes, where residential care may have been used previously.

The Great North Care Record (GNCR) has been implemented to share information across health and social care, with Hartlepool's Adult Social Care service the first to go live in the Tees Valley.

Feedback from the Care Group Director – Healthy Lives at North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust, has highlighted the value of our partnership working in delivering 'positive outcomes for our community' and supporting the Trust to have the best performance in the country for urgent and emergency care in 2023/24. Feedback stated that NHS colleagues 'couldn't speak more highly of the Council's teams, the approach they take and how supportive/ responsive they are'.

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

Civil Engineering Academy (Town Deal)

The Town Deal £2.25m Civil Engineering Academy project is progressing with works on track for completion in September 2024. The Exeter Street Annexe (Fabrication and Welding Institute) officially opened on 19th April 2024.

Community Hubs

Between January and March 2024 there have been 69,200 visits to Community Hubs (including the library service and Jobs and Skills) with a social media reach of 148,000 in the same period. In addition there have been 1,800 volunteer hours delivered in Community Hubs with 170 active volunteers registered and an assumed economic impact of £18,160. A total of £566,138 of external grant funding has also been secured by the Community Hubs service during that time.

Working with Public Health, Community Hubs have been successful in securing two blood pressure machines to be used in the community and positively engage members of the public to prevent escalation of conditions that can occur with high blood pressure if undetected. Hartlepool is one of two places in the Tees area to be piloting this work.

Capital improvement works at Seaton Branch Library are progressing well.

Hartlepool Creative and Cultural Partnership

Secured £5,000 investment from Arts Council England to facilitate an independent launch of Hartlepool Creative and Cultural Partnership bringing together key

stakeholders from the creative, cultural and heritage sector to support strategic leadership and development across the borough.

Learning and Skills

Adult skills enrolments until the end of February 2024 are 408, against the profile of 238. The retention rate is 91.3% and the achievement rate is 87.7%

Learning for Inclusion have 554 enrolments and 390 unique learners. In year retention is 98.3% and in year achievement 98.3%.

Hartlepool Art Gallery, Museum of Hartlepool and Wingfield Castle

Between January and March 2024 there were 26,828 visits to Hartlepool Art Gallery and Museum of Hartlepool with a social media reach of 30,167 and 118 hours volunteered with a positive contribution of £3,620.

Capital schemes for the art gallery, museum and Wingfield Castle are progressing well. Grant funding from the Arts Council England of £1.8 million has been agreed for the Wingfield Castle and Phase 1 emergency works have been completed. National Heritage Lottery Funding has been approved for phase 1 of the Museum of Hartlepool project and architects have been appointed.

Armed Forces

Promotion of veteran friendly accreditation for Care Homes and GP practices is ongoing, alongside work with those practices who are already accredited to explore how interactions with the veteran community can be improved.

Following retention of an active reservist presence at the Army reservist Centre, Easington Road. Arrangements being put in place to further support reservist promotion and recruitment (including location of promotional stands in the Civic Centre on a monthly basis).

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

Funding Secured

Over £750k in developer contributions have been secured this year towards education, managing ecological impacts, highway improvements, health facilities, sports, play and green infrastructure.

£530k secured via the government's Traffic Signals Obsolescence Grant, for refurbishment/ upgrade of existing signals installations.

Road / Highway Improvement and Safety Schemes

Safety schemes in Mowbray Road and Grange Road completed in March and April 2024 respectively.

Bus stop re-location works outside of High Tunstall School to improve safety of children when crossing were completed in February 2024.

Hartlepool Railway Station

Works on 2nd platform at Hartlepool Railway Station ‘on track’ for entry into service on 31 May '24, enabling increased service frequency.

Bus Services – Wynyard Village

Bus service commenced around Wynyard in April 2024. Operated by Stagecoach, the majority of services require a change at Billingham but a handful link direct with Hartlepool. New bus stops have been installed utilising funding from Tees Valley Combined Authority and developers.

Trading Standards

In April 2024 Qwidz In, Murray Street, was closed down for three months by Teesside Magistrates following an application by the Trading Standards Team. An application for costs of £1,800 was also approved. Reports had been received from members of the public over a number of months about the sale of illicit tobacco and illegal vapes from the premises.

A Hartlepool trader, took money from two Hartlepool pensioners for landscaping work but then failed to complete the work in full. Following investigation by the Trading Standards Team, a successful prosecution was brought, with the trader pleading guilty. The case has been adjourned until the 21st May when he will be sentenced for the crimes.

A19 / Elwick Road / North Lane Junction and Elwick Road / Hartlepool Western Link Project

During the last 4 months, progress has been made on the A19/Elwick Road/North lane Junction and Elwick Northern Bypass/Hartlepool Western Link Project with Planning Permission granted in January 2024 and detailed design subsequently progressing.

Community Safety

The Council received over £300K of Safer Streets 5 Home Office funding from Cleveland Police and Crime Commissioner in order to tackle neighbourhood crime and anti-social behaviour within a designated area of the Victoria Ward within the town. The funding will be used to improve security with new lighting and alley-gate anti-climb installations, deployment of additional mobile CCTV and the appointment of a Community Cohesion Officer and Project Officer - tasked with engaging and establishing Neighbourhood Watch groups and to target harden burglary victims and at risk properties within the designated Safer Streets zone.

The Council received £180K of Home Office funding from Cleveland's Police and Crime Commissioner to help tackle and reduce the amount of anti-social behaviour in two identified “hotspot areas” of the town. The funding allowed for 4 additional Civil Enforcement Officers to be recruited and to provide regular and highly visible patrols of areas on Old Cemetery Road, Headland and Sandringham Road, Victoria which had been identified as having significant issues in relation to reported anti-social behaviour.

The Council was also successful in obtaining £520K of UKSPF Investment funding via TVCA. The funding will allow for the employment of an additional 6 full time

Street Wardens. In addition to providing a reassuring visual presence their deployment allows the additional resources to support crime reduction and address anti-social behaviour including that of the night time economy in the town centre area. The funding will be used to improve CCTV, tackle aggressive begging, provide specific support to address retail crime and has provision to complete a “deep clean” of the town centre aimed at improving the visual appearance of the town and whilst supporting other regeneration and improvement works taking place to encourage and increase visitor numbers.

Active Travel

Grant funding has been awarded for a joint piece of work with partners on active travel for Children and Young People. The partners involved are the University of Leeds, HBC Youth Services, Sustrans Walking Cycling Hub and Public Health. This piece of work will look at the barriers to Active Travel for children and young people to understand what the barriers are and produce a toolkit and information for young people on active travel. This is in the early stages and will be developed by the Council’s Youth Services with support from Sustrans.

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

Housing

Housing completions for last year significantly exceeded Local Plan targets. The annual monitoring report shows that for 2023 the authority delivered 507 dwellings well above the development plan annual housing target of 410, in addition to a record number of starts. At the same time 96 affordable homes were delivered again well in excess of the development plan target of 74 homes. To date, this year, for the first quarter we have had some 26 starts and 106 completions.

Smart Infrastructure Pilot Project

The Smart Infrastructure Pilot Project has identified locations for 6 lighting columns with modular technology including wayfinding which will compliment phase 2 of Waterfront Connectivity project which is also in development and supports active travel.

The smart street lighting columns to be installed in the Marina/ Church Street area, will have CCTV, traffic/ pedestrian counters, visitor displays and speakers. They are currently in the design stage with installation due in August 2024.

Electric Vehicle Charging

An electric vehicle charging pilot scheme is underway, enabling residents to have a kerb channel facility installed. Funding of £10,000 has been secured from government which will allow the first 20 applicants who have no off-street parking to receive a half price installation.

Wesley Chapel

The Wesley Chapel, Town Deal project is progressing well with internal strip out and demolition, scaffold of full building, structural infill of areas where swimming

pool, dance floor and staircase removed and roof coverings among works complete.

Screen Industries Production Village

The Screen Industries Production Village project continues with the following occurring in the previous quarter:

- Completed acquisition of the final asset at 25 Whitby Street;
- Completed procurement of heritage and specialist technical consultants as part of design and build elements of project;
- Worked with Time + Space to develop the branding, operator model, supply chain engagement, and design requirements with a draft report completed;
- Early building surveys continue with some remedial works to identify and prevent further deterioration of assets and reduce potential costs in later stages of the project.

Better Health at Work Award

The Better Health at Work award is a framework to build healthy and happy workforce culture with an engaging health and well-being offer to help address health inequalities. Three new workplaces have signed up to framework for Hartlepool. The Council continues to work with 10 workplaces in Hartlepool at various levels of the framework and has received positive feedback about the support that has been given to workplaces which has included:

- Health Advocate (HA) training with Making Every Contact Count (MECC) training incorporated has been delivered to workplaces. Support for campaigns around specific topics to be delivered to workplace staff with positive evaluations including case histories of making a difference to individuals and staff groups.
- Support for eligible staff to access and get free flu vaccines
- Offers of experienced workplaces to support new workplaces as part of the ambassador level accreditation, including delivery of HA training and provision of facilities.

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

Digital Progression

The Council continues to develop its digital offer and has been providing increasing opportunities for residents and customers to contact the Council through digital channels. At the end of 2023/24 there were 34,719 active HBC self-online accounts and there had been 359,776 transactions delivered digitally across the platform. Digital projects delivered recently include:

- MyAccounts and e-billing launched – providing the availability for residents to view their Council Tax account and bill online
- Garden Waste Subscriptions 2024 – digital process launched
- Council Tax Support and Housing Benefit – banded scheme digital application process launched

- Corporate change of address process – adopting a tell us once

Communications and Marketing

The Council's Communications and Marketing Team were crowned winners of the 'Not For Profit Campaign of the Year' at the prestigious North East Marketing Awards.

Hartbeat delivered a small surplus profit for the first time in many years through to increasing advertising base.

Consultation and Engagement

The Council's Your Say consultation and engagement platform continues to develop and the contract has been extended for a further year. Recent activity has included:

- Conservation Area Management Plans (Phase 2);
- Tides of Change: Redevelopment of the Museum of Hartlepool (comprises of public, teachers' and students' surveys);
- Long-Term Plan for Towns information page;
- Work experience forms;
- Internal workforce activities including Staff Development Day Feedback survey and Health and Wellbeing Campaign resources.

Big Conversation

The Big Conversation consultation and engagement exercise launched in November 2023 and ran until 14th February 2024 (12 weeks). The underlying principle was to engage with people where they were rather than holding large scale events and expecting people to come to us. The exercise included Community Hubs fortnight in January, 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 have been analysed and will be used to inform the preparation of a new Council Plan and other strategies and plans including the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy.

Data and Intelligence

Plans to action feedback from Peer Review on more holistic use of data are in development including development of Data Strategy and use of a Data and Intelligence Hub.

Workforce

The Council has revised its Work Experience Policy and implemented a new framework enabling priority placements for its children in care and care leavers thereby supporting its corporate parent role and equality policy commitments.

The Council has successfully utilised its apprentice levy in 2023/24. The Council as at April 2024 are supporting 71 current employees to upskill and 23 paid apprenticeships. In 2024 the Council are advertising 15 paid apprenticeship opportunities. Additionally 7 apprentice leavers secured permanent employment in Council services.

A new Council Jobs and Careers website has been developed and went live in March 2024. This promotes the Local Government branding campaign linked to the LGA pilot recruitment campaign outlined in the previous report together with an outline of Council services with video testimonials from employees to help engage the public and support recruitment especially for difficult to fill job roles.

A Workforce Development Programme for Council wide training was launched in April 2024 with a learning and skills offer for the workforce with identified mandatory and optional training opportunities. All employees with HBC email accounts are now able to have individual accounts on the Council's e-learning platform (Skillgate) with future plans to roll out to other employees later in the year.

The Council have developed new Council Induction and Manager Induction which will be available via Skillgate e-learning modules with plans to launch this in July 2024. This has been developed using a new e-learning authoring tool Articulate 360 that enables the development of better quality interactive learning with the user.

In January 2024 the Executive Leadership Team agreed an employee survey action plan in response to the Annual Employee Survey in October 2023 based on a You Said, We Will commitment. Feedback on progress on the action plan will be communicated to employees when launching the Autumn 2024 Employee Annual Survey.

The Council have developed and successfully piloted a new workforce plan framework to meet its commitment in the Workforce Strategy to support having “the right people, with the right skills, values and behaviours, in the right jobs”. This will support services to recruit and retain, meet demographic concerns in relation to the number of older workers in the workforce and look at actions to support resilience in high risk roles. This will be rolled out across 2024/25.

The Council have refreshed its Workforce Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy and approved a new action plan which has been developed in consultation with the Staff Equality Network to support the equality, diversity and inclusion ambitions of the Council. This includes a zero-tolerance approach to discrimination and harassment and mandatory training for all staff.

The Strategic Health and Wellbeing Group, chaired by the Managing Director, has developed and agreed a set of Health and Wellbeing Key Performance Indicators to monitor improvements of the wellbeing of the workforce.

4.2 Current areas of concern

Whilst good progress is being made on the delivery of the Council Plan there are a number of areas of concern that may impact on future progress including:

- Impact of cost of living pressures on residents and issues of poverty and deprivation across Hartlepool;
- Impact of inflation on council services and those of local partners in the public, private and voluntary sectors. Concerns may impact on

future service delivery and may require further prioritisation of services and schemes;

- Difficulties in the recruitment and retention of employees being felt by both the Council and those who deliver commissioned services on our behalf.
- Ageing workforce and potential future knowledge and skills gaps if we are unable to recruit new talent as people retire from the Council;
- Impact of covid recovery and the cost of living crisis on achieving projected income targets across a range of service areas.
- Potential financial and operational impact of anticipated legislative changes with timescales not yet confirmed (Mental Health Act, Mental Capacity Act and Liberty Protection Safeguards);
- Difficulties in maintaining service standards and managing expectations in the context of funding reductions, increasing demands and uncertainty around future funding stream availability;
- Limited proactive maintenance of Council buildings over time is having an impact with more expensive remedial works now necessary alongside loss of income and reputational damage through unforeseen building closures;
- Increased incidence of unacceptable and unreasonable behaviour from members of the public across Council services and locations.

4.3 2023/24 Performance Indicator Report

A suite of Performance Indicators (PIs) have been identified that demonstrate the delivery of the Council Plan. The latest position on these PIs and comparison with the local and national average where available is set out in the PI report included as **Appendix 1**.

4.4 Strategic Risk Register

The Strategic Risk Register sets out the key strategic risks that the Council faces and the areas of concern identified above are reflected within it. Risks within the SRR have been reviewed and the following changes have been made:

- **Workforce** - The skills, expertise, wellbeing, performance and overall size of the workforce available may not be sufficient to support the overall aims of the organisation resulting in the failure to deliver services. Change in rating to Amber 6 (Major / Possible) from Amber 6 (Minor / Probable).
- **Access to Leisure, Community and Preventative services** - Failure to engage the at risk population in preventative, cultural, leisure and community based activities could impact on demand led services. Change in score to Red 9 (Major / Probable) from Amber 6 (Major / Possible).
- **Housing** – Failure to address the housing requirements of the borough and provide affordable, high-quality housing. Change in score to Red 9 (Major / Probable) from Amber 6 (Major / Possible).

- **Home to School Transport** – Failure to deliver home to school transport services leads to the Council being unable to discharge statutory duties resulting in possible legal challenge. New risk identified with score Amber 6 (Major / Possible).
- **0-19 Service** – Failure to provide sufficient health visiting and school nursing services to meet the needs of children leading to increased safeguarding concerns. New risk identified with score Red 9 (Major / Probable).

4.5 The latest full version of the SRR is attached as **Appendix 2** for Finance and Policy Committee’s information.

4.6 Annual Report

In order to share the progress made on delivering the Council Plan more widely an Annual Report for 2023/24 is being produced which will be shared with all elected members and will be made available to residents, employees and partners. It is anticipated that this should be available to circulate in July 2024.

5. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS/IMPLICATIONS

<p>RISK IMPLICATIONS</p>	<p>The Council agreed the Risk Management Framework in June 2019 and this ensures that appropriate arrangements are in place for the management of the Council’s key strategic risks. Embedding the identification and management of risk supports the achievement of our Council Plan and provides assurance to elected members that these risks are being appropriately managed.</p> <p>The Council Plan and Strategic Risk Register are monitored regularly to enable early identification and reporting to Members of any emerging risks which might prevent delivery of the strategic priorities identified in the Council Plan. The latest version of the Strategic Risk Register is included as Appendix 2 of this report.</p>
<p>FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS</p>	<p>The Council Plan was prepared alongside the Medium Term Financial Strategy and the 5 year Capital Plan as three parts of a single plan to ensure the links between the three are strengthened. In addition, effective risk management arrangements should help improve the use of valuable and limited financial resources.</p>
<p>SUBSIDY CONTROL</p>	<p>No implications.</p>
<p>LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS</p>	<p>Whilst there are no legal requirements to have a Council Plan it is good practice to have one in place.</p>

CHILD AND FAMILY POVERTY	The priorities identified in the Council Plan include work to reduce child and family poverty within Hartlepool. There is no change to the Child and Family Poverty Impact Assessment included within the Council Plan 2021/22 – 2023/24 report to Council on 25th February 2021.
EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY CONSIDERATIONS	Since the 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 demonstrates that equality and diversity is a core part of what we do as an organisation and not an add on activity. The Council's vision as set out in the Council Plan sets out our equality objectives. The priorities identified in the Council Plan aim to have a positive impact on the whole population of Hartlepool and those with protected characteristics. There is no change to the Equality Impact Assessment included within the Council Plan 2021/22 – 2023/24 report to Council on 25th February 2021.
STAFF CONSIDERATIONS	No implications.
ASSET MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS	No implications.
ENVIRONMENT, SUSTAINABILITY AND CLIMATE CHANGE CONSIDERATIONS	No implications.
CONSULTATION	The Council Plan was informed by extensive consultation including a 4 week consultation exercise in September 2019, a further 5 week consultation starting in January 2020 and a wide ranging consultation over the summer of 2020. This consultation included Elected Members through Members Seminars on 27th November 2019, 29th January 2020 and 14th July 2020 and through reports to individual Policy Committees in January and February 2020.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.1 Finance and Policy Committee are requested to:
- note the progress made on the Council Plan 2021-2024 by May 2024;
 - note the Council Plan Performance Indicator report for 2023/24 as set out in appendix 1;
 - note the updated Strategic Risk Register as set out in appendix 2, the changes to individual risk scores and the additional new risks;
 - note the development of the Council Plan Annual Report 2023/24.

7. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1 Finance and Policy Committee have overall responsibility for Performance and Risk Management and are the responsible Committee for a number of service areas contained within the Council Plan.

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 8.1 Council Plan 2021/22 - 2023/24 report to Council on 25th February 2021.

Council Plan 2021-2024 – Progress Update report to Finance and Policy Committee on 15th November 2021.

Council Plan 2021-2024 – Progress Update report to Finance and Policy Committee on 14th March 2022.

Council Plan 2021-2024 – Progress Update report to Finance and Policy Committee on 26th July 2022.

Council Plan 2021-2024 – Progress Update report to Finance and Policy Committee on 12th December 2022.

Council Plan 2021-2024 – Progress Update report to Finance and Policy Committee on 13th March 2023.

Council Plan 2021-2024 – Progress Update report to Finance and Policy Committee on 3rd July 2023.

Council Plan 2021-2024 – Progress Update report to Finance and Policy Committee on 27th November 2023.

Council Plan 2021-2024 – Progress Update report to Finance and Policy Committee on 19th February 2024.

9. CONTACT OFFICERS

Denise McGuckin
 Managing Director
Denise.mcguckin@hartlepool.gov.uk
 01429 523001

Sign Off:-

Managing Director	Date: 13/06/2024
Director of Finance, IT and Digital	Date: 13/06/2024
Director of Legal, Governance and HR	Date: 13/06/2024

Council Plan 2021/22 – 2023/24

Performance Indicator Update June 2024

Key:

Direction of travel (from baseline) =  Improving /  Maintaining /  Declining

RAG Rating England =  Better than /  Same as /  Worse than

RAG Rating North East =  Better than /  Same as /  Worse than

 This symbol means that the data is not available. This could be because there was not a sample size big enough in Hartlepool to generate a releasable figure or that the data is not reported every year or that more recent data is not currently available due to the time lag in publication.

Please note that the baseline year has been set as 2019/20 or 2019 where possible in recognition of the potential impact of the covid pandemic on data.

Hartlepool will be a place...	Performance Indicator	Hartlepool		England		North East		Direction of Travel	RAG Rating England	RAG Rating North East
		Baseline	Latest Data	Baseline	Latest Data	Baseline	Latest Data			
...where people are enabled to live healthy, independent and prosperous lives	Percentage of adults aged 18+classified as overweight or obese	72.5% (2019/20)	76.2% (2021/22)	62.8% (2019/20)	63.8% (2021/22)	67.2% (2019/20)	70.5% (2021/22)	▬	▬	▬
	Percentage of obese children in reception year	13.79% (2019/20 Academic)	12.1% (2022/23 Academic)	9.86% (2019/20 Academic)	9.2% (2022/23 Academic)	11.04% (2019/20 Academic)	11.3% (2022/23 Academic)	+	▬	▬
	Percentage of obese children in year 6	24.46% (2019/20 Academic)	26.6% (2022/23 Academic)	21.05% (2019/20 Academic)	26.7% (2022/23 Academic)	23.20% (2019/20 Academic)	25.8% (2022/23 Academic)	▬	+	▬
	Successful completion of drug treatment - opiate users (% of those that entered treatment)	3.1% (2019)	3.3% (2022)	5.6% (2019)	5.0% (2022)	3.9% (2019)	4.0% (2022)	+	▬	▬
	Successful completion of drug treatment – non-opiate users (% of those that entered treatment)	23.0% (2019)	26.1% (2022)	34.2% (2019)	31.4% (2022)	27.3% (2019)	27.1% (2022)	+	▬	▬
	Successful completion of drug treatment - alcohol (% of those that entered treatment)	25.6% (2019)	27.8% (2022)	37.8% (2019)	35.1% (2022)	31.2% (2019)	29.1% (2022)	+	▬	▬
	Smoking prevalence in adults – current smokers (APS)	19.3% (2019)	14.3% (2022)	13.9% (2019)	12.7% (2022)	15.3% (2019)	13.1% (2022)	+	▬	▬
	Under 18 conception rate per 1,000	27.0 (2019)	19.9 (2021)	15.7 (2019)	13.1 (2021)	21.8 (2019)	19.8 (2021)	+	▬	▬
	Percentage of older people who were still at home 91 days after discharge from hospital into reablement / rehabilitation services (effectiveness of the service)	82.9% (2019/20)	81.1% (2022/23)	82.0% (2019/20)	82.3% (2022/23)	83.5% (2019/20)	83.1% (2022/23)	▬	N/A	N/A
	Percentage of service users aged 65+ who reported that they had as much social contact as they would like	53.8% (2019/20)	46.6% (2022/23)	43.4% (2019/20)	41.5% (2022/23)	48.1% (2019/20)	47.4% (2022/23)	▬	N/A	N/A
	Percentage of adults in contact with secondary mental health services who live independently with or without support	86% (2019/20)	71.6% (2022/23)	58% (2019/20)	▲	69% (2019/20)	▲	▬	N/A	N/A
	% 16-17 year olds in Education and Training	92.6% (2019)	92.9% (2023)	92.6% (2019)	92.3% (2023)	91.6% (2019)	90.5% (2023)	+	+	+
	Percentage of children living in families with less than 60% of the median UK household income, after housing costs have been taken into account	37.8% (2019/20)	32.9%* (2022/23)	30% (2019/20)	30%* (2022/23)	37% (2019/20)	30%* (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.

Hartlepool will be a place...	Performance Indicator	Hartlepool		England		North East		Direction of Travel	RAG Rating England	RAG Rating North East
		Baseline	Latest Data	Baseline	Latest Data	Baseline	Latest Data			
...where those who are vulnerable will be safe and protected from harm	Children looked after rate, per 10,000 children under 18	155 (2019/20)	160 (2022/23)	67 (2019/20)	71 (2022/23)	107 (2019/20)	113 (2022/23)	▬	▬	▬
	Rate of children who were subject of a child protection plan per 10,000 children	92 (2019/20)	89 (2022/23)	43 (2019/20)	43 (2022/23)	70 (2019/20)	65 (2022/23)	+	▬	▬
	Second or subsequent child protection plans (percentage)	18.9% (2019/20)	21% (2022/23)	21.9% (2019/20)	23.6% (2022/23)	21.9% (2019/20)	24.6% (2022/23)	▬	+	+
	Percentage of homelessness applications that were resolved	84% (2019/20)	81% (2022/23)	N/A Local PI		N/A Local PI		▬	N/A	N/A
	Percentage 'Good' or 'Outstanding' Adult Social Care Providers	97.8% (2019/20)	93.5% (2023/24)	N/A Local PI		N/A Local PI		▬	N/A	N/A
	Deaths from drug misuse per 100,000 population	16.3 (2018-20)	14.8 (2020-22)	5.0 (2018-20)	5.2 (2020-22)	9.9 (2018-20)	9.7 (2020-22)	+	▬	▬
...of resilient and resourceful communities with opportunities for all	Percentage of primary / secondary schools rated good or outstanding by OFSTED	86.8% (2019/20)	92% (May 2023)	N/A Local PI		N/A Local PI		+	N/A	N/A
	Percentage qualified to level 1 and above (working age population - 16-64 years)	81.1% (2019)	86.2% (2021)	85.8% (2019)	87.8% (2021)	84.8% (2019)	85.0% (2021)	+	▬	+
	Percentage of adults in contact with secondary mental health services in paid employment	14% (2019/20)	16.2% (2022/23)	9% (2019/20)	▲	10% (2019/20)	▲	+	+	+
	Percentage of adults with learning disabilities in paid employment	23.5% (2019/20)	7.6% (2022/23)	5.6% (2019/20)	4.8% (2022/23)	5.1% (2019/20)	3.5% (2022/23)	▬	+	+
...that is sustainable, clean, safe and green	CO ² emissions estimates – per capita (LA influence)	4.5 tonnes (2019)	4.8 tonnes (2021)	4.1 tonnes (2019)	3.9 tonnes (2021)	4.5 tonnes (2019)	4.4 tonnes (2021)	+	▬	▬
	Percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting in Hartlepool	34.00 (2019/20)	30.1 (2022/23)	43.80 (2019/20)	41.70 (2022/23)	35.50 (2019/20)	31.20 (2022/23)	▬	▬	▬
	Number of affordable homes delivered (gross)	86 (2019/20)	84 (2022/23)	58,964 (2019/20)	63,605 (2022/23)	2,587 (2019/20)	1,857 (2022/23)	▬	N/A	N/A
	Number of houses improved through energy efficiency measures.	645 (2021/22)	241 (2023/24)	N/A Local PI		N/A Local PI		▬	N/A	N/A

Hartlepool will be a place...	Performance Indicator	Hartlepool		England		North East		Direction of Travel	RAG Rating England	RAG Rating North East
		Baseline	Latest Data	Baseline	Latest Data	Baseline	Latest Data			
...that has an inclusive and growing economy	Employment rate	67.6% (Q4 2019)	67.9% (Q4 2023)	76.0% (Q4 2019)	76% (Q4 2023)	70.5% (Q4 2019)	72.8% (Q4 2023)	▬	▬	▬
	Unemployment Rate	7.7% (Q4 2019)	3.6% (Q4 2023)	3.9% (Q4 2019)	3.7% (Q4 2023)	5.8% (Q4 2019)	3.9% (Q4 2023)	+	+	+
	Youth unemployment rate (claimant count aged 16-24)	7.7% (Dec 2019)	6.5% (Dec 2023)	3.2% (Dec 2019)	4.1% (Dec 2023)	5.2% (Dec 2019)	4.6% (Dec 2023)	+	▬	▬
	Care leavers who are in education, employment and training aged 17-21	49% (2019/20)	43.2% (2022/23)	56% (2019/20)	58.6% (2022/23)	54% (2019/20)	55.9% (2022/23)	▬	▬	▬
	Qualified to level 3 and above (working age population)	49.8% (2019)	56.3% (2021)	58.5% (2019)	61.3% (2021)	52.1% (2019)	54.5% (2021)	+	▬	+
	Percentage of Council spend that goes to local suppliers	35.8% (2019/20)	36.5% (2023/24)	N/A Local PI		N/A Local PI		+	N/A	N/A
	Business density (enterprises per 10,000 population)	303.3 (2019)	239.3 (2022)	502.5 (2019)	425.9 (2022)	321.3 (2019)	276.8 (2022)	▬	▬	▬
	Visitor numbers (STEAM)	3.72m (2019)	3.33m (2020)	N/A Local PI		N/A Local PI		▬	N/A	N/A
	Value of visitor economy (STEAM)	£199.46m (2019)	£204.51m (2020)	N/A Local PI		N/A Local PI		+	N/A	N/A
	Self-Employment Rate	7.5% (2020)	5% (Year to Dec 2023)	9.9% (2020)	9.5% (Year to Dec 2023)	7.6% (2020)	7.4% (Year to Dec 2023)	▬	▬	▬
	Rate of births of new enterprises	41.0 (2019)	36.8 (2022)	71.6 (2019)	64.6 (2022)	43.1 (2019)	44 (2022)	▬	▬	▬
...with a Council that is ambitious, fit for purpose and reflects the diversity of its community	Council's CO ² emissions data	5,503 tonnes (2022/23)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
	Number of transactions delivered digitally (internal and/or external)	359,776 (2020/21)	307,116 (2023/24)	N/A Local PI		N/A Local PI		▬	N/A	N/A
	HBC employees who agreed that they felt that they were maintaining a healthy work – life balance	70.6% (Summer 2020)	65.1% (Autumn 2022)	N/A Local PI		N/A Local PI		▬	N/A	N/A
	HBC employees who agreed that they were having meaningful check ins with their manager	74.9% (Summer 2020)	76.0% (Autumn 2022)	N/A Local PI		N/A Local PI		+	N/A	N/A



Strategic Risk Register

May 2024

Risk Scoring Matrix:

	IMPACT			
LIKELIHOOD	1 NEGLIGIBLE	2 MINOR	3 MAJOR	4 CRITICAL
4 ALMOST CERTAIN	AMBER 4	RED 8	RED 12	RED 16
3 PROBABLE	GREEN 3	AMBER 6	RED 9	RED 12
2 POSSIBLE	GREEN 2	AMBER 4	AMBER 6	RED 8
1 HARDLY EVER	GREEN 1	GREEN 2	GREEN 3	AMBER 4

HBC Strategic Risk Register

No.	Risk Title	Risk Score	Risk Owner
1	Finance - Failure to deliver a balanced budget for 2025/26 and sustainable Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) leading to a reduction in services provided, damage to reputation and negative impact on the community.	RED 12	James Magog Director of Finance, IT and Digital
2	Workforce - The skills, expertise, wellbeing, performance and overall size of the workforce available may not be sufficient to support the overall aims of the organisation resulting in the failure to deliver services.	AMBER 6	Hayley Martin Director of Legal, Governance and HR
3	Communication and Engagement – Failure to deliver effective communication, consultation and engagement could impact adversely on the Council’s reputation and ability to deliver plans and strategies.	AMBER 6	Bev Bearne Assistant Director – Development and Growth
4	Health and Safety - Failure to comply with Health and Safety legislation and ensure appropriate risk controls are in place to ensure the health, safety and wellbeing of individuals at work and those who may be affected by our act or omission.	RED 12	Sylvia Pinkney Assistant Director – Regulatory Services
5	Information Governance and Cyber Security - Failure to comply with legislation and ensure appropriate system safeguards to ensure the confidentiality, integrity and availability of personal and corporate information and data leading to data loss, cyber-attacks, legal proceedings and significant financial penalties.	RED 8	James Magog Director of Finance, IT and Digital
6	Information Technology – Failure to provide a resilient and responsive ICT infrastructure leading to ineffective service delivery or the loss of services.	RED 8	James Magog Director of Finance, IT and Digital
7	Children and Young People – Failure to improve life chances and provide opportunities for education for children and young people particularly those whose circumstances make them vulnerable to poor outcomes.	RED 9	Sally Robinson Director of Children’s and Joint Commissioning Services

7.1 Appendix 2

No.	Risk Title	Risk Score	Risk Owner
8	Drugs and Alcohol – Failure of the drugs and alcohol addiction services to prevent, treat and provide recovery for those with substance misuse problems in Hartlepool.	AMBER 6	Craig Blundred Director of Public Health
9	Safeguarding children – Failure to protect children and young people from harm and promote their welfare.	RED 12	Laura Gough Assistant Director - Children and Families
10	Market failure and sufficiency of provision (Adults) – Provider failure within residential or non-residential care leading to insufficient capacity to support vulnerable adults appropriately.	AMBER 6	Danielle Swainston Assistant Director - Joint Commissioning
11	Adult Safeguarding – Failure to protect an adult’s right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect.	AMBER 6	John Lovatt Assistant Director - Adult Social Care
12	Access to Leisure, Community and Preventative services - Failure to engage the at risk population in preventative, cultural, leisure and community based activities could impact on demand led services.	RED 9	Gemma Ptak Assistant Director - Preventative and Community Based Services
13	Highways and Flood Defences – Failure to maintain the Borough Highway infrastructure and protect areas from flooding risks could impact on the economy and quality of life.	AMBER 6	Kieran Bostock Assistant Director – Neighbourhoods
14	Community Safety - Failure to provide a safer Hartlepool where residents and visitors can live free from crime, fear of crime and anti-social behaviour could impact on quality of life and tourism.	AMBER 6	Sylvia Pinkney Assistant Director – Regulatory Services
15	Waste Management - Council are unable to collect and dispose of all household waste within existing financial resources.	RED 9	Kieran Bostock Assistant Director – Neighbourhoods

7.1 Appendix 2

No.	Risk Title	Risk Score	Risk Owner
16	Business Continuity - Failure to provide Council services as a result of disruption to the normal day to day activities.	RED 8	Sylvia Pinkney Assistant Director – Regulatory Services
17	Economic Regeneration – Failure to encourage regeneration, support enterprise, reduce unemployment and grow new and existing businesses could impact adversely on the sustainability of Hartlepool.	AMBER 6	Bev Bearne Assistant Director – Development and Growth
18	Housing – Failure to address the housing requirements of the borough and provide affordable, high-quality housing.	RED 9	Bev Bearne Assistant Director – Development and Growth / Kieran Bostock Assistant Director – Neighbourhoods / Danielle Swainston Assistant Director - Joint Commissioning
19	Adult Social Care - Workforce, system and financial pressures within the NHS may negatively impact on Adult Social Care and the broader Council by placing unrealistic expectations on Adult Social Care to assess and provide services to vulnerable and ill people earlier.	RED 8	John Lovatt Assistant Director - Adult Social Care
20	Market failure and sufficiency of provision (Children’s) – Failure within the children’s care or education sector to provide sufficient foster care, special school and residential care that can meet the needs of children leading to insufficient capacity to support vulnerable children appropriately.	RED 9	Danielle Swainston - Assistant Director - Joint Commissioning / Laura Gough - Assistant Director – Children and Families / Amanda Whitehead – Assistant Director – Education

7.1 Appendix 2

No.	Risk Title	Risk Score	Risk Owner
21	Home to School Transport – Failure to deliver home to school transport services leads to the Council being unable to discharge statutory duties resulting in possible legal challenge.	AMBER 6	Kieran Bostock Assistant Director – Neighbourhoods
22	0-19 Service – Failure to provide sufficient health visiting and school nursing services to meet the needs of children leading to increased safeguarding concerns.	RED 9	Craig Blundred Director of Public Health

7.1 Appendix 2

RISK TITLE:	Finance - Failure to deliver a balanced budget for 2025/26 and sustainable Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) leading to a reduction in services provided, damage to reputation and negative impact on the community.
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DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF CURRENT RISK:		
CAUSES - what could make it happen?	IMPLICATIONS - what impact would it have if it did?	EXISTING INTERNAL CONTROLS – what are we already doing to reduce the likelihood and/or impact of it happening?
<p>Changes in government funding leading to the necessity to deliver greater savings, cuts and efficiencies.</p> <p>Council Tax not increased in line with government referendum limits including the Adult Social Care precept.</p> <p>Individual service pressures for example rising costs and numbers relating to looked after children; increasing demands on Adults’ services.</p> <p>Higher national pay awards, interest rates and / or inflation than forecast.</p> <p>Permanent reduction in business rates base – e.g. Power Station and impact of current economic conditions.</p> <p>Impact of inflation on capital programme costs and other service delivery across the Council.</p> <p>Political uncertainty – national and local and associated short term funding decisions</p>	<p>Potentially a significant impact on service delivery and achievement of Council objectives.</p> <p>Loss of reserves leading to reduced investment income, increased borrowing costs and overall reduction in financial resilience.</p> <p>Potential redundancies and associated costs.</p> <p>Reputational damage with our communities and partners, but also regionally and nationally.</p> <p>Increased risk of Section 114 notice in the near term.</p>	<p>A three year Medium Term Financial Strategy including the Capital Strategy in order to demonstrate the financial position of the Authority.</p> <p>Ongoing monitoring and delivery of savings and efficiency targets.</p> <p>Maximise and safeguard income for the council, including effective treasury management strategy, debt recovery, maximise funding opportunities.</p> <p>Timely and effective financial performance reporting and monitoring.</p> <p>Good understanding and interpretation of changes to funding regimes and analysis of the Government annual budget statements.</p> <p>Robust governance framework.</p> <p>Compliance with relevant accounting principles and standards to satisfy legislative and regulatory requirements.</p> <p>Capital programme monitoring arrangements in place.</p> <p>Increased information to members to aid awareness and understanding of financial position.</p>

7.1 Appendix 2

CURRENT RISK ASSESSMENT:					
RISK MATRIX		IMPACT			
		NEGLIGIBLE	MINOR	MAJOR	CRITICAL
LIKELIHOOD	ALMOST CERTAIN				
	PROBABLE				RED 12
	POSSIBLE				
	HARDLY EVER				

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	James Magog – Director of Finance, IT and Digital
DIVISION	Corporate and Financial Services
DEPARTMENT	Finance, IT and Digital Department
DATE OF ASSESSMENT	May 2024

ADDITIONAL CONTROLS TO BE PUT IN PLACE:			
ADDITIONAL CONTROL	WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE? (ACTION)	LEAD OFFICER	DUE DATE
Being prepared to respond quickly to future changes	Measures in place to mitigate the in year position as far as possible to safeguard reserves.	Director of Finance, IT and Digital	March 2025
	Agree savings programme for 2025/6.	Managing Director	February 2025
	On-going revenue budget monitoring, including the impact of inflation and the existing savings programme.	Director of Finance, IT and Digital	March 2025
	On-going capital budget monitoring, including of the impact of inflation pressures on the Capital programme and service delivery arrangements.	Director of Finance, IT and Digital	March 2025

7.1 Appendix 2

RISK TITLE:	Workforce - The skills, expertise, wellbeing, performance, and overall size of the workforce available may not be sufficient to support the overall aims of the organisation resulting in the failure to deliver services.
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DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF CURRENT RISK:		
CAUSES - what could make it happen?	IMPLICATIONS - what impact would it have if it did?	EXISTING INTERNAL CONTROLS – what are we already doing to reduce the likelihood and/or impact of it happening?
<p>The necessity to deliver savings and efficiencies has resulted in a reduced workforce.</p> <p>Loss of experienced staff due to retirement, ill health, lack of development opportunities or due to concerns about job security caused by continuing reductions in staffing levels.</p> <p>Recruitment and selection difficulties; attracting applicants to the public sector/Local Government.</p> <p>Recruitment and retention difficulties resulting from an inability to compete in the local/national labour markets if pay levels continue to be suppressed.</p>	<p>Failure to maintain staffing levels, and failure to develop staff performance/Council services, resulting in reduced service delivery impacting on the lives and wellbeing of the Hartlepool community.</p> <p>Increased workloads leading to inefficiencies, increased sickness absence and impact on staff wellbeing and general discontent.</p> <p>Reputational damage.</p> <p>Failure to attract and maintain external contracts resulting in reduced income generation.</p>	<p>Availability of up to date HR policies and procedures, in line with legislative requirements and the strategic aims of the Council.</p> <p>Recruitment and retention of quality staff ensures that the organisation has the necessary knowledge, skills and experience to achieve its objectives.</p> <p>Support the development of Apprenticeships, volunteering opportunities and work experience within the Council.</p> <p>Accurate and timely payment of all employee salaries and administration of all deductions from pay.</p> <p>Administration of pension service.</p> <p>Advisory services providing advice, guidance and support in all employment matters.</p> <p>Support provided to the programme of organisational and structural change being delivered to meet the financial challenge, including service reviews and redundancies.</p> <p>Trade Union negotiation and consultation.</p> <p>Absence management and reporting.</p> <p>Management of Health and Wellbeing contracts, including Occupational Health and Counselling to support the wellbeing of the workforce preventing and supporting the management of sickness absence.</p> <p>Management and administration of employee benefits.</p>

7.1 Appendix 2

Workforce planning, including the Council's values and behavioural standards, succession planning, pay and reward.

Employee development and engagement to further enhance the skills and capacity of our workforce.

Support the development of the Council's Digital Strategy through My View and HR Dashboard for employee and managers to access and manage employee information.

Support the health of the workforce through the Council's Health & Wellbeing of the Workforce Programme.

Report on concerns and actions to monitor recruitment and retention across the Council to the Executive Leadership Team.

Control measures are regularly reviewed to ensure effectiveness.

Utilise market forces supplements where the criteria is met under the Council's terms and conditions of employment (in the absence of funding a full pay and grading review).

Managers encouraged to review essential criteria in person specifications such as qualification level (possible JE implications to pay banding).

Introduction of development schemes for career development to attract quality candidates.

Development of recruitment platforms with NEREO and other partner agencies to reach a wider audience. Promote the NE Recruitment Pilot 'Make a difference'.

Development of a HBC Jobs and Careers webpage to improve recruitment to difficult to fill vacancies.

7.1 Appendix 2

CURRENT RISK ASSESSMENT:					
RISK MATRIX		IMPACT			
		NEGLIGIBLE	MINOR	MAJOR	CRITICAL
LIKELIHOOD	ALMOST CERTAIN				
	PROBABLE				
	POSSIBLE			AMBER 6	
	HARDLY EVER				

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	Hayley Martin - Director of Legal, Governance and HR
DIVISION	HR
DEPARTMENT	Legal Governance and HR
DATE OF ASSESSMENT	May 2024

7.1 Appendix 2

RISK TITLE:	Communication and Engagement – Failure to deliver effective communication, consultation and engagement could impact adversely on the Council’s reputation and ability to deliver plans and strategies.
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DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF CURRENT RISK:		
CAUSES - what could make it happen?	IMPLICATIONS - what impact would it have if it did?	EXISTING INTERNAL CONTROLS – what are we already doing to reduce the likelihood and/or impact of it happening?
<p>Failure to respond effectively to public relations / media.</p> <p>Poor partnership working and media relations.</p> <p>Lack of marketing and communication skills.</p> <p>Lack of correct equipment and technology.</p> <p>Not effectively engaging with the public so that their views are heard.</p> <p>Negative news stories coming from poor local performance.</p> <p>Failure of staff and elected members to uphold the Nolan principles (In particular the principle of accountability where holders of public office are accountable to the public for their decisions and actions and must submit themselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this.)</p>	<p>Poor image, public discontent and reputational damage.</p> <p>Failure to attract investment and visitors to the town leading to loss of jobs and/or economic hardship.</p> <p>Difficulties in attracting and retaining staff.</p> <p>Poor staff morale and employee engagement.</p> <p>Lack of engagement from media companies</p>	<p>Annual Communications Plan.</p> <p>Ongoing website and social media including Facebook, Instagram and Twitter development.</p> <p>Proactive communications.</p> <p>HR policies and procedures (Code of Conduct, Values).</p> <p>Internal communications and staff engagement work including development of the Staff Hub</p> <p>Public engagement and consultation activities including Face the Public events and the Your Say online consultation platform.</p> <p>Horizon scanning for key themes emerging from public and tackling through proactive communications.</p>

7.1 Appendix 2

CURRENT RISK ASSESSMENT:					
RISK MATRIX		IMPACT			
		NEGLIGIBLE	MINOR	MAJOR	CRITICAL
LIKELIHOOD	ALMOST CERTAIN				
	PROBABLE				
	POSSIBLE			AMBER 6	
	HARDLY EVER				

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	Beverley Bearne - Assistant Director – Development and Growth
DIVISION	Development and Growth
DEPARTMENT	Development, Neighbourhoods and Regulatory Services
DATE OF ASSESSMENT	May 2024

7.1 Appendix 2

RISK TITLE:	Health & Safety - Failure to comply with Health and Safety legislation and ensure appropriate risk controls are in place to ensure the health safety and wellbeing of individuals at work and those who may be affected by our by act or omission.
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DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF CURRENT RISK:		
CAUSES - what could make it happen?	IMPLICATIONS - what impact would it have if it did?	EXISTING INTERNAL CONTROLS – what are we already doing to reduce the likelihood and/or impact of it happening?
<p>Non-compliance with legislation, government guidance and best practice standards</p> <p>Failure to maintain corporate Health and Safety Policy standards</p> <p>Poorly communicated policies and procedures leading to senior leaders, managers and employees not being aware of their individual Health and Safety roles and responsibilities</p> <p>Lack of incident reporting and a low near miss to accident reporting ratio</p> <p>Failure to correctly monitor employees health for those exposed to hazardous substances such as HAVS</p> <p>Lack of available resources to manage health and safety on day to day basis</p> <p>Lack of suitable training for staff appropriate to the level of the requirements to manage health and safety at work</p>	<p>Risk to life, including: Fatality, injury, ill health</p> <p>Prosecution under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005, the Occupiers' Liability Act for breach of statutory duty and accompanying regulations.</p> <p>Costs arising from other enforcement actions.</p> <p>Fees for intervention by enforcing authority, such as the HSE. Currently £154 per hour.</p> <p>Torte of negligence (Civil Claim).</p> <p>Fines from prosecution, maximum fine is unlimited; custodial sentences, up to a maximum of 18 years for gross negligence manslaughter; indirect incurred legal costs.</p> <p>Insurance costs; compensation award; excess payments, levied by the insurance company; raised insurance premiums.</p> <p>Costs to the reputation of Hartlepool Borough Council.</p> <p>Indirect costs such as costs arising from investigations, retraining and developing systems.</p>	<p>Corporate Health and Safety Policy</p> <p>Accompanying Health and Safety Policies</p> <p>Employing a qualified Health, Safety and Risk Manager and Health and Safety team to provide advice and assistance to ensure that directors, manager and employees are aware of their responsibilities under health and safety legislation and to ensure that health and safety standards are adequately maintained.</p> <p>Corporate and departmental H&S committees to ensure that managers and trade union representatives are consulted on matters of health and safety</p> <p>ELT oversight in place through quarterly reporting arrangements.</p> <p>An online incident reporting system including near miss reporting system</p> <p>H&S training catalogue, available through the workforce development programme and free to all employees</p> <p>Induction checklist with H&S instructions</p> <p>H&S audit programme conducted by the HS&R team to ensure that H&S performance standards are maintained</p>

7.1 Appendix 2

<p>Lack of suitable work place maintenance programmes and condition surveys</p> <p>Lack of suitable health and safety audits, fire risk assessment and inspection programmes to identify health and safety risks across the work force</p>	<p>Loss of income.</p> <p>Costs arising from loss or damage of plant or property</p>	<p>Unannounced site safety inspections conducted by the H&S team to ensure compliance with safety legislation</p> <p>Director appointed to provide resources for H&S safety</p> <p>Monitoring in place for high risk actions including HSE improvement notice actions.</p>
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CURRENT RISK ASSESSMENT:					
RISK MATRIX		IMPACT			
		NEGLIGIBLE	MINOR	MAJOR	CRITICAL
LIKELIHOOD	ALMOST CERTAIN				
	PROBABLE				RED 12
	POSSIBLE				
	HARDLY EVER				

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	Sylvia Pinkney - Assistant Director – Regulatory Services
DIVISION	Regulatory Services
DEPARTMENT	Development, Neighbourhoods and Regulatory Services
DATE OF ASSESSMENT	May 2024

7.1 Appendix 2

ADDITIONAL CONTROLS TO BE PUT IN PLACE:			
ADDITIONAL CONTROL	WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE? (ACTION)	LEAD OFFICER	DUE DATE
Risk Management Group that has been established to meet fortnightly is working well.	Review the Risk Management Group to ensure it has appropriate membership and is having a demonstrable impact on improving health and safety. Report to be presented to Executive Leadership Team (ELT).	Assistant Director – Regulatory Services	September 2024
Regular reporting to Finance and Policy Committee on performance.	Establish reporting framework for Finance and Policy Committee.	Assistant Director – Regulatory Services	December 2024
Improved follow-up and reporting on Health and Safety actions from audits.	Explore available IT systems to monitor progress on Health and Safety actions from audits.	Assistant Director – Regulatory Services	December 2024

7.1 Appendix 2

RISK TITLE:	Information Governance and Cyber Security - Failure to comply with legislation and ensure appropriate system safeguards to ensure the confidentiality, integrity and availability of personal and corporate information and data leading to data loss, cyber-attacks, legal proceedings and significant financial penalties.
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DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF CURRENT RISK:		
CAUSES - what could make it happen?	IMPLICATIONS - what impact would it have if it did?	EXISTING INTERNAL CONTROLS – what are we already doing to reduce the likelihood and/or impact of it happening?
<p>Non-compliance with legislation and best practice standards.</p> <p>Human error.</p> <p>Deliberate attack.</p> <p>System failure.</p> <p>Spoofing.</p>	<p>If the Council does not effectively manage personal data, a penalty of up to £17.5m or 4% of total annual worldwide turnover (whichever is higher) may be levied by the Information Commissioner.</p> <p>Detrimental impact on end user/customer.</p> <p>Service disruption.</p> <p>Potentially major reputational damage.</p>	<p>Compliance with legislation and information publication requirements.</p> <p>Information management policies, strategies, processes and procedures and associated staff training (mandatory).</p> <p>Data Security and Protection (DPS) Toolkit.</p> <p>Regular monitoring of information governance by Corporate Information Governance Group with all Department’s represented and chaired by an Assistant Director.</p> <p>Mandatory for all staff to undertaken IG training once a year.</p> <p>Cyber Security Strategy in place.</p> <p>Automatic email encryption where TLS certificates exist.</p> <p>Encryption of removable media – laptops, tablets, USB devices.</p> <p>Security of our system monitored by NEC and reported to HBC monthly through Operations Board.</p> <p>Monthly meetings with NEC re cyber security.</p> <p>Monthly review of ICT risk register and threat landscape.</p> <p>Regular phishing campaigns for all staff and Members.</p>

7.1 Appendix 2

		<p>Information security incident management process incorporating lessons learned improvement action plans.</p> <p>Internal arrangements for the secure disposal of information through shredding.</p> <p>Secure file transfer between HBC and its partner organisations.</p> <p>Robust security processes for the introduction and use of Microsoft 365 including Teams and SharePoint.</p> <p>Business continuity arrangements in place covering availability of information systems.</p> <p>Cyber security is a standing item on the agenda for the corporate Business Continuity Group.</p> <p>Regular application of security patches and updates to system with a monthly weekend window to carryout updates to the estate.</p> <p>Support accessed from external bodies (DLUHC and LGA) to review and ensure our approach to cybersecurity and information governance is up to date with current best practice.</p> <p>Annual PSN test, submission and associated accreditation.</p> <p>Adhere to NCSC guidance and best practice.</p>
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7.1 Appendix 2

CURRENT RISK ASSESSMENT:					
RISK MATRIX		IMPACT			
		NEGLIGIBLE	MINOR	MAJOR	CRITICAL
LIKELIHOOD	ALMOST CERTAIN				
	PROBABLE				
	POSSIBLE				RED 8
	HARDLY EVER				

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	James Magog - Director of Finance, IT and Digital
DIVISION	Customer Services and IT
DEPARTMENT	Finance, IT and Digital Department
DATE OF ASSESSMENT	May 2024

ADDITIONAL CONTROLS TO BE PUT IN PLACE:			
ADDITIONAL CONTROL	WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE? (ACTION)	LEAD OFFICER	DUE DATE
Cyber Security Response Plan agreed.	Agree draft cyber response security plan with Business Continuity Group and I.T. provider (NEC) once new contract is operational.	Director of Finance, IT and Digital	March 2024

7.1 Appendix 2

RISK TITLE:	Information Technology - Failure to provide a resilient, flexible and responsive ICT infrastructure leading to ineffective service delivery or the loss of services.
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DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF CURRENT RISK:		
CAUSES - what could make it happen?	IMPLICATIONS - what impact would it have if it did?	EXISTING INTERNAL CONTROLS – what are we already doing to reduce the likelihood and/or impact of it happening?
<p>Out of date equipment, software and technology.</p> <p>Lack of robust disaster recovery, business continuity and cyber-crime plans.</p> <p>Environmental threats.</p> <p>Power outages.</p> <p>Failure of Telco infrastructure.</p> <p>Lack of CICT staff knowledge and expertise.</p> <p>Lack of general ICT knowledge and expertise of all staff.</p> <p>Poor user awareness of threats.</p> <p>Failure to protect our ICT assets.</p> <p>Poor contract management of outsourced ICT service and/or collapse of provider.</p> <p>Lack of suitable ICT provider.</p>	<p>Negative impact on productivity and availability of services.</p> <p>Failure to ensure security of personal data.</p> <p>Failure to comply with legislation.</p>	<p>Relevant information security policies and training in place.</p> <p>Self-help/training videos on intranet support staff 24/7</p> <p>Monthly Operations Board meetings with NPS to monitor Contract and Service issues</p> <p>Dedicated and skilled CICT Team / NEC managed contract</p> <p>Implementation of Microsoft E5 licensing model to bring in further resilience and large suite of products.</p> <p>Cloud first, where appropriate, to move reliance from traditional data centre model to dedicated cloud services.</p> <p>Quarterly Contract Management Board - manages contract at strategic level</p> <p>Work with Combined Authority to review regional connectivity resilience.</p> <p>ICT/Digital Strategy and associated 3-5 Year prioritisation and financial plan in development.</p> <p>Monthly meetings with NEC re cyber security.</p> <p>Monthly review of ICT Risk register and threat landscape.</p>

7.1 Appendix 2

CURRENT RISK ASSESSMENT:					
RISK MATRIX		IMPACT			
		NEGLIGIBLE	MINOR	MAJOR	CRITICAL
LIKELIHOOD	ALMOST CERTAIN				
	PROBABLE				
	POSSIBLE				RED 8
	HARDLY EVER				

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	James Magog - Director of Finance, IT and Digital
DIVISION	Customer Services and IT
DEPARTMENT	Finance, IT and Digital Department
DATE OF ASSESSMENT	May 2024

7.1 Appendix 2

RISK TITLE:	Children and young people - Failure to improve life chances and provide opportunities for education for children and young people particularly those whose circumstances make them vulnerable to poor outcomes
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DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF CURRENT RISK:		
CAUSES - what could make it happen?	IMPLICATIONS - what impact would it have if it did?	EXISTING INTERNAL CONTROLS – what are we already doing to reduce the likelihood and/or impact of it happening?
Failure to promote life chances for a child or young person due to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of investment and/or public sector cuts impacting upon capacity of schools, health services and local authorities to deliver services that meet need and improve life chances. Lack of educational opportunities Lack of access to community health services Lack of opportunities to develop life skills 	Ineffective support and opportunities for children can result in significant implications for the future life chances, increasing the risk of them being dependent on the state throughout their adult life, for example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Worklessness Mental health needs Drug and alcohol dependency Entering the criminal justice system. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Education Improvement Strategy and DfE Priority Investment Area Education support services for vulnerable pupils Child and Family Poverty Strategy and Plan 0-19 service and pathways Early help and support Family Hubs Using all opportunities to influence policy makers on impact of austerity for children and young people in Hartlepool.

CURRENT RISK ASSESSMENT:					
RISK MATRIX		IMPACT			
		NEGLECTIBLE	MINOR	MAJOR	CRITICAL
LIKELIHOOD	ALMOST CERTAIN				
	PROBABLE			RED 9	
	POSSIBLE				
	HARDLY EVER				

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	Sally Robinson
DIVISION	Children's and Joint Commissioning Services
DEPARTMENT	Children's and Joint Commissioning Services
DATE OF ASSESSMENT	May 2024

7.1 Appendix 2

ADDITIONAL CONTROLS TO BE PUT IN PLACE:			
ADDITIONAL CONTROL	WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE? (ACTION)	LEAD OFFICER	DUE DATE
Refresh and deliver Education Improvement Plan	Implement refreshed Education Improvement Plan through Education Partnership Align and target resources to vulnerable children	Assistant Director Education	March 2025
Statutory guidance for promoting schools attendance (from August 2024)	Implement requirements of the local authority as outlined in statutory guidance to improve school attendance	Assistant Director Education	March 2025
SEND Improvement Plan	Deliver year two of the SEND transformation plan to support inclusion and meet children with SEND needs in mainstream settings wherever possible Deliver SEND Regional Change Partnerships Programme	Assistant Director Joint Commissioning Assistant Director Education	March 2025
Review Health and Wellbeing Strategy	Implement Starting Well (Health and Wellbeing Strategy) to provide children with the best start in life 0-19 pathways regularly reviewed	Director of Public Health	March 2025
Early Help	Roll out year two family hubs model Implement Workforce programme for Early Help workforce	Children's and Joint Commissioning Services Departmental Management Team	March 2025

7.1 Appendix 2

RISK TITLE:		Drugs and Alcohol - Failure of the Drugs and Alcohol addiction services to prevent , treat and provide recovery for those with substance misuse problems in Hartlepool
DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF CURRENT RISK:		
CAUSES - what could make it happen?	IMPLICATIONS - what impact would it have if it did?	EXISTING INTERNAL CONTROLS – what are we already doing to reduce the likelihood and/or impact of it happening?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Failure to break intergenerational cycles of drug and alcohol misuse in Hartlepool • Failure of the service to fully engage with the at a risk population • Failure of the service to deliver an evidenced based model of treatment and addiction recovery • Failure to increase capacity, resources and expertise to meet the level of need 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuing increase in the prevalence of substance misuse in Hartlepool leading to Increased prevalence of ACEs, children suffering significant harm and crime • At risk population do not receive appropriate levels of treatment and behavioural support with increasing numbers failing to achieve a sustained recovery • Increased incidence of drug related deaths. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health and Wellbeing Board • Safer Hartlepool Partnership • Systematic review of Drug Related Deaths (DRD) and ongoing review of the process with key learning reported to the strategic governance group • 0 to 19 service and pathways • Agreed strategy for substance misuse with clear vision, objectives and outcomes identified. This strategy is performance monitored and managed by the strategic governance group

7.1 Appendix 2

CURRENT RISK ASSESSMENT:					
RISK MATRIX		IMPACT			
		NEGLIGIBLE	MINOR	MAJOR	CRITICAL
LIKELIHOOD	ALMOST CERTAIN				
	PROBABLE				
	POSSIBLE			AMBER 6	
	HARDLY EVER				

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	Craig Blundred – Director of Public Health
DIVISION	Public Health
DEPARTMENT	Children’s and Joint Commissioning Services
DATE OF ASSESSMENT	May 2024

ADDITIONAL CONTROLS TO BE PUT IN PLACE:			
ADDITIONAL CONTROL	WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE? (ACTION)	LEAD OFFICER	DUE DATE
Outcome review for strategy	Monitor and review outcomes in the action plan associated with the strategy	Director of Public Health	July 2024

7.1 Appendix 2

RISK TITLE:	Safeguarding children - Failure to protect children and young people from harm and promote their welfare	
DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF CURRENT RISK:		
CAUSES - what could make it happen?	IMPLICATIONS - what impact would it have if it did?	EXISTING INTERNAL CONTROLS – what are we already doing to reduce the likelihood and/or impact of it happening?
<p>Failure to protect a child or young person and promote their welfare due to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased demand and consequent capacity within the services to respond. • Failing in policies/ procedures • Failure in partnership working • Lack of the required skills, knowledge, expertise and resources within the service to meet need. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ineffective safeguarding leaves children at risk of harm. • Children and young people do not experience safe, consistent, stable care, leading to increased risks of poor adult outcomes. • Significant implications for reputation of the organisation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policies and procedures in place regularly reviewed and updated • Maintain workforce stability and skills mix to provide effective social care service • Performance Management and Quality assurance cycle • Management oversight and supervision • Workforce Development programme • Staff Briefings • HSSCP • Effective commissioning arrangements with clear service specifications and robust and regular monitoring and review • Ofsted Inspection of Local Authority Children’s Services

7.1 Appendix 2

CURRENT RISK ASSESSMENT:					
RISK MATRIX		IMPACT			
		NEGLIGIBLE	MINOR	MAJOR	CRITICAL
LIKELIHOOD	ALMOST CERTAIN				
	PROBABLE				RED 12
	POSSIBLE				
	HARDLY EVER				

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	Laura Gough - Assistant Director Children and Families
DIVISION	Children and Families
DEPARTMENT	Children's and Joint Commissioning Services
DATE OF ASSESSMENT	May 2024

ADDITIONAL CONTROLS TO BE PUT IN PLACE:			
ADDITIONAL CONTROL	WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE? (ACTION)	LEAD OFFICER	DUE DATE
Continuous improvement in assessment planning, implementation and review of the needs of children and young people	Performance management in place with audits cycle to review practice	Assistant Director Children and Families	March 2025
	Managers oversee performance within their teams through PowerBI dashboard	Assistant Director Children and Families	March 2025
	Workforce development to maintain practice standards and continuous learning and development	Assistant Director Children and Families	March 2025
	Implement areas for improvement identified in Ofsted inspection March 2024	Assistant Director Children and Families	September 2024

7.1 Appendix 2

RISK TITLE:	Market failure and sufficiency of provision (Adults) - Provider failure within residential or non-residential care leading to insufficient capacity to support vulnerable adults appropriately.
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DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF CURRENT RISK:		
CAUSES - what could make it happen?	IMPLICATIONS - what impact would it have if it did?	EXISTING INTERNAL CONTROLS – what are we already doing to reduce the likelihood and/or impact of it happening?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Action taken by the regulator to stop a service from operating. • Provider decides to close or change focus of provision. • Provider cannot operate due to financial viability. • Provider cannot operate due to lack of appropriate workforce/ staffing. • Commissioned services not able to provide high quality services. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service for vulnerable adults ceasing at short notice. • Services unavailable to meet assessed need placing people at risk of harm. • Vulnerable adults need to be moved to different provision which is detrimental to their health and wellbeing and creates significant pressure for operational services. • Insufficient provision for older people can result in increased Delayed Transfers of Care, creating pressures across the wider health and care system. • Increase in out of area placements if there is insufficient provision locally. • Non-residential provision is not able to meet need therefore vulnerable adults have to access residential care which would place significant pressure on existing provision. • Reputational damage to the Council if services cannot be provided within Hartlepool to meet local needs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regional agreement/ process to share information re: commissioned provision intelligence which highlights any emerging risks. • Regular contract meetings with providers to understand their current performance and business position. • Robust commissioning arrangements – financial checks undertaken. • Regional protocol for responding to market failure. • Good relationships with partners e.g. CCG for information to be shared to highlight any early issues that can be planned for. • Commissioning link officers for all providers – regular visits from link officers. • Good relationship with CQC – regular updates. • Bi monthly regional commissioning meetings – share best practice and intelligence on providers across the region • Regular committee reports to inform members of market position • High quality data and information available which if a provider closes can be used to ensure that the best provision is identified

7.1 Appendix 2

CURRENT RISK ASSESSMENT:					
RISK MATRIX		IMPACT			
		NEGLIGIBLE	MINOR	MAJOR	CRITICAL
LIKELIHOOD	ALMOST CERTAIN				
	PROBABLE				
	POSSIBLE			AMBER 6	
	HARDLY EVER				

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	Danielle Swainston - Assistant Director - Joint Commissioning
DIVISION	Joint Commissioning
DEPARTMENT	Children's and Joint Commissioning Services
DATE OF ASSESSMENT	May 2024

7.1 Appendix 2

RISK TITLE:	Adult safeguarding - Failure to protect an adult's right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect.
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DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF CURRENT RISK:		
CAUSES - what could make it happen?	IMPLICATIONS - what impact would it have if it did?	EXISTING INTERNAL CONTROLS – what are we already doing to reduce the likelihood and/or impact of it happening?
<p>Failure to protect an adult from death or serious harm as a result of increased referral activity and workload pressures, leading to either a failing in policies / procedures, personnel or partnerships.</p>	<p>Ineffective safeguarding has potentially critical implications for individuals (vulnerable adults, responsible officers/Members), and the reputation of the organisation.</p>	<p>Adult safeguarding alerts / referrals are managed in a timely manner. We commissioned an independent review of our safeguarding arrangements in 2023 by Partners in Care & Health (Local Government Association / ADASS) and thereafter we have strengthened our safeguarding offer to respond to increased activity and demand on services.</p> <p>We have an Operational Lead for Safeguarding Adults and a Head of Service responsible for our safeguarding arrangements and in April 2024 we implemented a new approach to our working practices and re-modelled the workforce as a result of further investment via the Market Sustainability and Improvement Fund. This has helped us to address challenges and mitigate emerging risks.</p> <p>Our operational teams are fully staffed and training has been prioritised for non-professionally qualified and qualified staff, with the level of training dependent on staff's responsibilities. Professionally qualified Social Workers are required to complete Advanced Safeguarding Training and Legal Literacy Training.</p> <p>The Teeswide Safeguarding Adults Board (TSAB) is the statutory body that sets the strategic direction for safeguarding and approves and updates all policies and procedures. HBC is represented on the Board and all sub groups and we currently chair two sub groups of the TSAB arrangements - Communication & Engagement and Safeguarding Adults Review(s).</p> <p>The Quality Assurance Framework (QAF) is completed by a number of peers from other local authorities and other statutory bodies, e.g. the Police. This is linked to the guiding principles of the Care Act.</p>

7.1 Appendix 2

New legislation (Domestic Abuse Act) is now in place to help deal with the increase in domestic abuse and a Victim Care Pathway has recently been revised.

There are a range of multi-agency arrangements in place across Tees and at a local level to share information and support the safeguarding of vulnerable adults including:

- Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC)
- Multi Agency Tasking & Coordination (MATAC)
- Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA)
- Multi-Agency Child Exploitation Meetings (MACE)
- Tees Exploitation Group
- Anti-Slavery Network
- Vulnerable, Exploited, Missing, Trafficked (VEMT)
- Integrated Community Safety Team
- Prevent / Channel Panels
- Providers have up to date training for their staff in identifying, dealing with and reporting Safeguarding issues, linked to an e-learning platform

We have recently taken a Teeswide Safeguarding Adults Board (TSAB) report to Adult Services Committee (25/01/2024) to provide assurance about our adult safeguarding arrangements.

We have updated our High Risk Adults Panel (HRAP) procedures with the TSAB Statutory partners and implemented a new approach to supporting people with complex presentations.

In December 2023, we went live with our Power BI Safeguarding Adults dataset, which supports officers to analyse and visualise raw data and present actionable information. This will provide greater reassurance to the TSAB and help us better understand our strengths and areas for improvement.

7.1 Appendix 2

CURRENT RISK ASSESSMENT:					
RISK MATRIX		IMPACT			
		NEGLIGIBLE	MINOR	MAJOR	CRITICAL
LIKELIHOOD	ALMOST CERTAIN				
	PROBABLE				
	POSSIBLE			AMBER 6	
	HARDLY EVER				

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	John Lovatt – Assistant Director - Adult Social Care
DIVISION	Adult Social Care
DEPARTMENT	Adults and Community Based Services
DATE OF ASSESSMENT	May 2024

7.1 Appendix 2

RISK TITLE:	Access to Leisure, Community and Preventative Services – Failure to engage the at risk population in preventative, cultural, leisure and community based activities could impact on demand led services.
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DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF CURRENT RISK:		
CAUSES - what could make it happen?	IMPLICATIONS - what impact would it have if it did?	EXISTING INTERNAL CONTROLS – what are we already doing to reduce the likelihood and/or impact of it happening?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unable to operate buildings due to lack of financial resource including capital investment. • Unable to operate buildings due to lack of staff resource. • Insufficient investment in the redevelopment of leisure and community assets. • Lack of investment in preventative services and financial resource being allocated to treatment/crisis/social care services. • No clear corporate centralised management of assets. • No effective data management system to monitor building issues. • Lack of coordinated approach to building management issues and risks • No matrix to manage holistic risk arising from building risks and prioritisation for the resource and capacity available to remedy issues. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of investment could result in moth balling facilities or selling/leasing to other organisations. • Unable to retain high quality staff to support long term delivery of services. • Existing assets are ageing and in need of investment or replacing. Without investment it will be increasingly challenging to maintain an offer for the whole population. • Demand will increase and further resources will be committed to treatment / crisis responses rather than investing in prevention. • Unable to open buildings • Loss of income • Reputational risk and customer retention • Incident occurs creating vulnerability or harm to staff or public • Imprisonment or investigation from appropriate bodies for noncompliance or negligence. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planned maintenance programme. • External funding opportunities are being explored. • Social Capital opportunities are being explored • Empowering communities to create their own opportunities. • Working with VCS organisations to support the delivery of community priorities. • Demonstrating to internal and external partners the difference preventative work can make to the economy.

7.1 Appendix 2

CURRENT RISK ASSESSMENT:					
RISK MATRIX		IMPACT			
		NEGLIGIBLE	MINOR	MAJOR	CRITICAL
LIKELIHOOD	ALMOST CERTAIN				
	PROBABLE			RED 9	
	POSSIBLE				
	HARDLY EVER				

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	Gemma Ptak – Assistant Director - Preventative and Community Based Services
DIVISION	Preventative and Community Based Services
DEPARTMENT	Adult and Community Based Services
DATE OF ASSESSMENT	May 2024

ADDITIONAL CONTROLS TO BE PUT IN PLACE:			
ADDITIONAL CONTROL	WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE? (ACTION)	LEAD OFFICER	DUE DATE
Asset transformation solutions considered by Strategic Asset Management Group	Provision of resource for the identification of problems and possible transformation solutions utilising a risk based approach across the Councils full portfolio considered by Strategic Asset Management Group	Assistant Director – Neighbourhood Services	May 2025

7.1 Appendix 2

RISK TITLE:	Highways and Flood Defences – Failure to maintain the Borough Highway infrastructure and protect areas from flooding risks could impact on the economy and quality of life.
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DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF CURRENT RISK:		
CAUSES - what could make it happen?	IMPLICATIONS - what impact would it have if it did?	EXISTING INTERNAL CONTROLS – what are we already doing to reduce the likelihood and/or impact of it happening?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of investment in infrastructure. • Deterioration of the highway due to extreme weather. • Escalating costs for schemes. • Loss of key personnel. • Quality of work issues. • Storm intensity exceeding the design capacity of the drainage network. • Climate Change leading to more unexpected and severe weather events such as storm surges, heavy rainfall, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial. • Reputation. • Legal. • Health and safety issues where infrastructure cannot be fixed or upgraded. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Established inspection regimes and policies for both highways and flood/coastal protection assets. • Regular monitoring meetings with insurance officers to assess position. • Regular review on inspection frequencies in conjunction with insurance section to determine policy outcomes. • Use HBC procurement process to ensure robust costs estimates. • Work closely with contractors to ensure deliverable schemes are developed. • Existing Transport Policy in Local Transport Plan. • Programme of installation of dropped kerbs. Programme of installation of low floor bus infrastructure. • Weather warnings provided by Met Office enabling advanced planning to be undertaken.

7.1 Appendix 2

CURRENT RISK ASSESSMENT:					
RISK MATRIX		IMPACT			
		NEGLIGIBLE	MINOR	MAJOR	CRITICAL
LIKELIHOOD	ALMOST CERTAIN				
	PROBABLE		AMBER 6		
	POSSIBLE				
	HARDLY EVER				

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	Kieran Bostock – Assistant Director - Neighbourhoods
DIVISION	Neighbourhoods
DEPARTMENT	Development, Neighbourhoods and Regulatory Services
DATE OF ASSESSMENT	May 2024

7.1 Appendix 2

RISK TITLE:	Community Safety - Failure to provide a safer Hartlepool where residents and visitors can live free from crime, fear of crime and anti-social behaviour could impact on quality of life and tourism.
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DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF CURRENT RISK:		
CAUSES - what could make it happen?	IMPLICATIONS - what impact would it have if it did?	EXISTING INTERNAL CONTROLS – what are we already doing to reduce the likelihood and/or impact of it happening?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CCTV service unable to operate without access to Civic Centre. • Lack of partnership approach by agencies. • Reduced resources within the police and fire authority. • Lack of scrutiny from Safer Hartlepool Partnership. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial. • Reputation. • Legal. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Other services could function with remote access to systems. • Footage could be viewed from other locations however cameras would be static. • Regular liaison with Police and Fire Brigade. • Joint working regularly carried out through the Hartlepool Community Safety Team. • All partner agencies work to same strategies in Safer Hartlepool Partnership. • Audit and Governance community safety statutory role.

7.1 Appendix 2

CURRENT RISK ASSESSMENT:					
RISK MATRIX		IMPACT			
		NEGLIGIBLE	MINOR	MAJOR	CRITICAL
LIKELIHOOD	ALMOST CERTAIN				
	PROBABLE				
	POSSIBLE			AMBER 6	
	HARDLY EVER				

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	Sylvia Pinkney - Assistant Director - Regulatory Services
DIVISION	Regulatory Services
DEPARTMENT	Development, Neighbourhoods and Regulatory Services
DATE OF ASSESSMENT	May 2024

7.1 Appendix 2

RISK TITLE:	Waste Management - Council are unable to collect and dispose of all household waste within existing financial resources.
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DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF CURRENT RISK:		
CAUSES - what could make it happen?	IMPLICATIONS - what impact would it have if it did?	EXISTING INTERNAL CONTROLS – what are we already doing to reduce the likelihood and/or impact of it happening?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased costs relating to waste disposal. • Provision of new contract or re-negotiation of existing contract. • Lack of contractors willing to remove certain waste products. • Current Government consultation relating to waste and future implications of findings. • Existing plant/equipment insufficient to meet current needs. • Announcement of government’s Simpler Recycling strategy, which will require HBC to introduce food waste collections to all properties by April 2025, amongst other requirements. • Uncertainty around future of the proposed Energy Recovery Facility, which will replace Suez’s Haverton Hill Energy from Waste (Efw) facility as HBC’s main waste disposal route. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial. • Reputational. • Legal. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing discussions with existing contractor. • Procurement options being considered. • Consultation response sent to Government on their proposed new strategy and the possible implications for Councils that may need further consideration. • Contractors appointed to produce long term strategy and business case for Tees Valley future waste provision. • Waste Management and Officer Groups established across Tees Valley. • Availability of ear-marked reserves to cover budget overspend. • Government will provide some funding to assist with implementation of its Simpler Recycling strategy, though details of this funding (how much, how and when allocated, etc.) have not yet been announced. • Contingency planning ongoing to secure future waste disposal options.

7.1 Appendix 2

CURRENT RISK ASSESSMENT:					
RISK MATRIX		IMPACT			
		NEGLIGIBLE	MINOR	MAJOR	CRITICAL
LIKELIHOOD	ALMOST CERTAIN				
	PROBABLE			RED 9	
	POSSIBLE				
	HARDLY EVER				

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	Kieran Bostock – Assistant Director - Neighbourhoods
DIVISION	Neighbourhoods
DEPARTMENT	Development, Neighbourhoods and Regulatory Services
DATE OF ASSESSMENT	May 2024

7.1 Appendix 2

RISK TITLE:	Business Continuity - Failure to provide Council services as a result of disruption to the normal day to day activities
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DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF CURRENT RISK:		
CAUSES - what could make it happen?	IMPLICATIONS - what impact would it have if it did?	EXISTING INTERNAL CONTROLS – what are we already doing to reduce the likelihood and/or impact of it happening?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disruption to normal day-to-day activities as a result of a major incident affecting employees, accommodation, IT services or vehicles. • Service delivery partners withdrawing contracted services. • Pandemic Flu. • Major Incident declared affecting the wider community of the town. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reputation. • Legal. • Financial. • Health and Safety 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business Continuity group coordinating arrangements for reviewing, planning and testing. • Business Continuity plans in places for services and functions. • Exercising of Business Continuity plans to ensure fit for purpose.

7.1 Appendix 2

CURRENT RISK ASSESSMENT:					
RISK MATRIX		IMPACT			
		NEGLIGIBLE	MINOR	MAJOR	CRITICAL
LIKELIHOOD	ALMOST CERTAIN				
	PROBABLE				
	POSSIBLE				RED 8
	HARDLY EVER				

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	Executive Leadership Team - ELT (Sylvia Pinkney - Assistant Director - Regulatory Services)
DIVISION	All
DEPARTMENT	All
DATE OF ASSESSMENT	May 2024

ADDITIONAL CONTROLS TO BE PUT IN PLACE:			
ADDITIONAL CONTROL	WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE? (ACTION)	LEAD OFFICER	DUE DATE
Effective Business Continuity Group in place with regular reporting to ELT and escalation of concerns as required.	Review the effectiveness of the feedback mechanism between the Business Continuity Group and ELT. Report to be presented to Executive Leadership Team (ELT).	Assistant Director – Regulatory Services	September 2024

7.1 Appendix 2

RISK TITLE:	Economic Regeneration: Failure to encourage regeneration, support enterprise and improve development opportunities for new and existing businesses across the borough.
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DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF CURRENT RISK:		
CAUSES - what could make it happen?	IMPLICATIONS - what impact would it have if it did?	EXISTING INTERNAL CONTROLS – what are we already doing to reduce the likelihood and/or impact of it happening?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Failure to secure capital/revenue funding to deliver future regeneration projects • Failure to deliver existing and future regeneration projects on time/budget • Impact of inflation on capital programme costs. • Failure for the BIS/HEC to meet their business/income targets and remain economically viable. • Failure of the Council to effectively engage with local businesses and offer appropriate advice and financial assistance. • Failure of the Tees Valley Combined Authority to effectively engage with local businesses and offer appropriate advice and financial assistance. • Failure of other publicly funded business support organisations to effectively engage and deliver appropriate advice and financial assistance. • Failure of the Council to develop and deliver activities, events and projects that directly contribute to the growth in the economy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legal and financial impacts relating to Council capital/revenue and external funding of regeneration projects and assets. • Reputational damage to the Council. • Adverse effect on local economy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring the Council teams have adequate staff and resources to undertake duties effectively. • Close monitoring of the current Regeneration Programme to identify issues/constraints/obstacles and look to positively remedy. • Capital programme monitoring arrangements in place and capital contingency built in to 2022/23 MTFS. • Continued close working relationship with the Tees Valley Combined Authority and other business support organisations. • Yearly plan of economy related interventions/activities to be undertaken.

7.1 Appendix 2

CURRENT RISK ASSESSMENT:					
RISK MATRIX		IMPACT			
		NEGLIGIBLE	MINOR	MAJOR	CRITICAL
LIKELIHOOD	ALMOST CERTAIN				
	PROBABLE				
	POSSIBLE			AMBER 6	
	HARDLY EVER				

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	Bev Bearne - Assistant Director - Development and Growth
DIVISION	Development and Growth
DEPARTMENT	Development, Neighbourhoods and Regulatory Services
DATE OF ASSESSMENT	May 2024

7.1 Appendix 2

RISK TITLE:	Housing - Failure to address the housing requirements of the borough and provide affordable, high-quality housing.	
DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF CURRENT RISK:		
CAUSES - what could make it happen?	IMPLICATIONS - what impact would it have if it did?	EXISTING INTERNAL CONTROLS – what are we already doing to reduce the likelihood and/or impact of it happening?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Imbalance in the current housing stock with existing provision skewed towards terraced/low quality dwellings. • Lack of Council owned land that can be developed for additional affordable housing provision. • Non or stalled delivery of the allocated housing sites and associated infrastructure provision identified in the Local Plan. • Downturn in the local, regional, national housing market due to economic/political changes. • Developments in the Teesmouth and Cleveland Coast Special Protection Area (SPA) not being approved for planning because they cannot demonstrate that they are nutrient neutral. • Housing Needs of the population cannot be met through current provision 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inability of the Council to benefit from additional New Homes Bonus (subject to Government changes of this regime). • Inability of the Council to capture additional and higher value Council Tax. • Negative economic impact in terms of physical job creation in the construction phase but also in providing attractive living environment for economically active people. • Reduced inward migration of economically active people and the risk of outward migration to more attractive settlements. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adopted Local Plan which seeks to specifically address the current and future housing requirements of the Borough via allocating appropriate land and policies that control development. • Adopting a Housing Strategy which seeks to address the housing requirements of the borough and provide affordable, high-quality housing. • Memorandum of understanding agreed with Natural England on a range of mitigation for waste water discharges which will allow developments to proceed. • Undertaking a review of all local intelligence re: housing stock/ housing quality and housing needs

7.1 Appendix 2

CURRENT RISK ASSESSMENT:					
RISK MATRIX		IMPACT			
		NEGLIGIBLE	MINOR	MAJOR	CRITICAL
LIKELIHOOD	ALMOST CERTAIN				
	PROBABLE			RED 9	
	POSSIBLE				
	HARDLY EVER				

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	Bev Bearne - Assistant Director - Development and Growth Kieran Bostock - Assistant Director – Neighbourhoods Danielle Swainston Assistant Director – Joint Commissioning
DIVISION	Various
DEPARTMENT	Development, Neighbourhoods and Regulatory Services, Children’s and Joint Commissioning
DATE OF ASSESSMENT	May 2024

ADDITIONAL CONTROLS TO BE PUT IN PLACE:			
ADDITIONAL CONTROL	WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE? (ACTION)	LEAD OFFICER	DUE DATE
New Housing Strategy adopted	New Housing Strategy to be prepared and agreed by Finance and Policy Committee.	Assistant Director – Joint Commissioning	September 2024

7.1 Appendix 2

RISK TITLE:	Adult Social Care - Workforce, system and financial pressures within the NHS may negatively impact on Adult Social Care and the broader Council by placing unrealistic expectations on Adult Social Care to assess and provide services to vulnerable and ill people earlier.
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DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF CURRENT RISK:		
CAUSES - what could make it happen?	IMPLICATIONS - what impact would it have if it did?	EXISTING INTERNAL CONTROLS – what are we already doing to reduce the likelihood and/or impact of it happening?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continued operational pressures linked to aftermath of Covid, especially long term Covid, affecting the public and the workforce, including management of residual waiting lists linked to cancelled operations etc during Covid • Significant number of flu cases affecting the public and the workforce. • Further changes to the regulatory framework we operate in linked to hospital discharges, Mental Capacity Act. • Mutual aid and the NHS approach to supporting other foundation trusts. • Further pressures impacting on services to people with a mental health need. • Further pressures on the ambulance service and bed availability for people experiencing a mental health crisis. • Any further pressures on funding of Adult Social Care. • Recent developments such as the introduction of the 'Virtual Ward' 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adult Social Care being expected to act beyond the scope of our legal powers (ultra vires). • Adult Social care being required to manage clinical interventions rather than social care issues. • If the performance of Adult Social Care was negatively affected by the causes as outlined, the impact would be significant on acute hospital availability and the availability of beds to meet crisis interventions for people with a mental health need. • Increased pressure on family carers, leading to carer breakdown with the potential to lead to more placements required in care homes. Leading to greater expenditure for Adult Social Care. • Increased waiting times for an assessment of need, leading to greater risk to 'life and limb' regarding the people we serve and their family carers. • Negative implications on the finances of Adult Social Care with increased expenditure for the provision of domiciliary care expenditure as we may have to meet people's needs earlier when they are frailer and requiring more care. • Increased stress on the workforce because of the a requirement to work quicker, especially in relation to hospital discharges and deal with patients and their family members with more complex needs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have regular, scheduled meetings with our Health colleagues to reflect on the health and social care systems response to the recovery phase following the Covid pandemic and pressures caused by the expansion of elective surgical operations to reduce NHS waiting lists, which inevitably increases activity across the whole system. We have agreed contingences in situ if there is a prolonged period of inclement weather, whether this be a heat wave or a 'cold snap'. • We now have a workforce strategy for Adult Social Care to enable the staff to access training and develop skills that will enable them to transfer to different parts of the Department in the event of a crisis situation. • We have highlighted the potential financial pressures linked to the provision of health and social care services to the Executive Leadership Team and agreed a short term financial strategy with the Pooled Budget Partnership Board. With regard to the Better Care Fund (BCF) the joint priorities for the provision of health and adult social care across Hartlepool has been agreed, as has the associated funding linked to the BCF for the period 2023 – 2024. In relation to the

7.1 Appendix 2

<p>may increase demand beyond our ability to respond in a timely way.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued industrial action by Health and Care Bodies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This increased stress may lead to staff absence regarding short term and long term unplanned leave. Delay in planned admissions leading to complications and increased anxiety, physical and mental distress. Further social care pressure on supporting people in the community. 	<p>period 2024 – 2025 we are awaiting further detail from the Government before confirming.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Integrated Single Point of Access, regular stress testing of the system. The Virtual Ward is now in place and Adult Social Care staff work closely with health colleagues to support this. The Direct Care and Support team now offer an overnight domiciliary service to a limited number of people as part of a pilot reducing the reliance on residential care.
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CURRENT RISK ASSESSMENT:					
RISK MATRIX		IMPACT			
		NEGLIGIBLE	MINOR	MAJOR	CRITICAL
LIKELIHOOD	ALMOST CERTAIN				
	PROBABLE				
	POSSIBLE				RED 8
	HARDLY EVER				

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	John Lovatt
DIVISION	Adult Social Care
DEPARTMENT	Adult and Community Based Services
DATE OF ASSESSMENT	May 2024

7.1 Appendix 2

ADDITIONAL CONTROLS TO BE PUT IN PLACE:			
ADDITIONAL CONTROL	WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE? (ACTION)	LEAD OFFICER	DUE DATE
Monitoring of BCF expenditure 2024-2025	Activity and related expenditure needs monitoring to identify pressures within the health and adult social care system to mitigate risks to the Department's and broader Council's financial position.	Assistant Director – Adult Social Care Head of Strategic Commissioning – Adult Social Care Head of Finance	May 2025

7.1 Appendix 2

RISK TITLE:	Market failure and sufficiency of provision – Failure within the children’s care or education sector to provide sufficient foster care, special school and residential care that can meet the needs of children leading to insufficient capacity to support vulnerable children appropriately.	
DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF CURRENT RISK:		
CAUSES - what could make it happen?	IMPLICATIONS - what impact would it have if it did?	EXISTING INTERNAL CONTROLS – what are we already doing to reduce the likelihood and/or impact of it happening?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Insufficient in house provision available to meet need • Insufficient places to commission regionally and nationally that meet need and demand • Action taken by the regulator to stop a service from operating. • Provider decides to close or change focus of provision. • Provider cannot operate due to lack of appropriate workforce/ staffing. • Commissioned places not able to provide high quality services. • Complexity of need for some children is so great all providers unable to offer place as unable to meet need • Regulatory framework makes providers reluctant to offer placements to the most challenging children as worried providing placement may affect their Ofsted judgement. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Placements for vulnerable children ceasing at very short notice with no available alternative placements sourced. • Services unavailable to meet assessed need placing children at risk of harm. • Vulnerable children need to be moved to different provision which is detrimental to their development, education, health and wellbeing and experience repeated placement disruption. • Increase in out of area placements if there is insufficient provision locally. • Increase in need to commission places from the independent sector which creates additional budget pressures for both care and education • Reputational damage to the Council if services cannot be provided within Hartlepool to meet local needs. • Increasing number of unregulated or alternative provision packages for children. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opening additional children’s homes and special school to ensure more children’s needs can be met in Hartlepool • Work with local partners to build capacity where need identified • Continued fostering campaign to increase number of foster carers able to offer homes for children in our care • Participation in regional fostering campaign and hub • Increasing school place capacity in special schools in Hartlepool • Robust exploration of extended family members who can care for children within their family network • Strong relationships with providers in local area who know organisation and will seek to meet our placement needs • High level of support to children placed in independent provision including additional support to fragile placements to prevent breakdown • Quality assurance of independent provision • Annual sufficiency assessments are completed to identify where there are emerging gaps in provision and work with providers to develop provision

7.1 Appendix 2

CURRENT RISK ASSESSMENT:					
RISK MATRIX		IMPACT			
		NEGLIGIBLE	MINOR	MAJOR	CRITICAL
LIKELIHOOD	ALMOST CERTAIN				
	PROBABLE			RED 9	
	POSSIBLE				
	HARDLY EVER				

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	Danielle Swainston - Assistant Director - Joint Commissioning, Laura Gough - Assistant Director – Children and Families and Amanda Whitehead – Assistant Director - Education
DIVISION	Joint Commissioning / Children and Families / Education
DEPARTMENT	Children’s and Joint Commissioning Services
DATE OF ASSESSMENT	May 2024

ADDITIONAL CONTROLS TO BE PUT IN PLACE:			
ADDITIONAL CONTROL	WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE? (ACTION)	LEAD OFFICER	DUE DATE
Maximise High Needs Block funding	Implement High Needs Block review recommendations (year 2) as per HNB report	Assistant Director Education	March 2025

7.1 Appendix 2

RISK TITLE:	Home to School Transport – Failure to deliver home to school transport services leads to the Council being unable to discharge statutory duties resulting in possible legal challenge.
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DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF CURRENT RISK:		
CAUSES - what could make it happen?	IMPLICATIONS - what impact would it have if it did?	EXISTING INTERNAL CONTROLS – what are we already doing to reduce the likelihood and/or impact of it happening?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased costs in relation to the provision of Home to School Transport for eligible pupils • Significant increase in the number of eligible students with special education needs and disabilities • External operators withdraw from the service • Shortage of suitable vehicles or vehicle parts • Shortage of qualified drivers (those who passed their test after 1997 will not have D1 category of their license) • Shortage of Passenger Assistants • Long winded recruitment processes to driver and passenger assistant roles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial. • Reputational. • Legal. • Unable to fulfil statutory duties 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial processes are monitored and reported. Budgets adapted as required • Actively seek to add suitably qualified and experienced operators to the Dynamic Purchasing Scheme for home to school transport services • Work with colleagues in Children’s Services to effectively manage the placement of children into their nearest suitable school, reducing the requirement for travel assistance • Work with colleagues in Fleet Services to maintain the existing fleet and procure suitable replacement or new vehicles • Work with colleagues in Human Resources to improve the recruitment, training and retention process

7.1 Appendix 2

CURRENT RISK ASSESSMENT:					
RISK MATRIX		IMPACT			
		NEGLIGIBLE	MINOR	MAJOR	CRITICAL
LIKELIHOOD	ALMOST CERTAIN				
	PROBABLE				
	POSSIBLE			AMBER 6	
	HARDLY EVER				

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	Kieran Bostock – Assistant Director - Neighbourhoods
DIVISION	Neighbourhoods
DEPARTMENT	Development, Neighbourhoods and Regulatory Services
DATE OF ASSESSMENT	May 2024

ADDITIONAL CONTROLS TO BE PUT IN PLACE:			
ADDITIONAL CONTROL	WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE? (ACTION)	LEAD OFFICER	DUE DATE
Options for delivery of passenger transport are regularly reviewed	Consideration to be given to increasing the Council's vehicle fleet and the possibility of procurement opportunities from the wider region to ensure statutory duties can be met in the future.	Assistant Director – Neighbourhoods	May 2025
Training for drivers to obtain the required licences is funded by the Council	Process to be developed to consider funding training for new drivers.	Assistant Director – Neighbourhoods	Feb 2025

7.1 Appendix 2

RISK TITLE:	0-19 Service – Failure to provide sufficient health visiting and school nursing services to meet the needs of children leading to increased safeguarding concerns.
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DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF CURRENT RISK:		
CAUSES - what could make it happen?	IMPLICATIONS - what impact would it have if it did?	EXISTING INTERNAL CONTROLS – what are we already doing to reduce the likelihood and/or impact of it happening?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Failure to recruit to vacant health visiting and school nursing posts due to national shortage of trained staff • Failure to retain trainee staff, once they qualify, due to work complexity and differential salaries to other areas. • Long term sickness causing challenges within the workforce • Inability to increase staffing levels to meet additional pressures in the next few years • Loss of experienced Health Visitors (HV) workforce through retirement (around 60% of current HV workforce will be eligible to retire in coming years) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A reduced service meeting only the minimum required number of visits would have to be put in place • There will be a risk that this means those families with more complex needs may not receive the support they require 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vacant HV hours have been restructured to allow staff nurses to be recruited in to the service to provide a level of skill mix • Health visitor support plan in place • Monthly monitoring of the data with management risk meetings for update, progress and assurance around targets and exceptions • Service recovery plan in place and reviewed at Clinical Oversight Group (COG) quarterly

7.1 Appendix 2

CURRENT RISK ASSESSMENT:					
RISK MATRIX		IMPACT			
		NEGLIGIBLE	MINOR	MAJOR	CRITICAL
LIKELIHOOD	ALMOST CERTAIN				
	PROBABLE			RED 9	
	POSSIBLE				
	HARDLY EVER				

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	Craig Blundred
DIVISION	Children's and Commissioning
DEPARTMENT	Public Health
DATE OF ASSESSMENT	May 2024

ADDITIONAL CONTROLS TO BE PUT IN PLACE:			
ADDITIONAL CONTROL	WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE? (ACTION)	LEAD OFFICER	DUE DATE
Benchmarking against CQC inspection criteria implemented	Establish benchmarking process and evidence base against CQC inspection criteria	Assistant Director Children and Families	July 2024
"Grow your own" approach to recruitment established	Develop a "grow your own" approach to recruitment which includes Specialist Community Public Health Nurse training	Assistant Director Children and Families	September 2025

<h1 style="margin: 0;">FINANCE AND POLICY COMMITTEE</h1> <h2 style="margin: 0;">25 JUNE 2024</h2>



Subject: FINANCIAL POSITION STATEMENT

Report of: Director of Finance, IT and Digital

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 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 provide an overview of the financial position facing the council. The report draws on internal and external data and benchmarking to provide members with the best possible insight into the financial challenges the authority faces. In doing so the report sets the scene for the MTFs update elsewhere on the agenda and identifies the challenging financial position faced by the authority.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 Members will be aware that during 2023/2024, there was a growing sense of crisis within local government finance. A small number of councils in recent years have issued Section 114 notices, a process many consider effective “bankruptcy”. In order to support those councils and also alleviate the increasing risk of further notices, the government introduced an “Exceptional Financial Support” framework, giving those councils deemed in need, the ability to use capital funding or borrow to meet revenue expenditure. This capital funding could be in the form of capital receipts through sale of assets or Public Works Loan Board (PWLB) borrowing, albeit at an increased interest rate. So far 20 councils, across the full breadth of the country have been granted access to this framework:

- Bradford
- Cheshire East
- Havering
- Middlesbrough
- Plymouth
- Somerset
- Southampton
- Stoke on Trent
- Birmingham
- Croydon
- Cumberland
- Eastbourne
- Medway
- North Northamptonshire
- Nottingham
- Slough
- Thurrock
- West Northamptonshire
- Woking
- Lambeth

In addition, the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead have recently commenced discussions to access this framework.

3.2 The challenges facing councils were laid bare in a report into the State of Local Government Finance 2024 carried out by the Local Government Information Unit (LGIU). The online survey, sent out after the announcement of an additional £600m in the final local government settlement, received 160 responses from 128 unique councils with a good spread across type of authority, region and political control. Key findings included:

- Only 4% of respondents had any confidence in the sustainability of local government finance (down from 14% in 2023);
- 51% of respondents felt their council was likely to issue a section 114 notice in the next 5 years;
- Only 6.1% were happy that government understood the scale of the problem facing local finances; and
- Only 1.4% were happy with the governments performance on delivering a sustainable funding system.

3.3 Hartlepool is far from immune to this situation, indeed given the disproportionate funding reductions coupled with the pressures that come from deprivation it is clear why the council struggles to balance its budget year on year. However, we have a legal responsibility to do so and have relied on

reserves in recent years to bridge the gap between funding and pressures to achieve a balanced position. This is clearly not a sustainable position.

3.4 In order to give members a clearer position of our financial position, this report focuses on three key elements;

- Council Funding – the level of funding we receive, how it has changed over the years and what the future may bring;
- Key cost pressures – the areas that are subsuming the greatest proportion of our budget, in addition to emerging pressures; and
- Financial management and reporting – how well placed are we to continue to meet these increasing challenges.

3.5 In support of producing this report, the council has relied on open source data, analysis from LG Inform and also engaged Pixel Financial Management to support with independent analysis of our funding position and challenges.

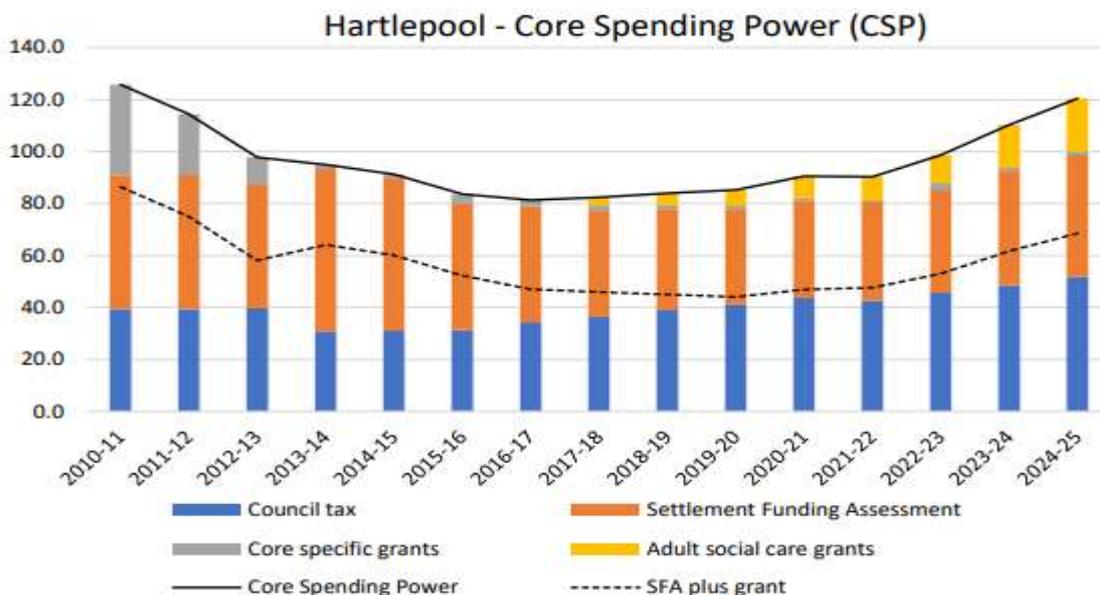
3.6 By its nature, this report includes a number of technical financial issues. Some of the key messages in this report will be developed into an easier to read format for potential wider communication. **Appendix A** replicates all charts in this report but in a larger format for ease.

4. COUNCIL FUNDING

Core Spending Power (CSP)

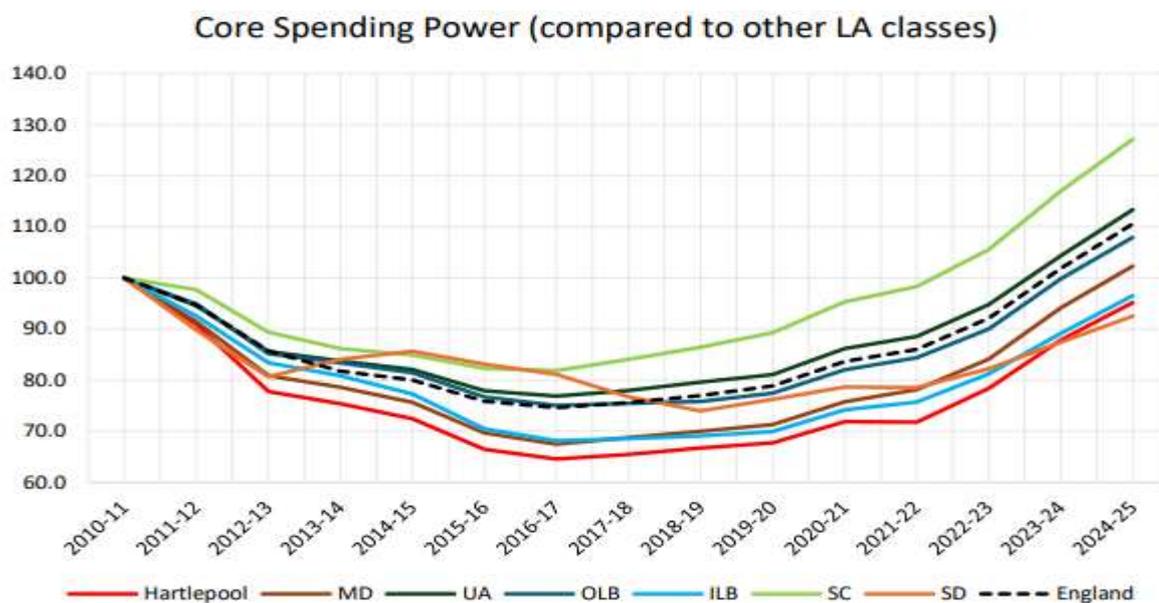
4.1 The government uses core spending power as a measure of the resources available to local authorities to fund service delivery. It sets out the money that has been made available to local authorities through the Local Government Finance Settlement and includes council tax and business rates. Therefore local decisions on council tax ultimately impact on our CSP. Whilst some specific grants sit outside of this settlement, CSP is the best available proxy for how funding has changed over the years and is widely used as such.

4.2 Hartlepool's CSP was £125.6m in 2010/11 but has reduced to £119.7m in 2024/25, a 4.8% reduction in 'cash terms' (i.e. not taking in to account inflation over the period). As CSP includes the increases in council tax over the years it is apparent that increases to council tax have not offset reductions to government funding – **we are still worse off in cash terms despite council tax increases**. Whilst government funding has increased significantly over the past three years, particularly with regard social care grants this has not been enough to offset the reductions seen in the early years of austerity.



4.3 In terms of comparisons the chart below shows how Hartlepool has compared against local authority classes since 2010. Key points include;

- Only Shire District councils have seen a greater cut to CSP. It should be noted that this is because they have not benefitted from the increases in Social Care grants in recent years (nor have they incurred corresponding significant cost pressures);
- Within Unitary Councils the average change is an increase of over 10% compared to Hartlepool’s 4.8% reduction. Blackburn and Darwin (5.9%) is the only other unitary council that has seen a greater decrease than ours;
- Against our nearest neighbours only Knowsley (metropolitan council) has suffered a larger reduction since 2010/11 (5.2%);
- Overall Bolton has the largest reduction in CSP of 8.4% and there are also five London boroughs with larger decreases in CSP than Hartlepool.



4.4 One of the reasons for our relative CSP position is the lower proportion being derived from council tax element. In 2024/25 council tax was 43% of CSP, compared to 56% average for England. Our position is not too dissimilar to our nearest neighbours and is to a large extent due to low council tax bases in more deprived councils such as ours. What this means is that cuts to government funding, especially in the early years of austerity, have a larger impact on councils with low tax bases, generally those in more deprived areas. To compensate, these councils are therefore more likely to have higher council tax charge levels to try to mitigate the position i.e. there is a ‘double whammy’ impact – larger relative grant cuts, and higher council taxes.

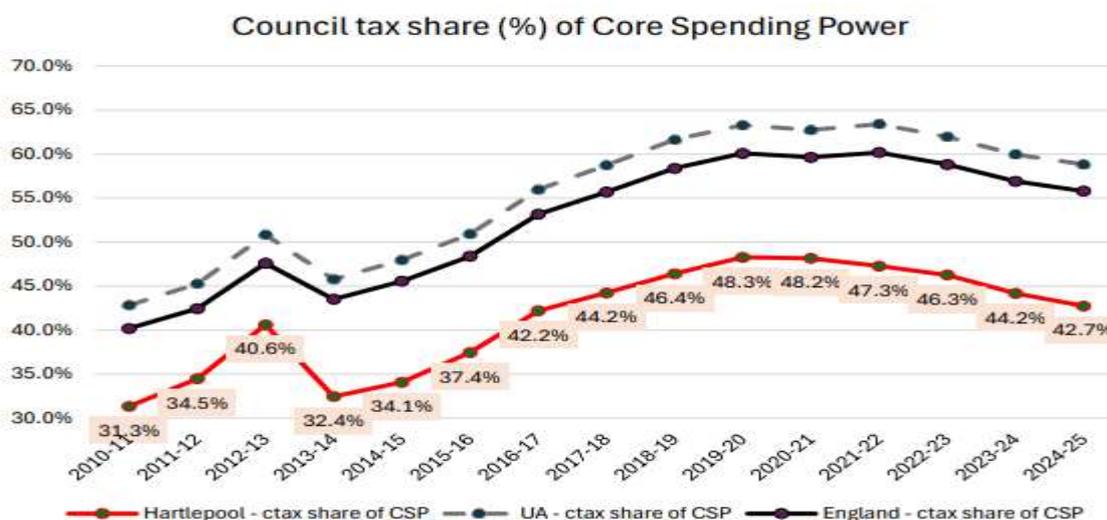
4.5 For illustration purposes only, the table below demonstrates the impact of low tax bases in a theoretical and simplified example;

	Council A Low Tax Base	Council B High Tax Base
Government Funding	£70m	£30m
Council Tax Funding	£30m	£70m
Net Funding	£100m	£100m
10% Government Funding Reduction		
Government Funding	£63m	£27m
Council Tax Funding	£37m	£73m
Net Funding	£100m	£100m

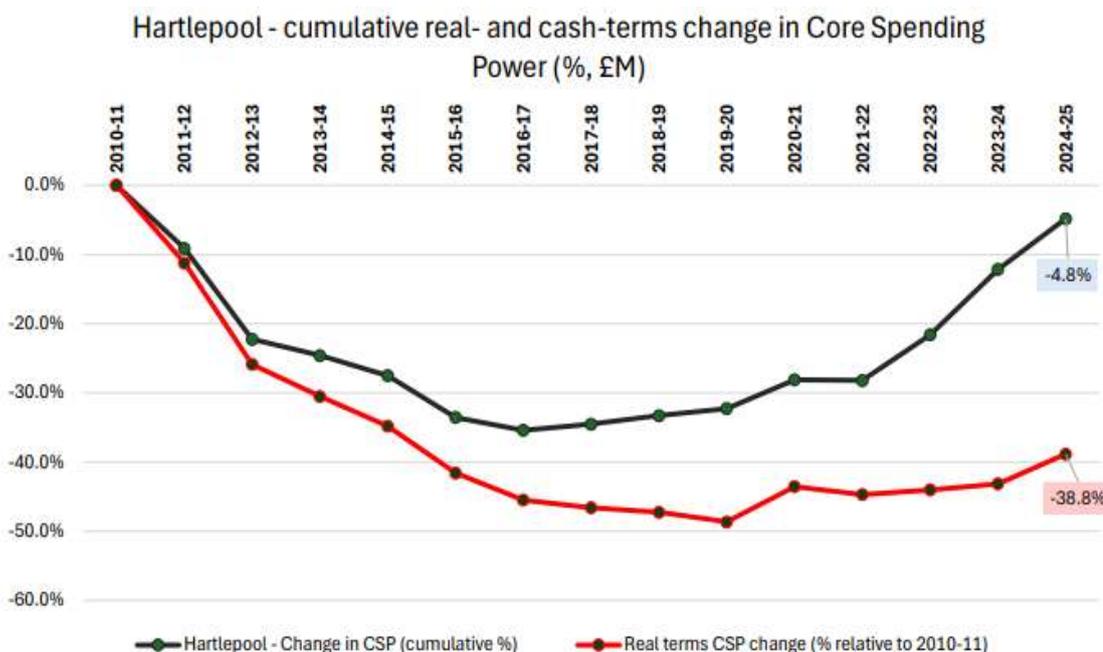
In the above scenario a 10% government funding reduction results in a loss of £7m to council A. It therefore needs to increase council tax by £7m (23%) to bring its funding back to £100m.

For council B, a 10% funding reduction equates to only £3m. It therefore only needs to increase council tax by £3m (4%) to compensate and bring funding levels back to £100m.

4.6 Hartlepool’s comparative council tax share of CSP is shown on the red line below;



- 4.7 In recent years some of the social care grant increases by government have included equalisation in the formula i.e. those councils less able to generate increases in council tax revenue have received more grant.
- 4.8 When considering the overall impact of funding, the real terms changes (i.e. adjusted for inflation) is the most important indicator since this takes into account the impact of inflation over the period. To calculate this, the GDP deflator has been used. The GDP deflator is a measure of inflation in the wider economy and is broader than CPI, reflecting changes in wages as well as goods and services. It is used by HM Treasury to adjust prices.
- 4.9 Whilst in cash terms our CSP is 4.8% lower in 2024/25 than it was in 2010/11, in real terms it is **38.8% lower**. In effect this means that if Hartlepool’s CSP had increased in line with inflation it would be £48.9m higher at £168.6m. The chart below demonstrates this position over the years. Of note is that whilst the increases in cash terms over the last three years have been significant and welcome, given the high level of inflation, the actual impact has been marginal.

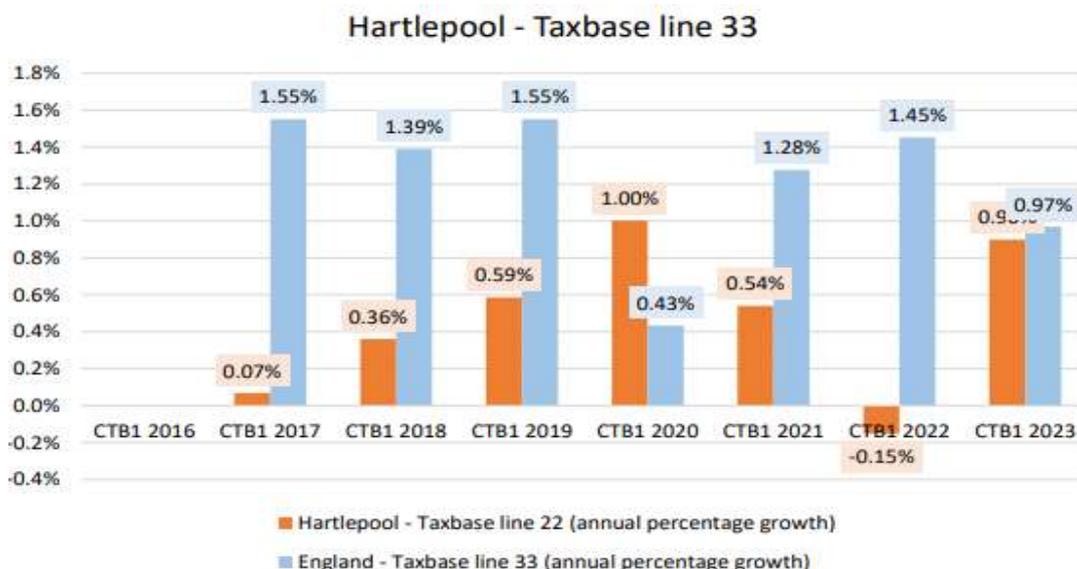


- 4.10 **Had Hartlepool’s CSP power only decreased in line with the England average (23.4% real-terms cut), our CSP would still be £19.4m higher than 2010/11.** This would be enough to meet our MTFs pressures for the next three years in full.

Council Tax

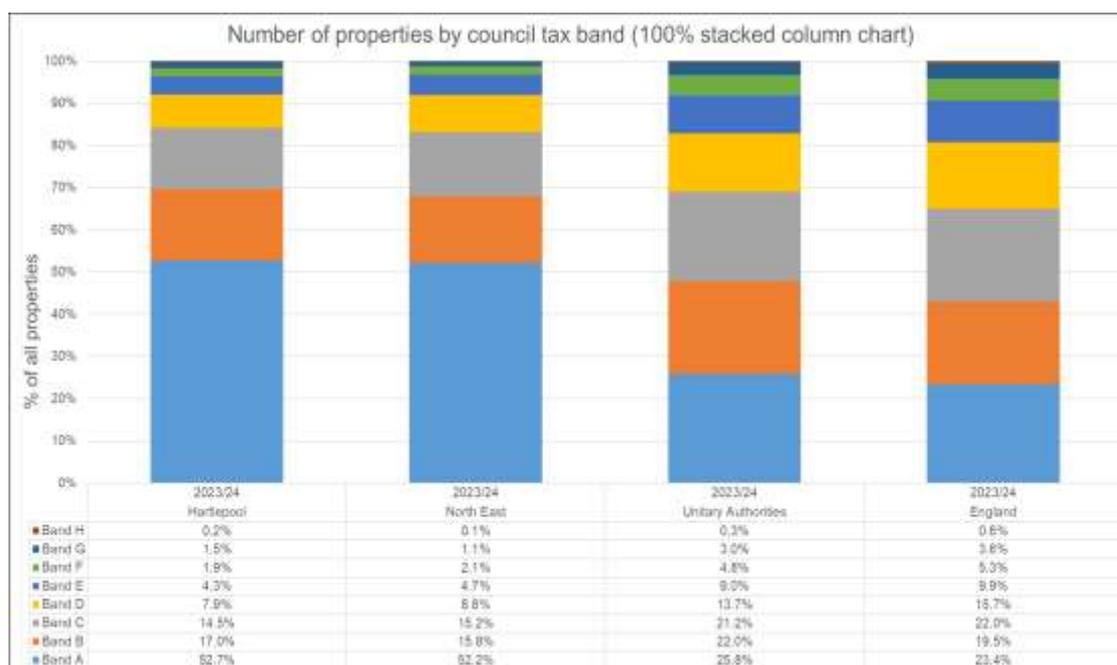
- 4.11 As previously highlighted many local authorities rely on council tax to support their CSP position. At a headline level, council tax funding is determined by the level of council tax base and the Band D charge applied. Hartlepool has a low tax base. Additionally, whilst housebuilding has been positive, the

council’s tax base has grown slower than the England average for all but one of the past seven years.



4.12 Tax base growth is not just about housebuilding, other factors include the council tax band of the housing, which tends to be lower in the North East, the number of exemptions and discounts (including Single Person Discount), the level and value of Local Council Tax Support (LCTS) and also the collection rate.

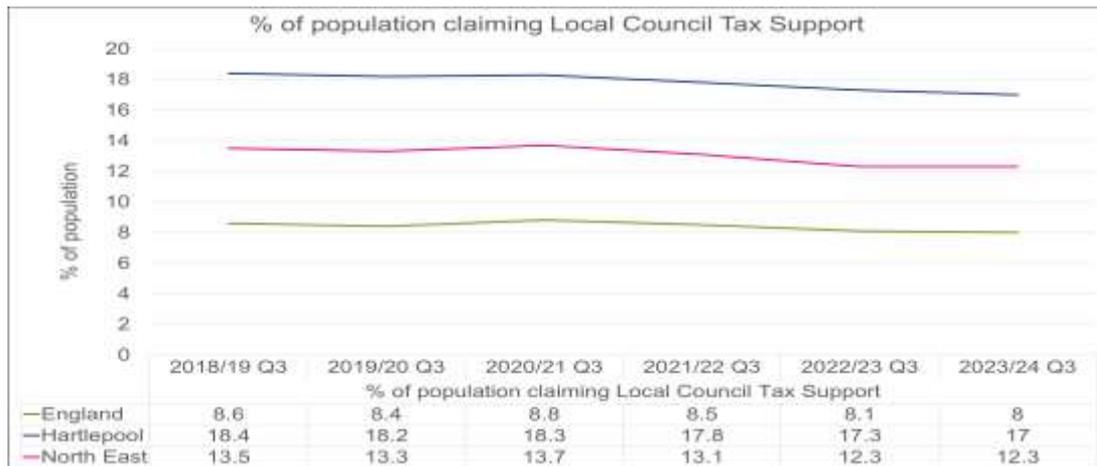
4.13 The banding of our tax base, with 69.7% in bands A and B, highlight the difficulty in raising income through council tax and confirms our status as a low tax base authority.



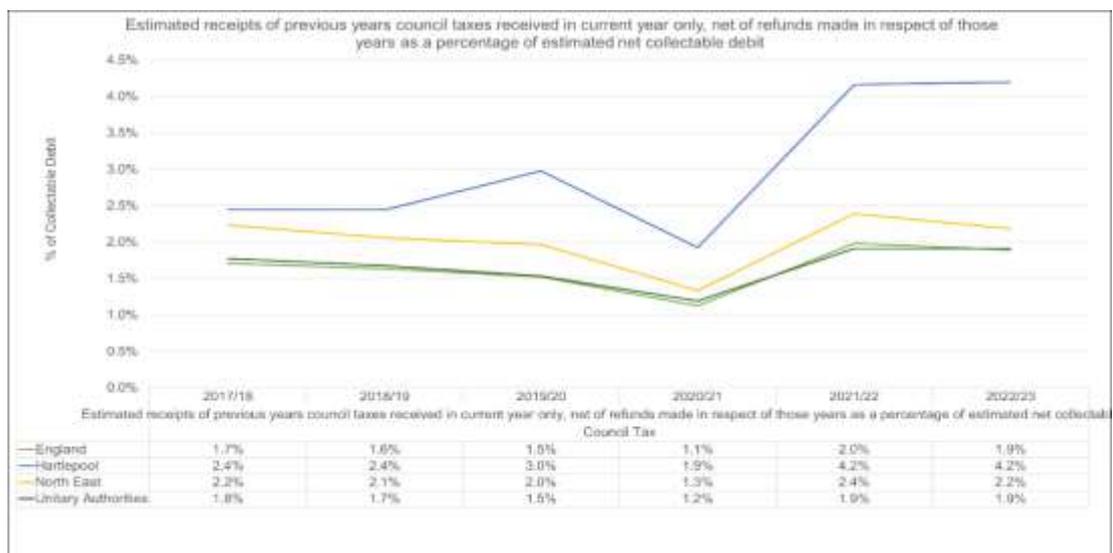
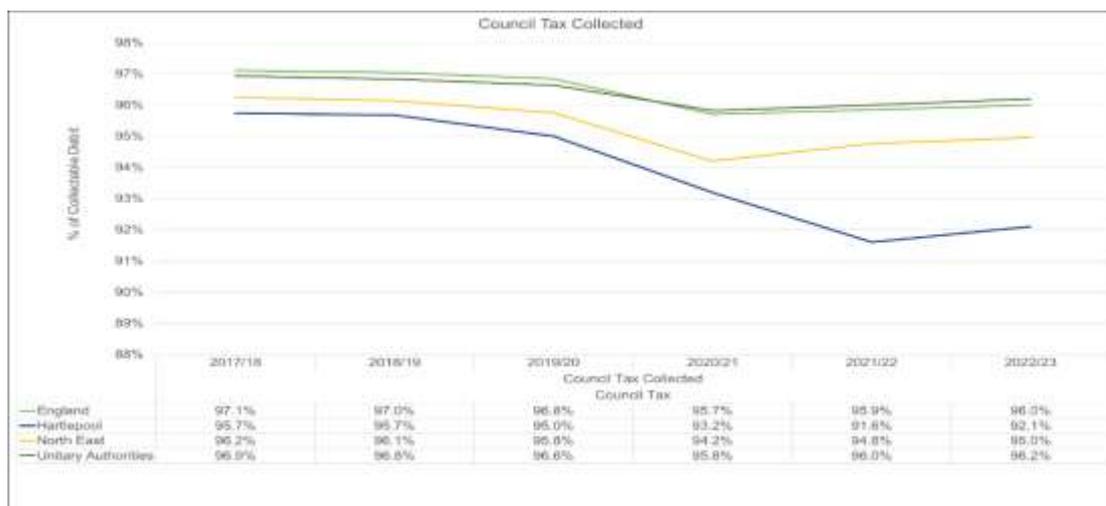
- 4.14 Over recent years a number of residents have pointed to housebuilding in the borough, especially on the town’s outskirts and Wynyard in particular, as evidence that the council should have enough funding to avoid council tax increases. The England average for band E to H properties is 19.4%. This compares to 7.9% in Hartlepool. Based on the current chargeable dwellings in Hartlepool we would need an additional 5,000 band E to H properties to be comparable with the England average. Based on the previous 2 years growth in band E to H properties, this would take in excess of 20 years to achieve, assuming no lower banded houses were also built.
- 4.15 Members may recall that Finance and Policy Committee received a report in February 2024 highlighting our relatively high level of Single Person Discount (SPD) and measures that are being taken to address this. Based on the October 2023 Council Tax Base return, Hartlepool was significantly above the England average, albeit broadly in line with the North East average for SPD. Reducing SPD, where it is being fraudulently claimed, will help increase our council tax base and ultimately improve our Core Spending Power position and funding levels.



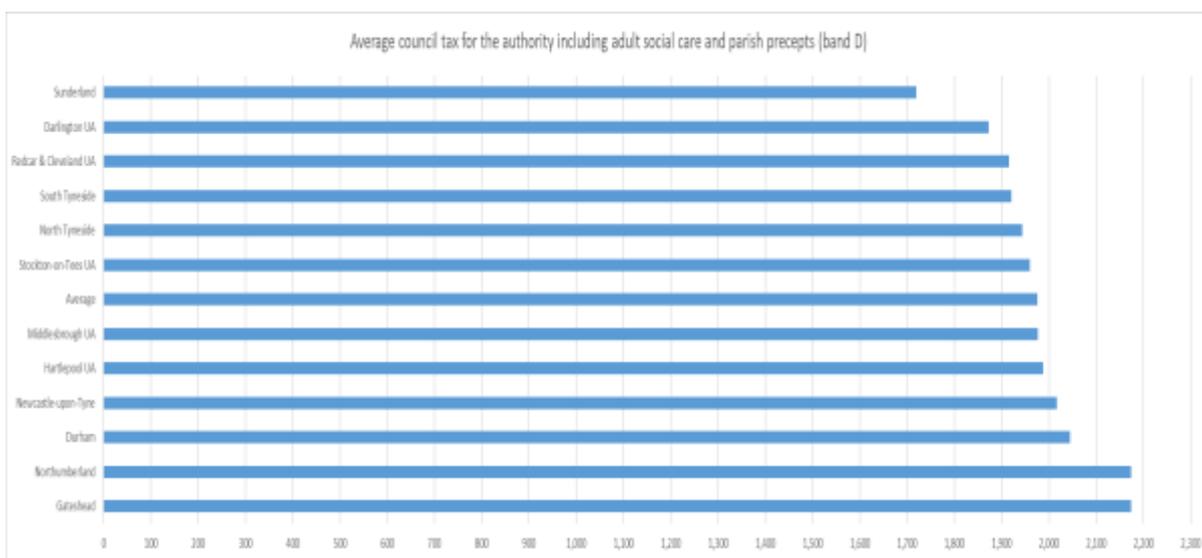
- 4.16 The council introduced a new banded Local Council Tax Support Scheme for 2024/25. The higher the call on LCTS the greater the impact on our council tax base position and ultimately the less resource we have available. LCTS is forecast to cost the council over £15m in 2024/25. Whilst this used to be funded by government, responsibility was passed to council in 2013/14 with an immediate 10% funding reduction. Funding has further eroded since, increasing the pressure on our budget. **The council has the highest percentage of the population in the country claiming LCTS, and are significantly above the North East and England average.**



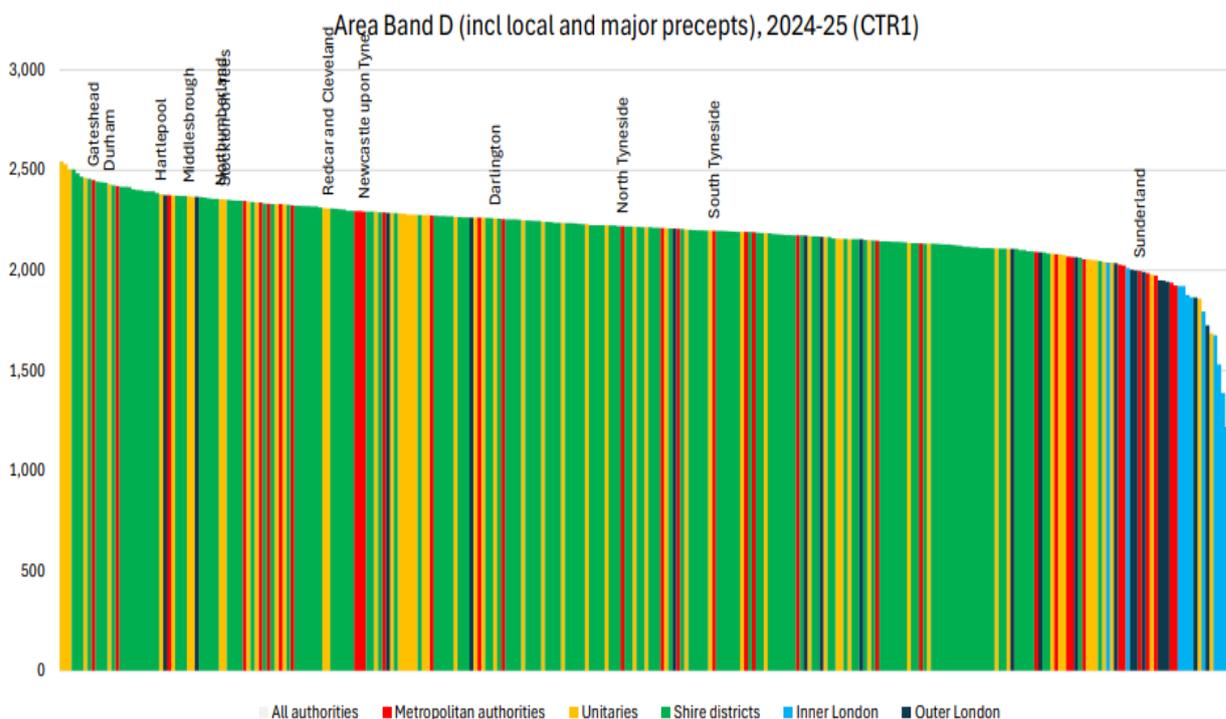
4.17 With regard to the collection rate, the council maintains a long term collection rate of 98.5%. The council took a decision to suspend enforcement of collection during the covid pandemic and this has had a significant impact on our in year collection rates which we are slowly recovering from, albeit our arrears collection remains strong.



4.18 The overall funding position, combined with our low tax base results in a relatively high council tax. Comparisons on levels of council tax can be difficult given services are provided in different ways dependent on local arrangements across the country, however we are not the highest council tax in the country with a significant number of councils having a higher level. Including an average precept for parish councils, comparing against our North East neighbours shows that we are only £12 a year (Band D) higher than the North East average.



4.19 When all services partly funded by council tax are included i.e. council, parish council, combined authorities, fire and police services are included, the data shows that the vast majority of band D households across the country sit within a band range of between £2,000 and £2,500.



4.20 At present, there seems little appetite amongst either of the main political parties to reform council tax and as such the council has to maximise receipt through existing means i.e. collection and increases to the council tax base.

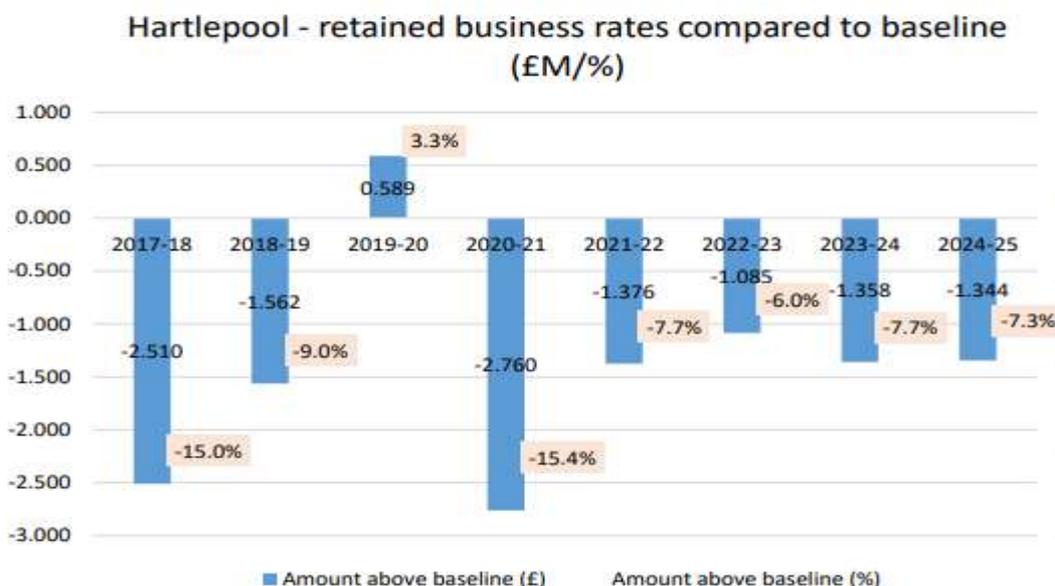
Business Rates

4.21 The Business Rates Retention System (BRRS) was introduced in 2013/14 allowing 50% of business rates generated to be retained locally – the split in Hartlepool being 50% to central government, 49% to the council and 1% to the fire authority. BRRS is, by its nature, quite a complex system with a number of mechanisms to protect councils, including a safety net should funding fall below 92.5% of baseline assessment.

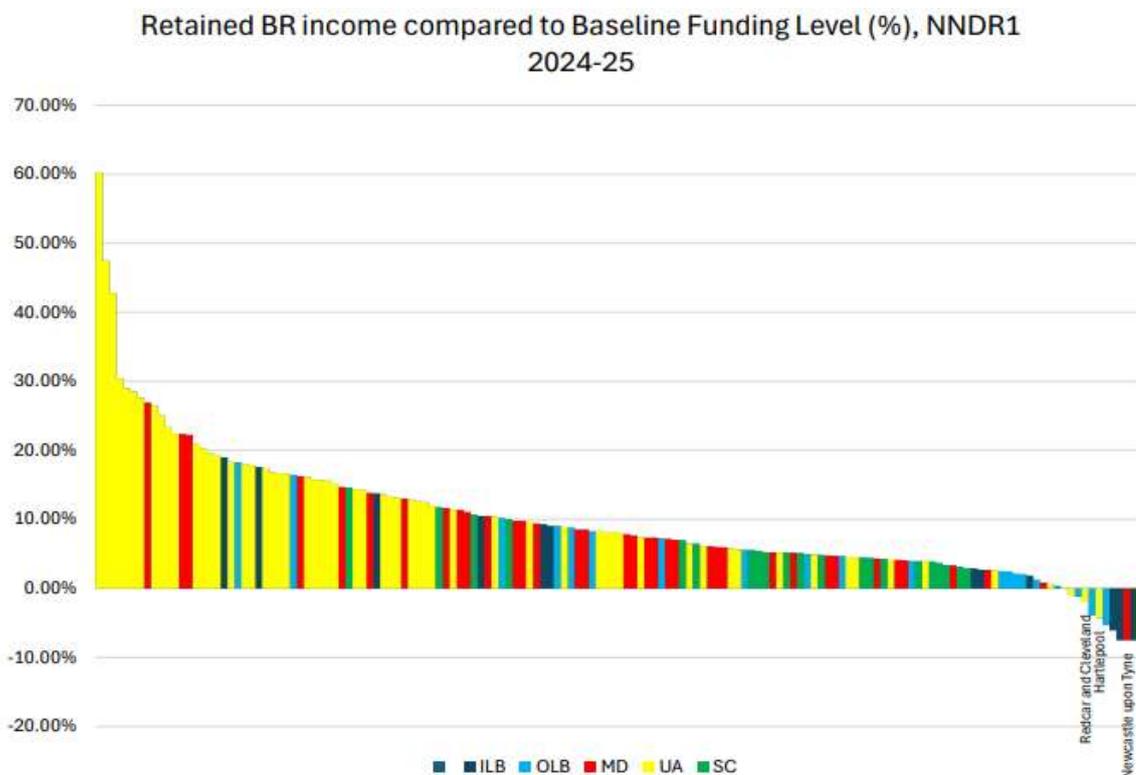
4.22 As part of the rollout, the government set a “baseline” funding level – this was the level of funding each council was deemed to need from retained rates. Where a council was initially below this level they received “top-up” grant. Where a council was above this, they paid a “tariff”. The system was designed to allow for regular baseline resets so those councils with significant growth had an element redirected to ensure those authorities below baseline received additional funding i.e. to make the system fairer and redistribute based on need.

4.23 Hartlepool has been consistently below its baseline, with the chart below showing the position since 2017/18. A significant reason being a substantial appeal submitted and approved by the Valuation Agency (VOA) in relation to the nuclear power station. The nuclear power station makes up circa 30% of our rates and presents a significant risk to the council’s business rate income, since we have no ability to influence the operation of the station.

4.24 The council only qualified for safety net in 2017/18. It would have qualified in 2020/21 however, government support in relation to the covid pandemic impacted the position prior to the safety net calculation. As such we have consistently lost out, with little support from government.



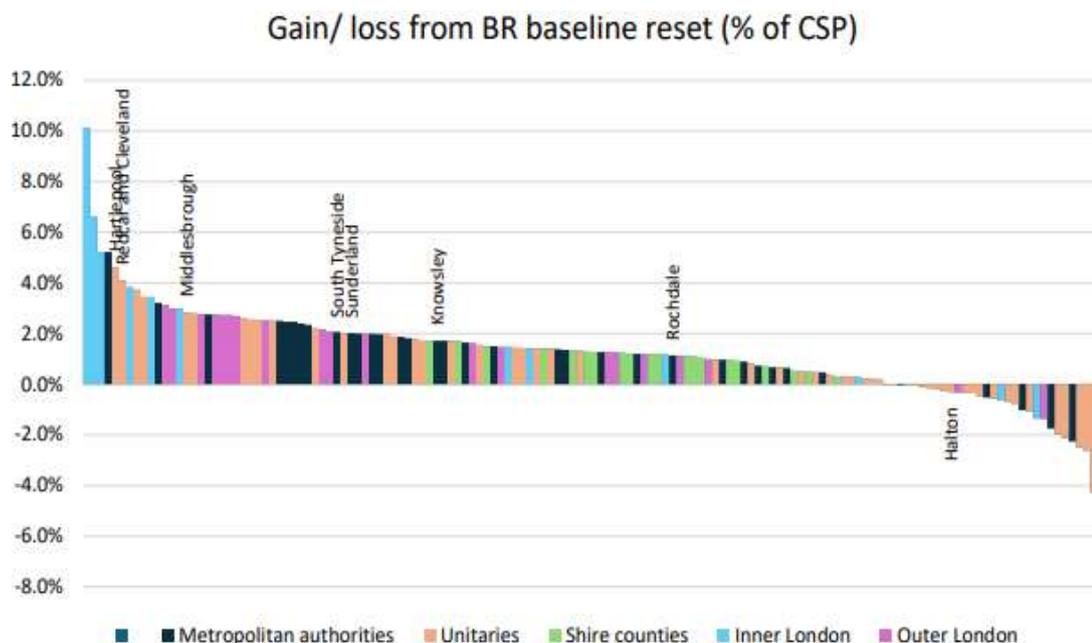
4.25 Using 2024/25 for illustration purposes, the council is one of only 11 upper tier councils in the country below baseline. The majority of upper-tier councils are gaining under BRRS, and some are gaining considerably. As an example Central Bedfordshire has additional retained rates that are equivalent of 60.3% of its CSP.



4.26 Despite the re-baselining protection being integral to BRRS, the government has not re-baselined the position. It was due to be re-baselined a number of years ago. As a result some councils are gaining every year whilst Hartlepool continues to lose out. There is currently at least £1.5bn in the system that should be re-distributed.

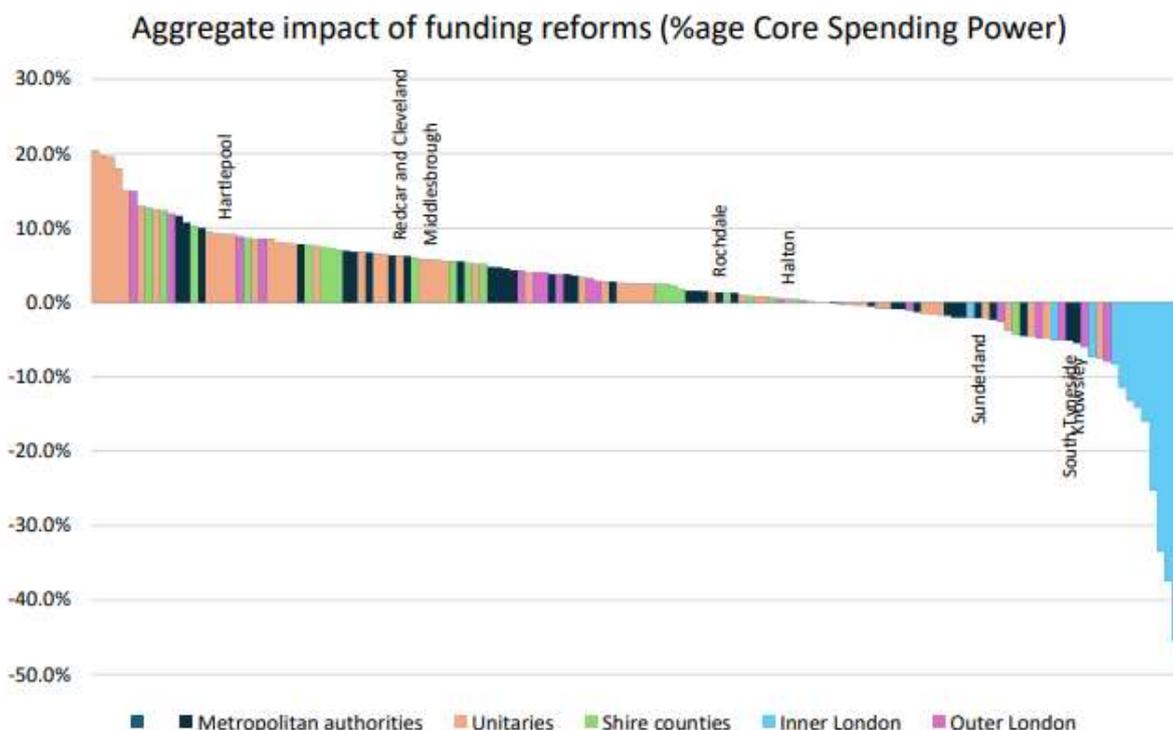
4.27 Should the baseline be redistributed, taken in isolation it has been estimated that Hartlepool would benefit by the tune of 4.6%. **This is the equivalent of an annual uplift of circa £5.5m to our funding position.** Recognising that the government may find it challenging to re-baseline business rates in isolation from fair funding, we have made the case to government over the past year for “bridging grant” payable to those local authorities consistently below baseline, such as ours.

4.28 Taking in isolation, the chart below demonstrates that the majority of councils would gain from some form of re-baselining.



Fair Funding

- 4.29 The government continues to stall on delivering the long awaited fair funding review (which would include a reset of the business rates retention system). The review was first promised in 2016 and is envisaged to create a fairer formula for the allocation of government funding to local authorities. Given the current political uncertainty and the time frames required for consultation on such a review, it is now expected that changes will not take place until 2026/27 at the earliest, should the newly formed government wish to deliver such change.
- 4.30 Pixel Financial Management have modelled the potential impact of these reforms. The modelling is based on the government’s December 2018 consultation paper. Although more than five years old, these proposals are likely to form the “building blocks” for any reforms.
- 4.31 The modelling includes the potential impact of a business rates baseline reset shown above, as well as new formulas for public health and adult social care (where we are expected to lose out) and new formulas for settlement funding assessment that will include council tax equalisation (where we are expected to gain).
- 4.32 Taking all funding factors into this equation, Hartlepool are expected to gain by 9.2% of CSP value. If the modelling is correct, **fair funding could therefore provide Hartlepool with an additional circa £12m per year** if fair funding was progressed. This includes the £5.5m set out in paragraph 4.27. The impact for individual councils and our nearest neighbours are shown below.



4.33 Members will note that there are some significant potential losers under fair funding, particularly inner London boroughs. As such, even if any government progressed with fair funding, some damping would be required to manage the funding transition over a period of time.

5. COST PRESURES

5.1 Notwithstanding the significant and sustained funding pressures, the council has faced some significant funding pressures in recent years that are adding to the financial challenges.

Pay Awards

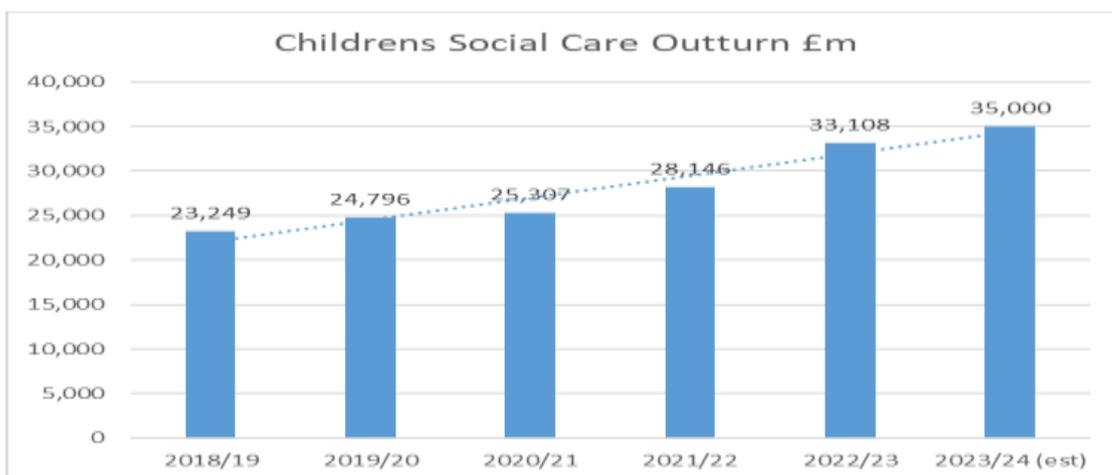
5.2 For most of the period since 2010/11 there has been significant pay restraint within local government, with a circa 25% real terms decrease in value since 2010. However, the last two financial years have seen pay increase agreements that averaged at circa 6% each year, and the council has allowed for a similar increase in the current year (an offer has been made by the employer side of a blended 4% increase). All told, **over the last three years the councils pay budget has increased by circa £10m**. This is the equivalent of a 20% council tax increase. No specific additional funding has been provided by government to meet this pressure. For clarity, the council does not determine pay increases for its staff, these are negotiated and agreed nationally.

Social Care

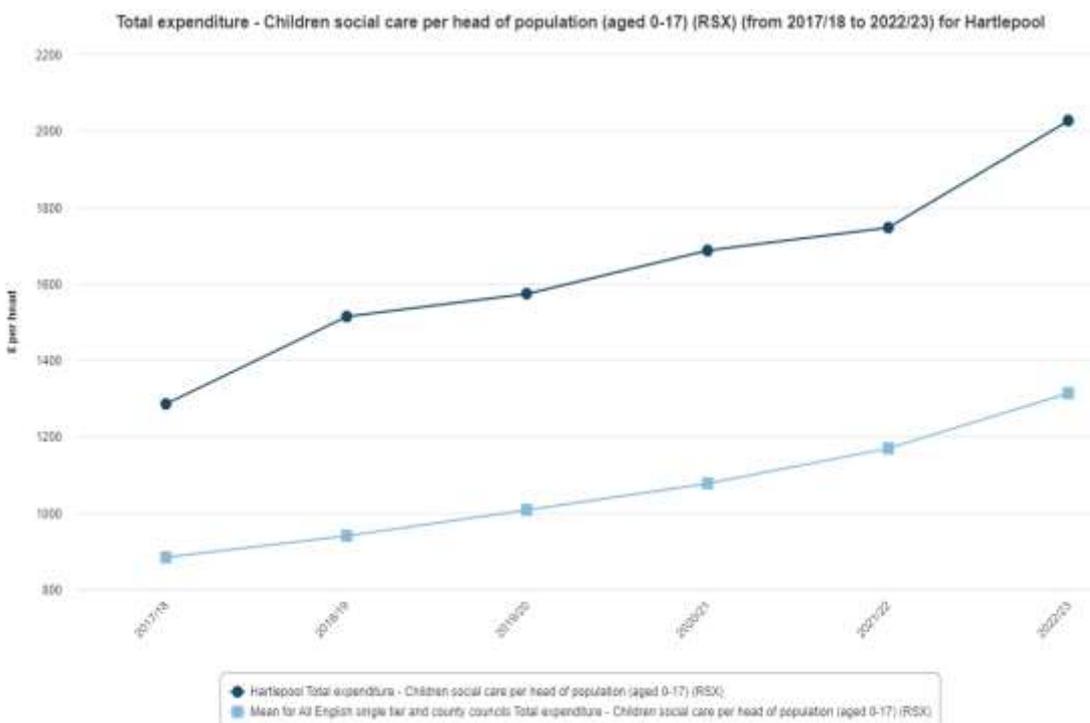
5.3 **The council now spends 69% of its net budget on social care**. This has increased significantly over recent years. Whilst adult social care pressures

have been predominantly funded by government through additional grant and the Adult Social Care precept, it is childrens social care (CSC) that is creating a significant pressure on the council’s budget.

- 5.4 Whilst the outturn position on CSC was reasonably stable between 2018/19 and 2020/21, in the three years since our spend has increased from £25.3m to an estimated £35m in 2023/24. **Spend on childrens social care has therefore increased by £10m or 38% in three years.** This is the equivalent of a 20% council tax increase.



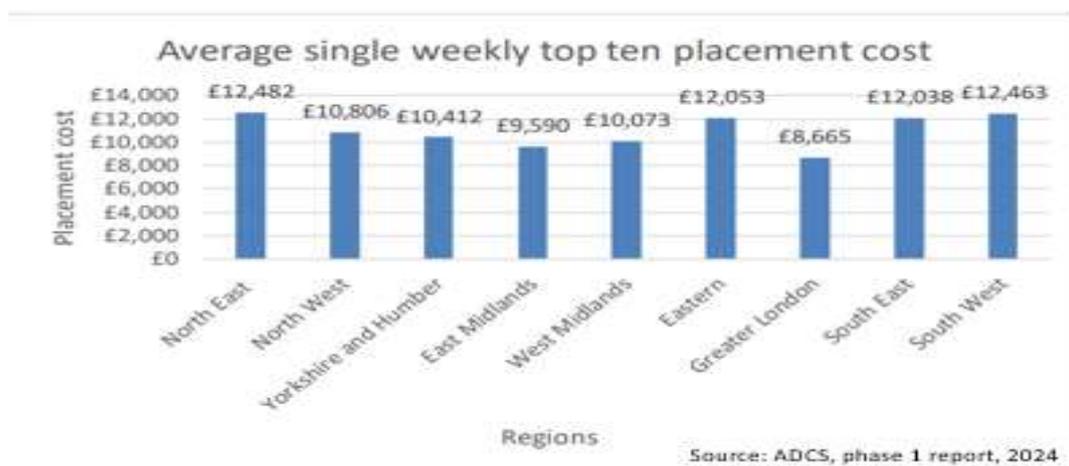
- 5.5 Our spend per child population is significantly higher and accelerating faster than the England average.



- 5.6 The volume and complexity of children in our care continues to drive costs. Where children in our care are placed in external placements we have very

little bargaining power given the finite external capacity and this is leading to ever increasing price being charged for accommodation. **The average weekly cost of a placement has increased by over 40%** over the last three years. The current **average cost of these placements is over £6,000 a week, and the highest weekly cost is £13,000 for one child.**

- 5.7 Pressures on CSC seem particularly acute in the North East of England. In the year 2022/23 all north east councils reported an overspend. The average weekly cost of the top ten placement costs as reported by the Association of Directors of Children Services is shown below. There were two examples in the region of placements costing in excess of £50,000 a week for one child.



Future and Emerging Pressures

- 5.8 The council includes known pressures within its MTFS reports. The most significant pressure, other than Childrens Social Care, is our waste contract which is likely to see **an additional £2million being added to the budget to cover the increased cost of waste disposal** over the coming two years. Where other pressures emerge these will be included within the MTFS as appropriate.

Dedicated Schools Grant

- 5.9 The council is carrying a deficit of £1.589m on its Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG), with a further £2.171m shortfall forecast in 2024/25. Any deficit on the DSG is carried as a “negative reserve” by the council under a statutory override put in place by the government. Should this statutory override end, the council may be required to fund this shortfall from its reserves. However, a significant number of councils have negative reserves far in excess of ours and the ending of this override would in effect lead to Section 114 notices being declared by a number of councils.

6. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING

- 6.1 The previous sections outlines the funding reductions and cost pressures that the council has faced in recent years. Despite this, the council continues to

manage its finances well and by comparability measures is in a stronger financial position than many councils. However, being a small unitary the challenge we face is that the position can deteriorate quickly and we have limited scope to react. As such proactive financial management is key.

Statement of Accounts and External Audit

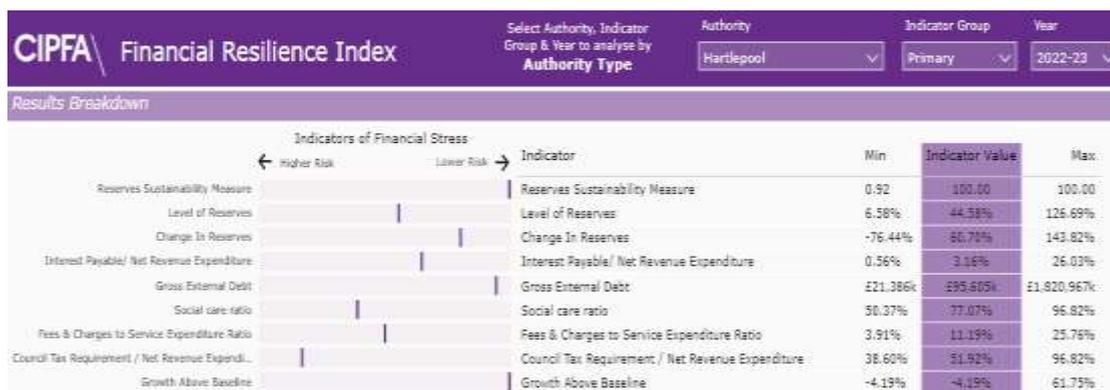
- 6.2 Members may be aware that in relation to the preparation and audit of accounts there is a substantial backlog across the country. As at 3 May 2024 15% had still to publish their 2022/23 accounts and only 27% of accounts had been finalised post audit. The councils 2022/23 accounts are all but signed off. We have also published our 2023/24 accounts on time, the only Tees Valley authority to do so.
- 6.3 As part of the audit of accounts, the external auditors are required to provide a value for money commentary. Our value for money judgement remains positive with Forvis-Mazars our external auditor commenting that “we have not identified any significant weaknesses in the Council’s arrangements in relation to the financial sustainability reporting criteria”. This judgement reinforces our approach to financial management

Cipfa Sustainability Index

- 6.4 The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (Cipfa) are one of a number of organisations that have sought to set out a sustainability index to provide Chief Financial Officers with support to achieve good financial management. The index takes data from outturn reports submitted to DLUHC as at the 31 March 2023. Therefore, by its nature it is a snapshot in time. The index will be updated annually when new data becomes available.
- 6.5 Comparisons against our nearest statistical neighbours suggests Hartlepool is at the lower risk of the scale on most indicators, with our spend on social care and the fact that we have a low council tax requirement compared to our budget being in the higher risk category.

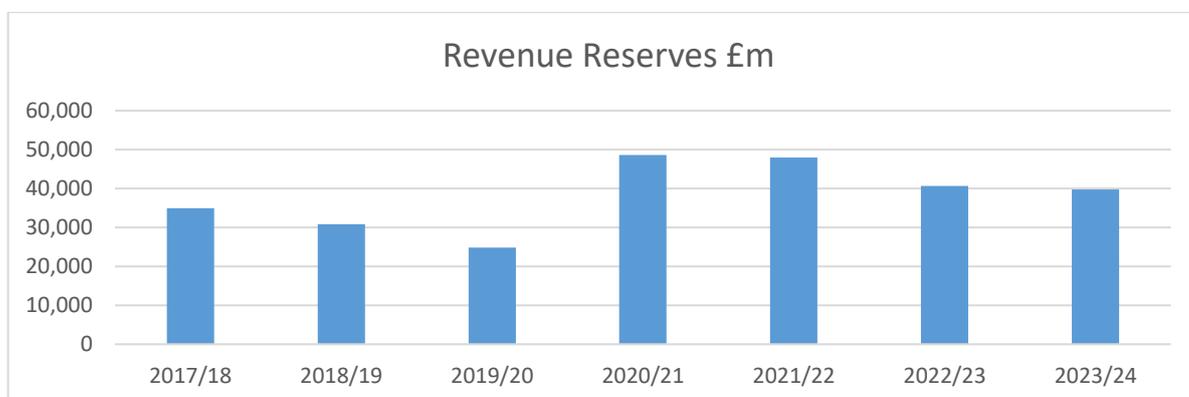


- 6.6 Comparisons against Unitary councils shows a higher level of risk on most categories. This is understandable given many of these councils are in comparatively more affluent areas that have seen an increase in Core Spending Power rather than our decrease.



Reserves

6.7 The council’s reserve position reduced to a challengingly low level in March 2020 with less than £25m held in revenue reserves down by £10m over two years. The significant financial support provided by government during covid provided a temporary increase to reserves, in part due to technical overrides on the collection fund. These have now unwound and the council has been successful in maintaining its reserve position over the past year despite the financial pressures. This resolve has ensured that we have also benefitted from positive Treasury Management returns during this period of high interest rates. It should be noted that all of these reserves are earmarked and will diminish in value over the coming years, especially given we are using reserves to balance the budget on an annual basis.

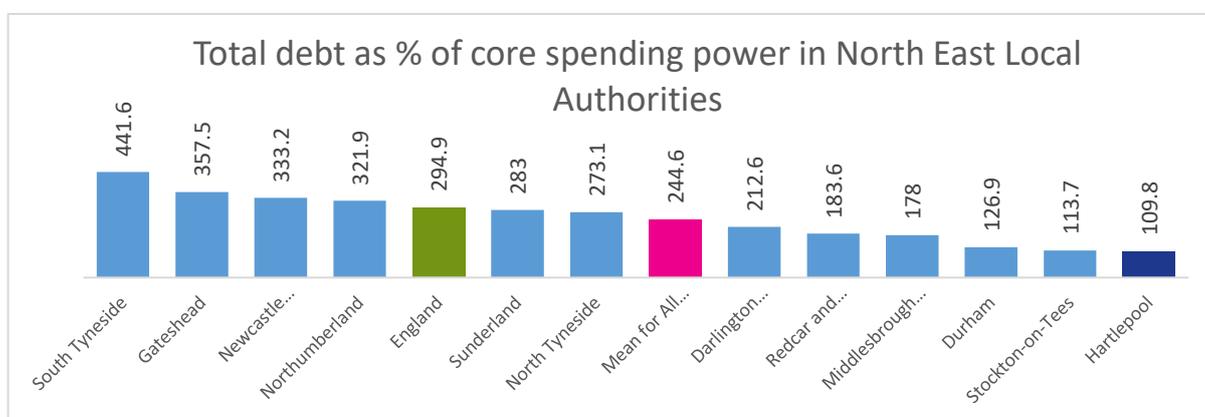
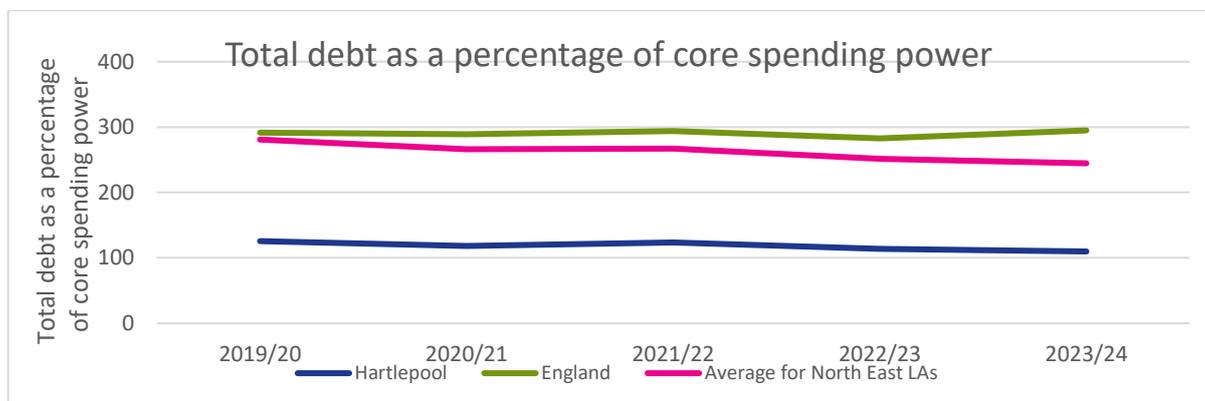


Debt

6.8 The council takes out borrowing to fund its capital programme i.e. to invest in our fixed assets. The council has maintained a prudent approach to borrowing and has been successful in pulling in external funding to support our capital programme. Overall 65% of our capital programme 2024/25 to 2027/28 is funded by external funding sources, therefore limiting the borrowing requirement for the council.

6.9 As a result of this prudence, the council has very low relative levels of debt compared to other local authorities. However, we do have a capital financing requirement that potentially requires additional borrowing of circa £35m over

the coming four years to fund major capital schemes. Whilst included within MTFs assumptions, dependent on interest rates at the time we take out the borrowing, this could lead to an unexpected budget pressure.



7. SUMMARY

7.1 The report provides members with data to help explain the financial position and provide some context challenges facing the council. It shows that the council;

- Has sustained a higher than average reduction to Core Spending Power;
- Is unable to raise the same levels of council tax as other councils and has high single person discounts and local tax support which weigh heavy on our council tax base position;
- Is disadvantaged when it comes to business rates retention both due to the make-up of our current list and the failure to re-baseline; and
- Has some significant cost pressures, notably childrens social care.

7.2 Despite these funding challenges the evidence suggests the council is well managed financially. However, members should be aware that the position can rapidly deteriorate.

7.3 Elsewhere on the agenda a report details the MTFs position for the next three financial years. This points to a gap, before any decisions are made on council tax, of £15.658m. This is clearly a difficult position to address,

especially in the context of our relatively poor funding position. Whilst the council has a reasonable expectation of additional funding through the fair funding review, there are no guarantees on its timing and outcome, and as such action will need to be taken to address this position.

8. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS/IMPLICATIONS

Risk Implications	No relevant issues
Financial Considerations	Set out in the main body of the report
Subsidy Control	No relevant issues
Legal Considerations	No relevant issues
Child and Family Poverty	No relevant issues
Equality and Diversity Considerations	No relevant issues
Staff Considerations	No relevant issues
Asset Management Considerations	No relevant issues
Environment, Sustainability and Climate Changes Considerations	No relevant issues
Consultation	No consultation required.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

9.1 To note the contents of the report

10. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

10.1 To provide members with relevant information to support decision making during the MTFS process.

11. BACKGROUND PAPERS

11.1 None

12. CONTACT OFFICERS

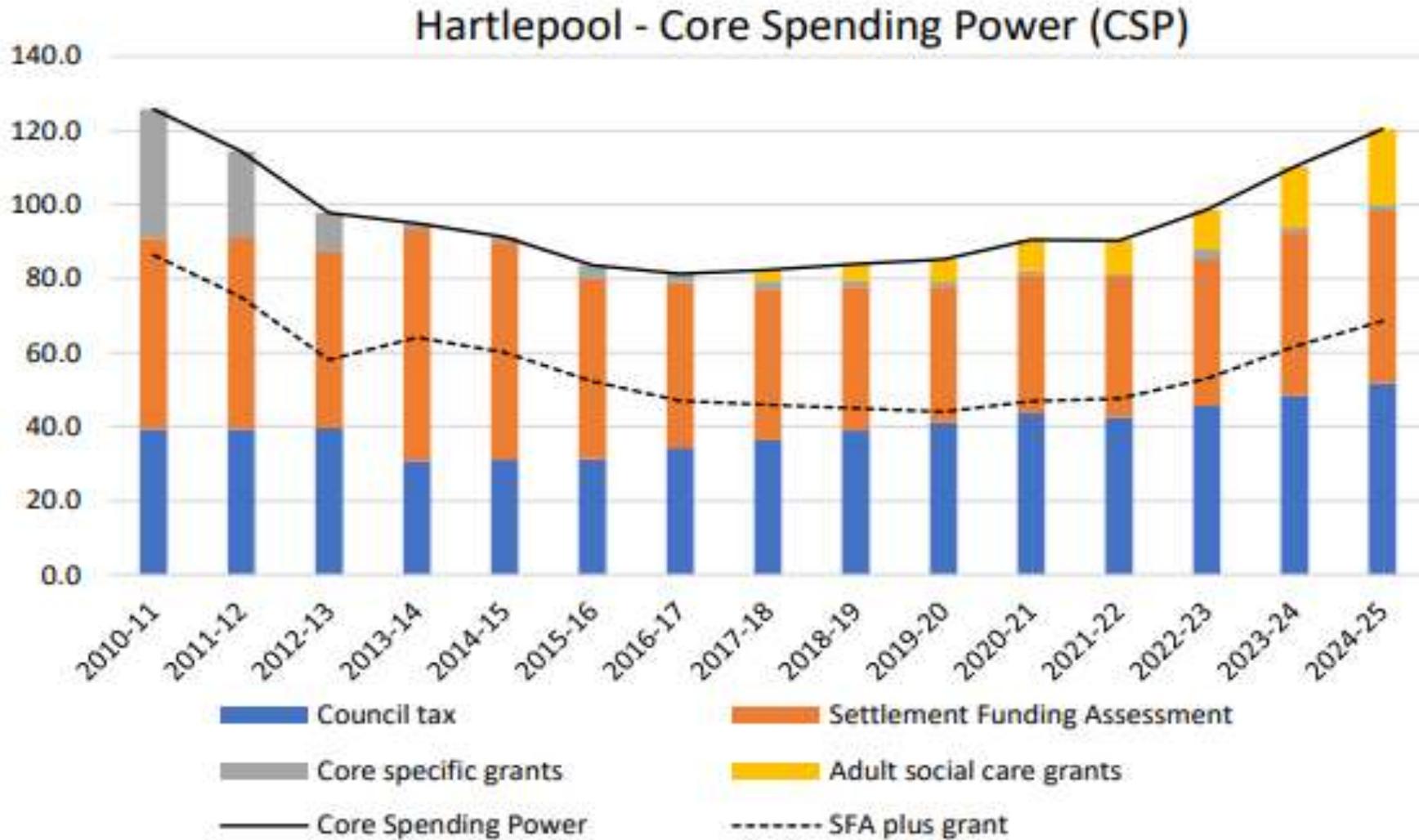
James Magog
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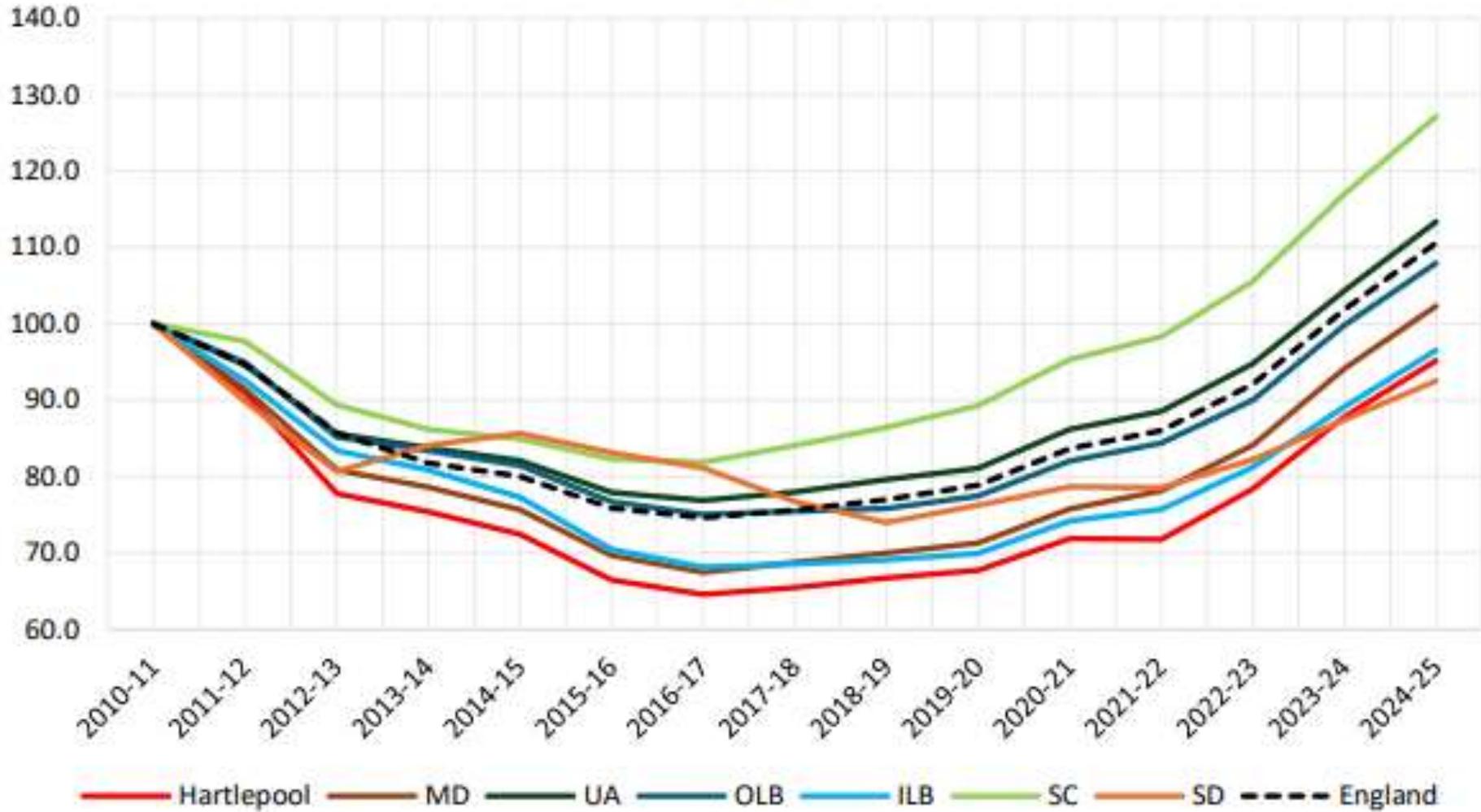
Sign Off:-

Managing Director	Date: 31 May 2024
Director of Finance, IT and Digital	Date: 31 May 2024
Director of Legal, Governance and HR	Date: 31 May 2024

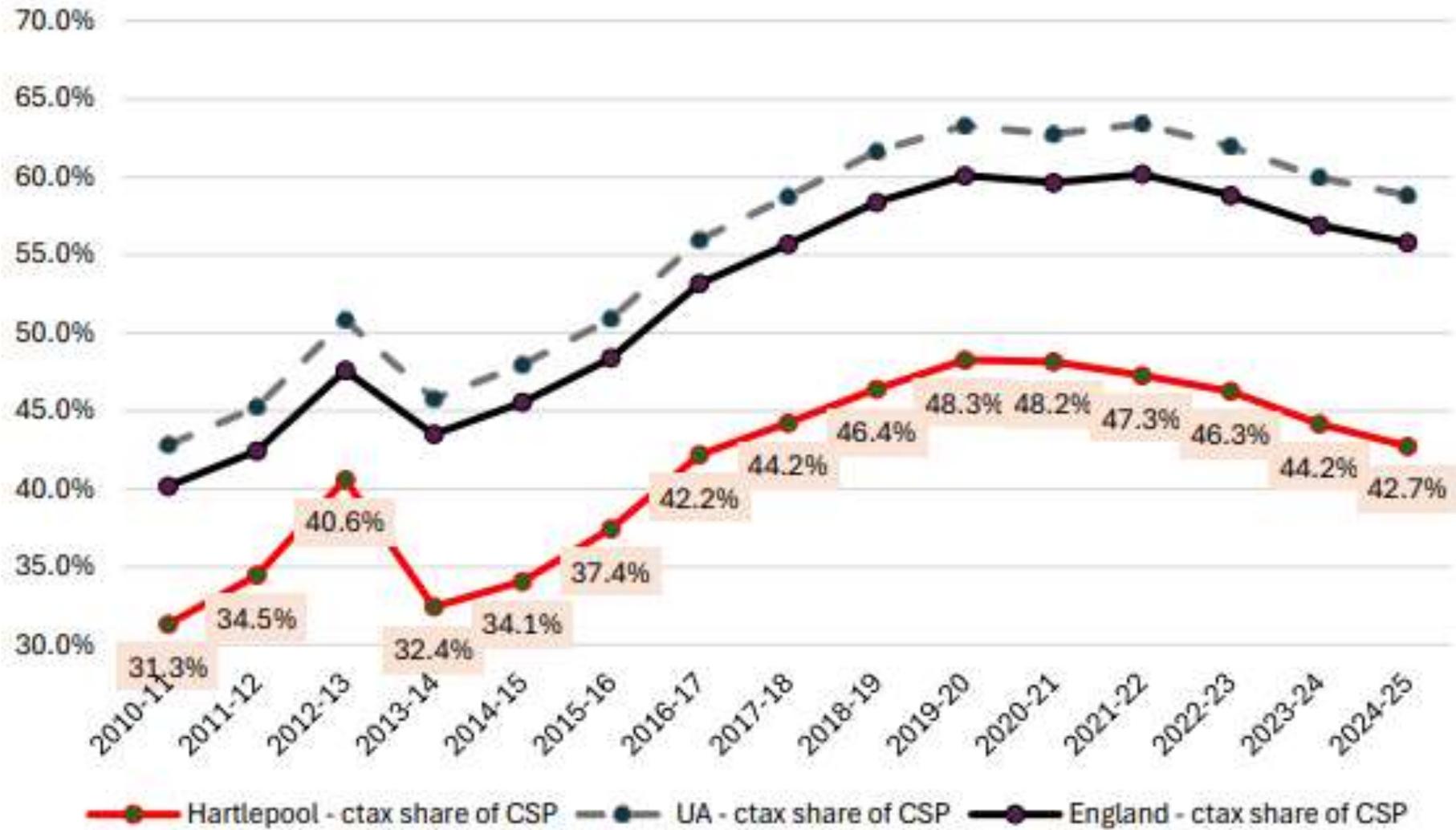
Replicated Suite of Graphs and Charts



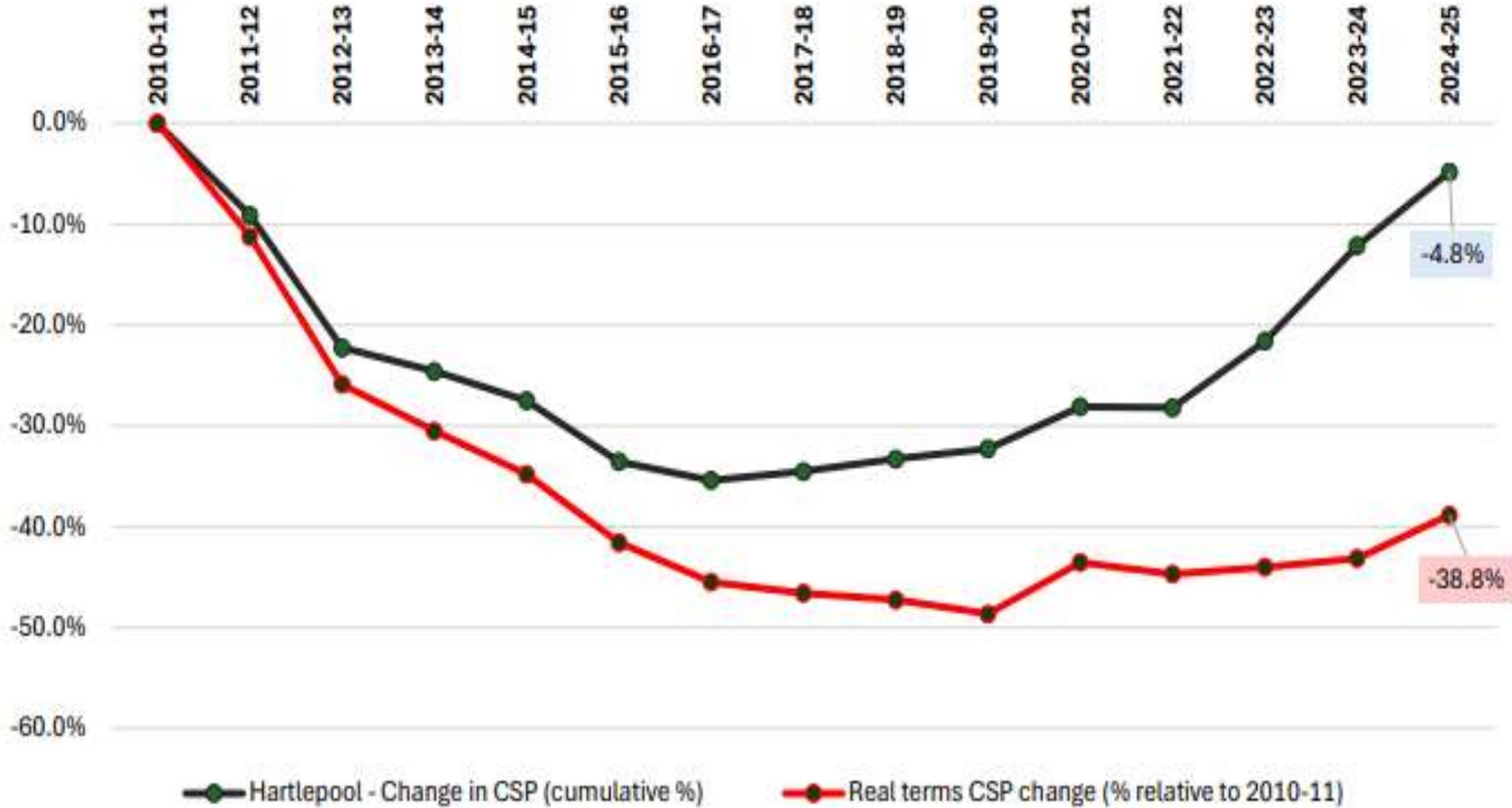
Core Spending Power (compared to other LA classes)



Council tax share (%) of Core Spending Power

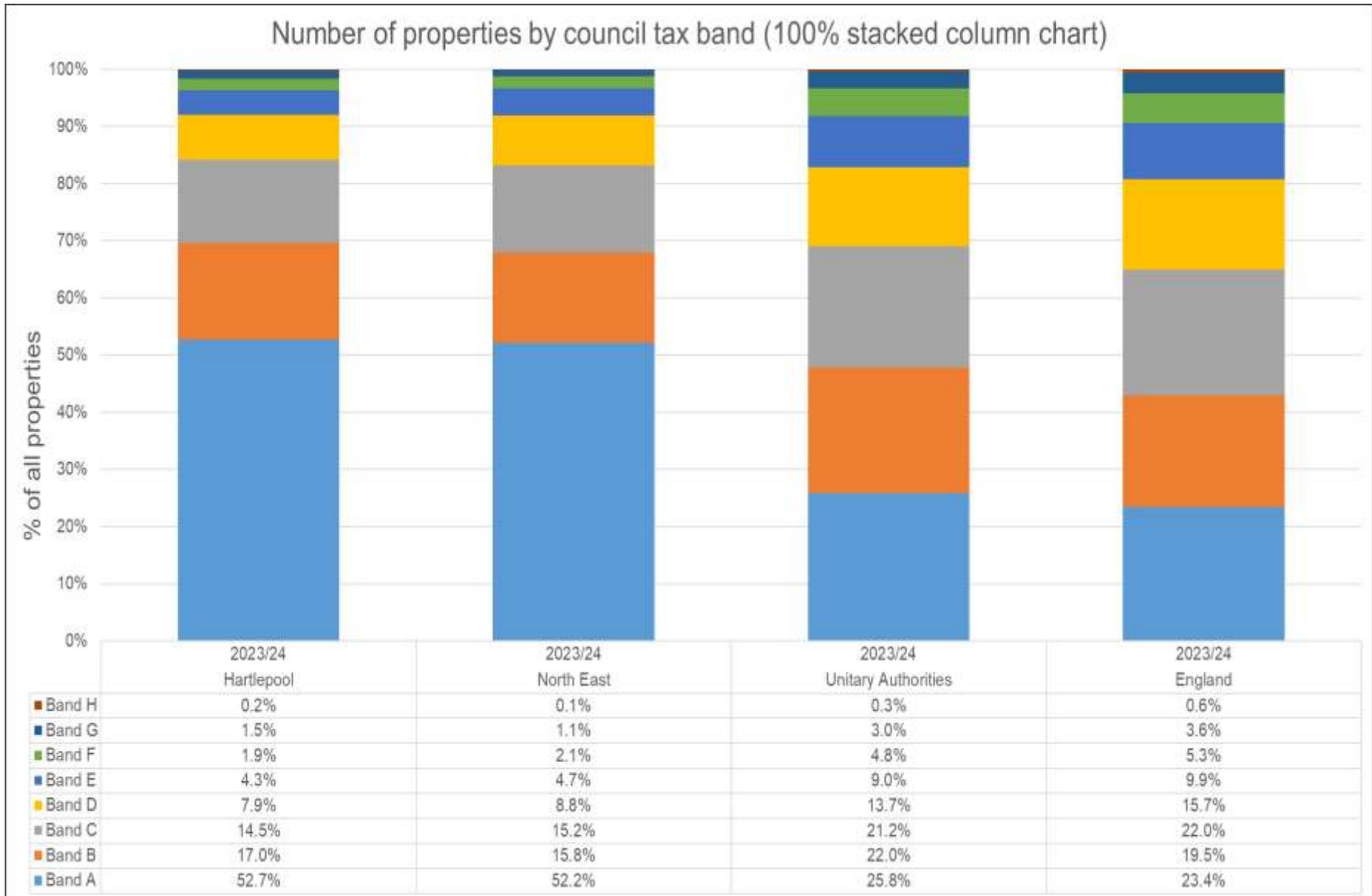


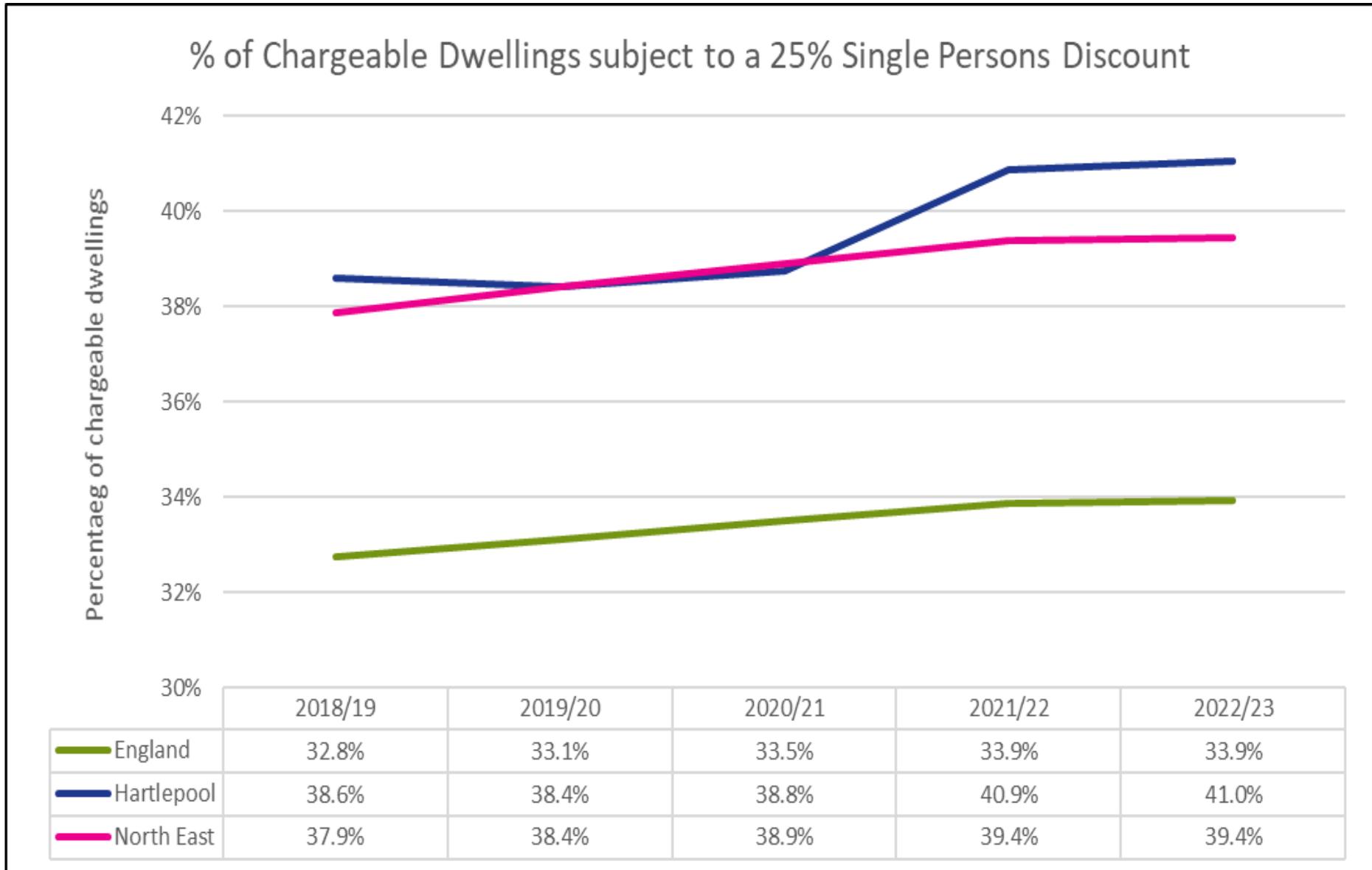
Hartlepool - cumulative real- and cash-terms change in Core Spending Power (% , £M)

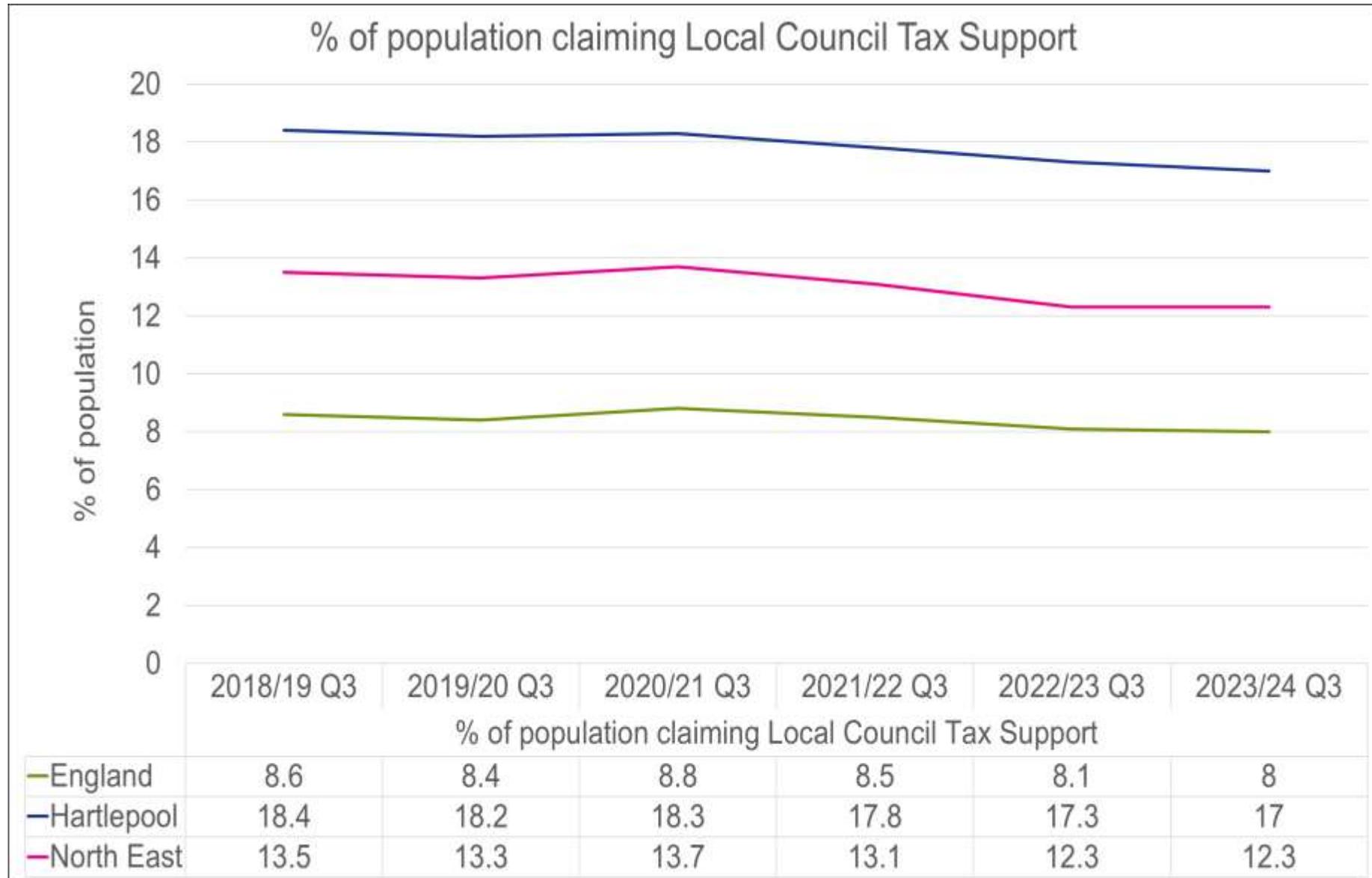


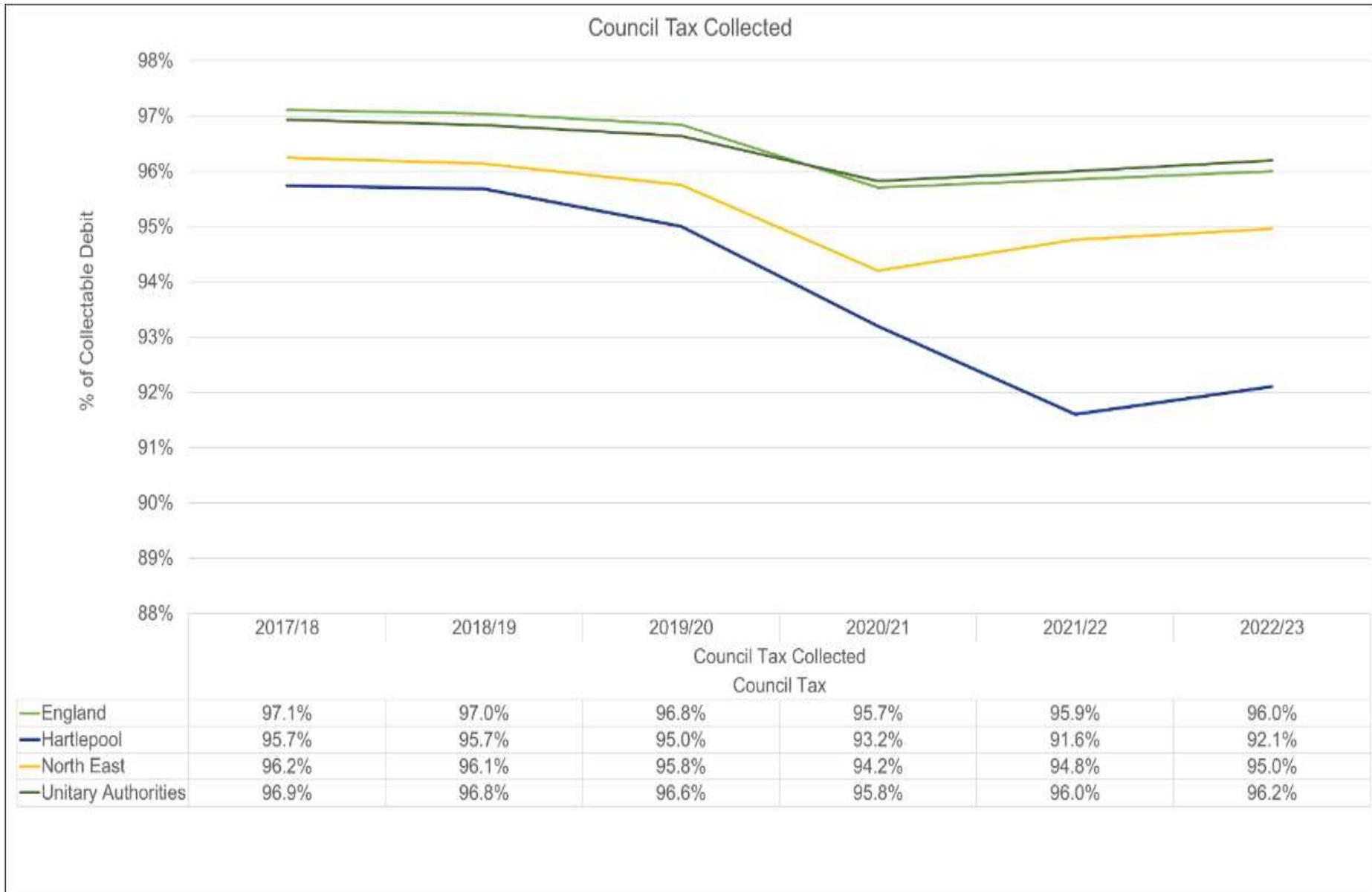
Hartlepool - Taxbase line 33

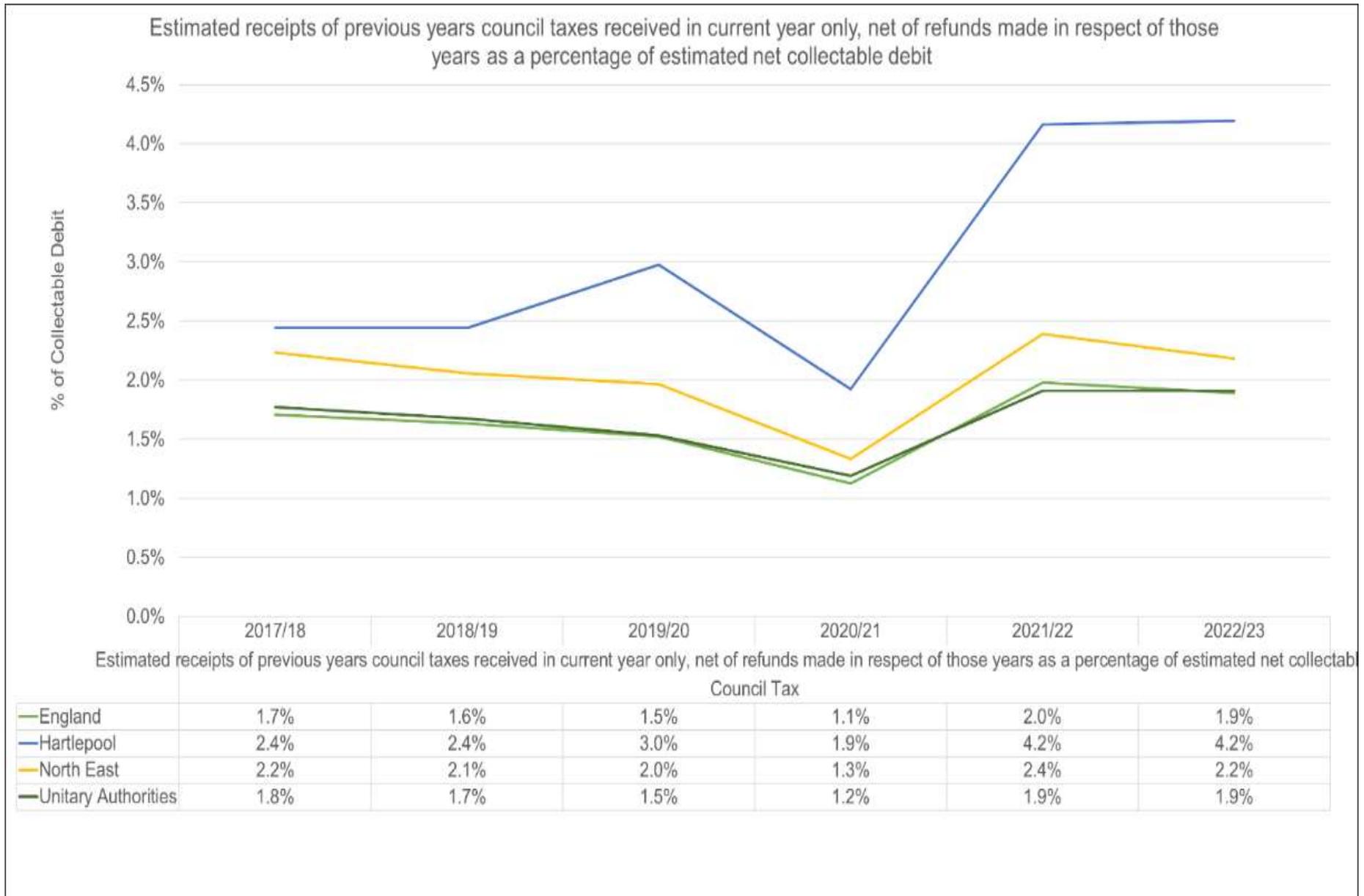


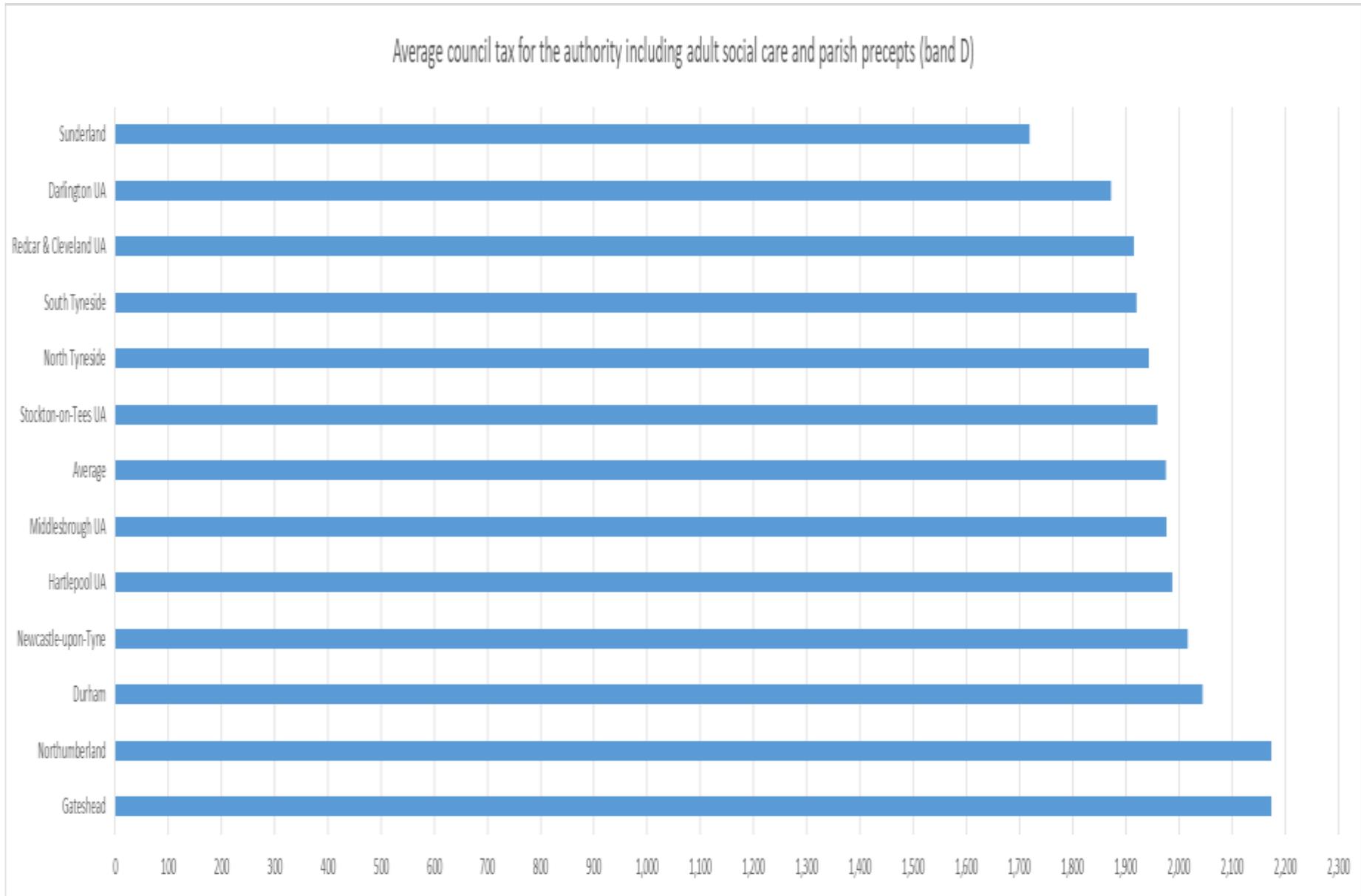


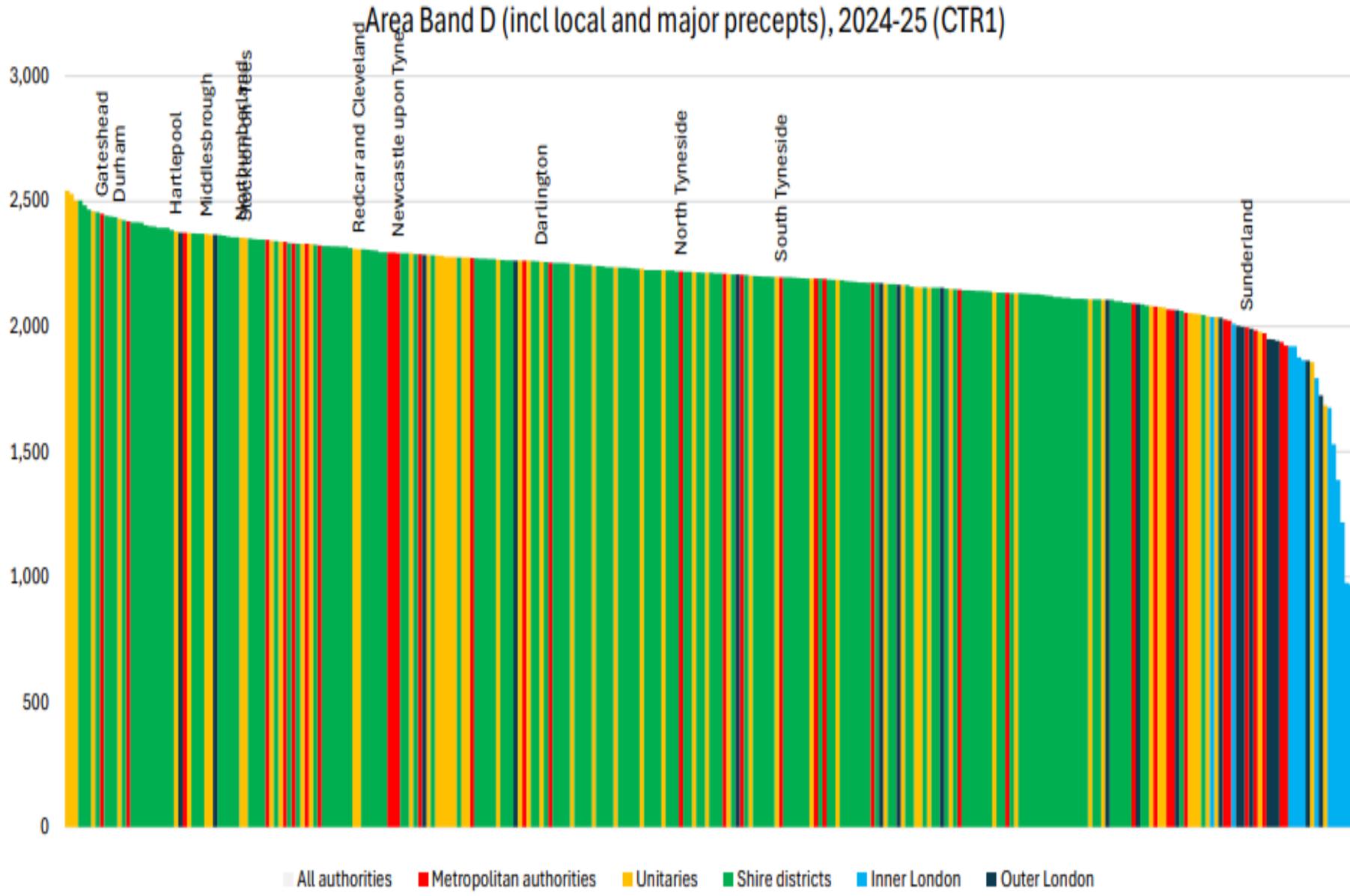




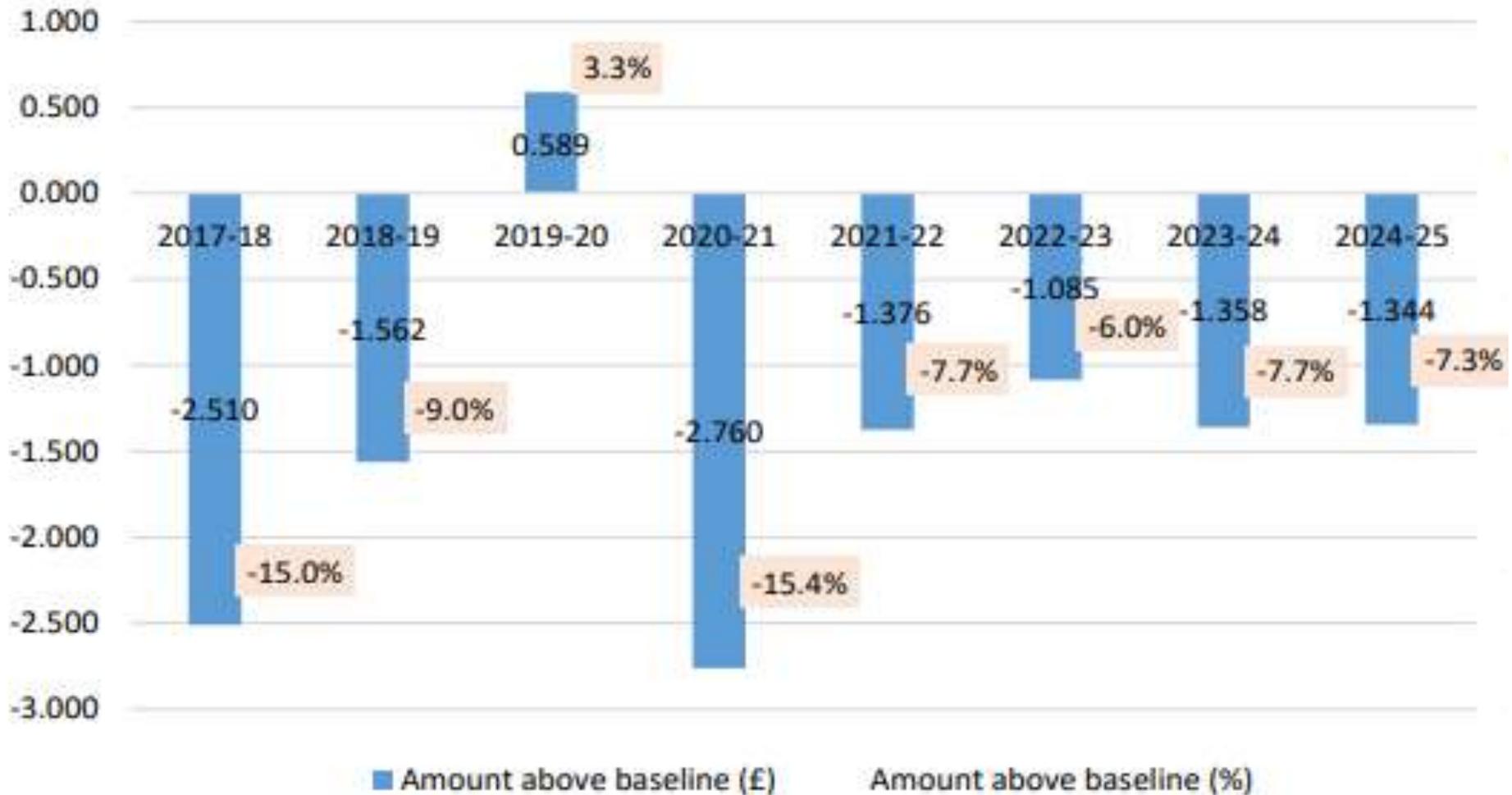




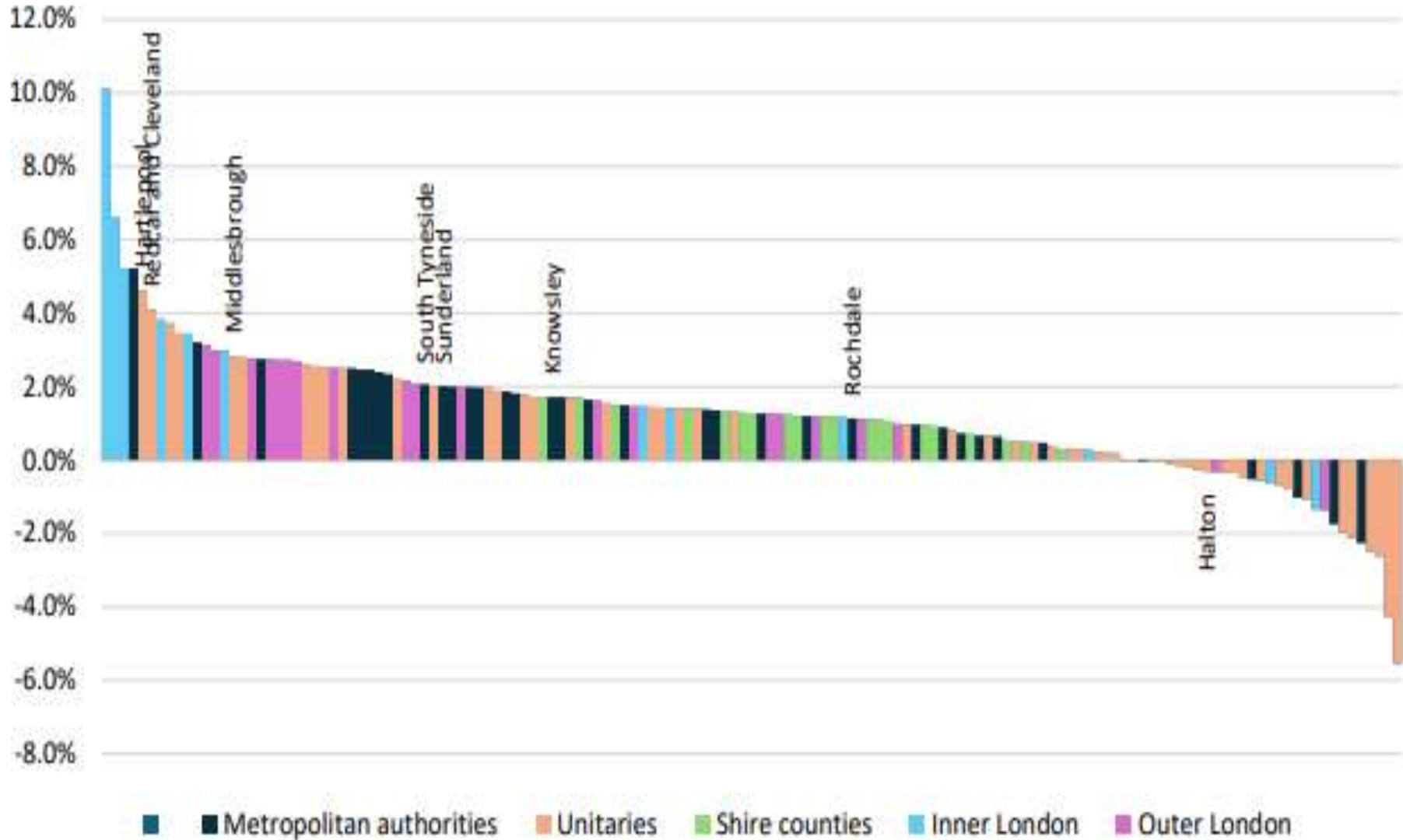




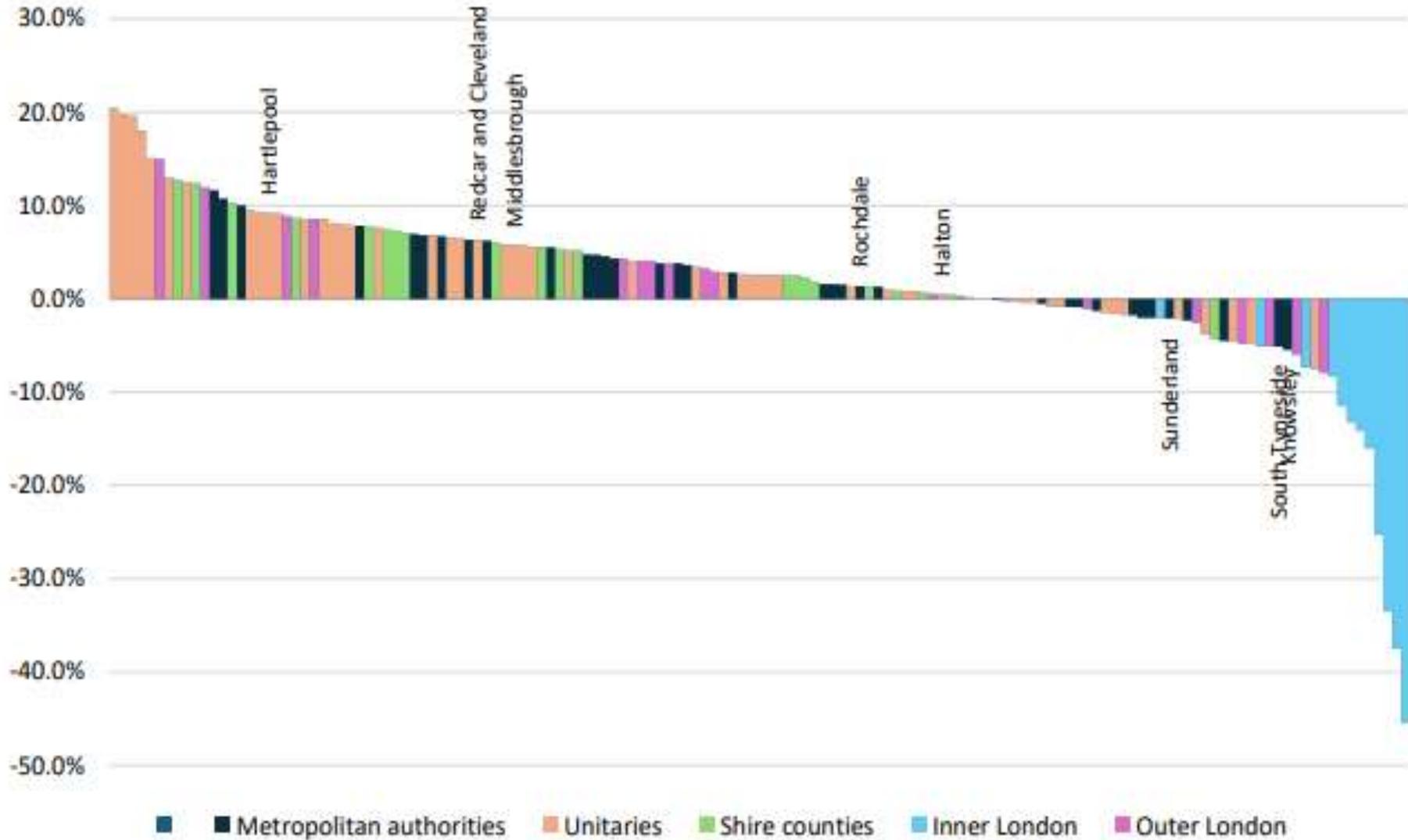
Hartlepool - retained business rates compared to baseline (£M/%)

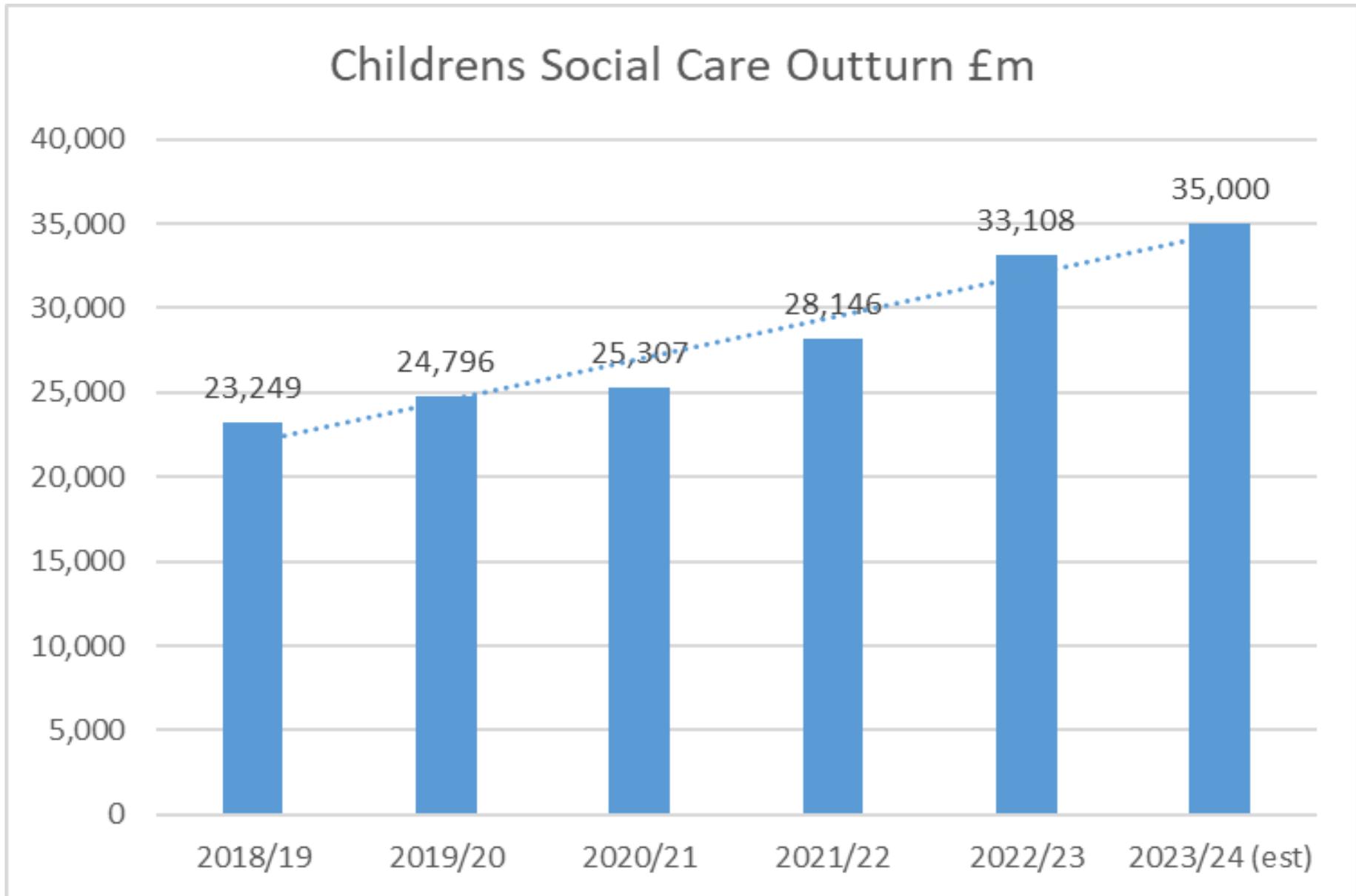


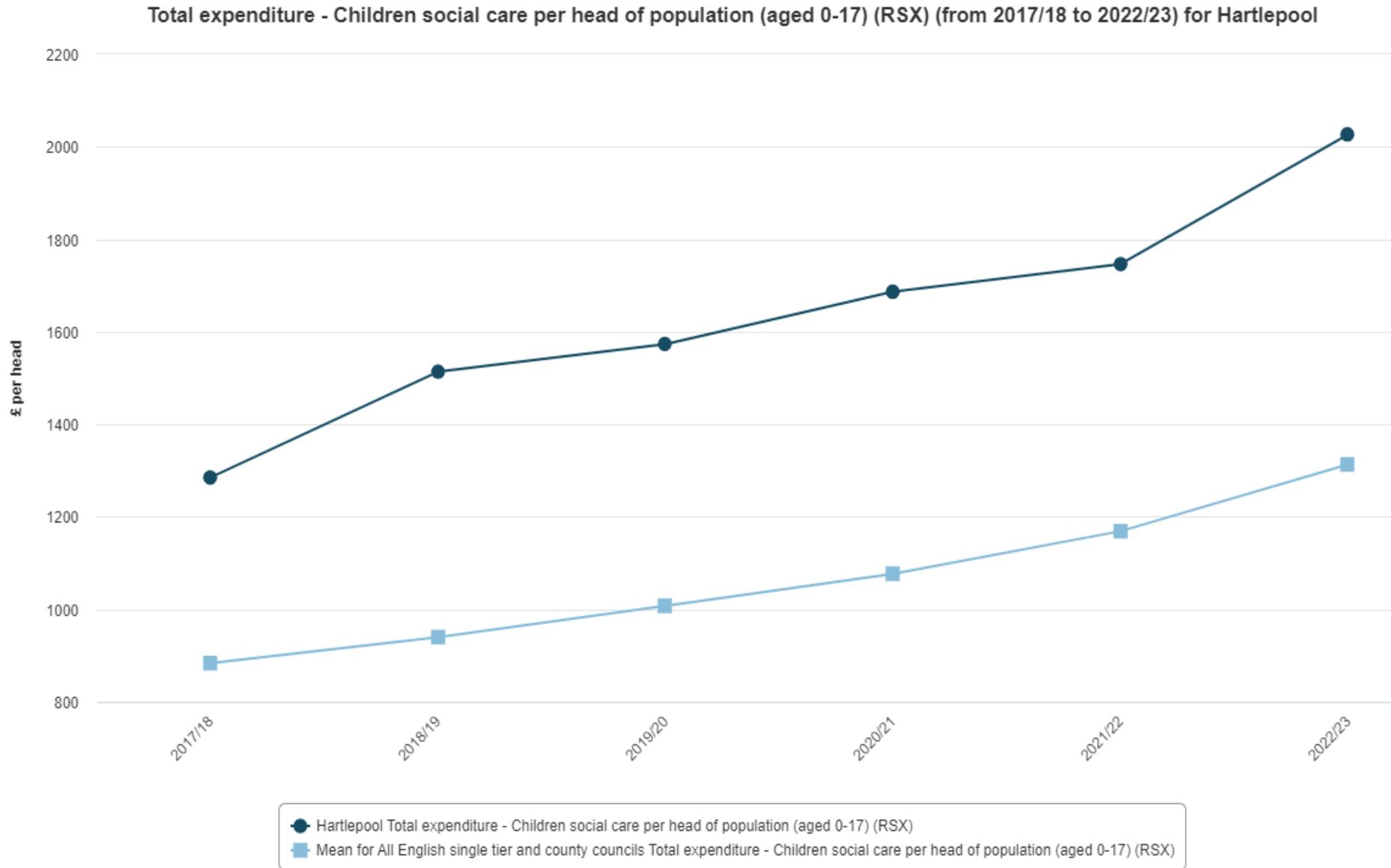
Gain/ loss from BR baseline reset (% of CSP)

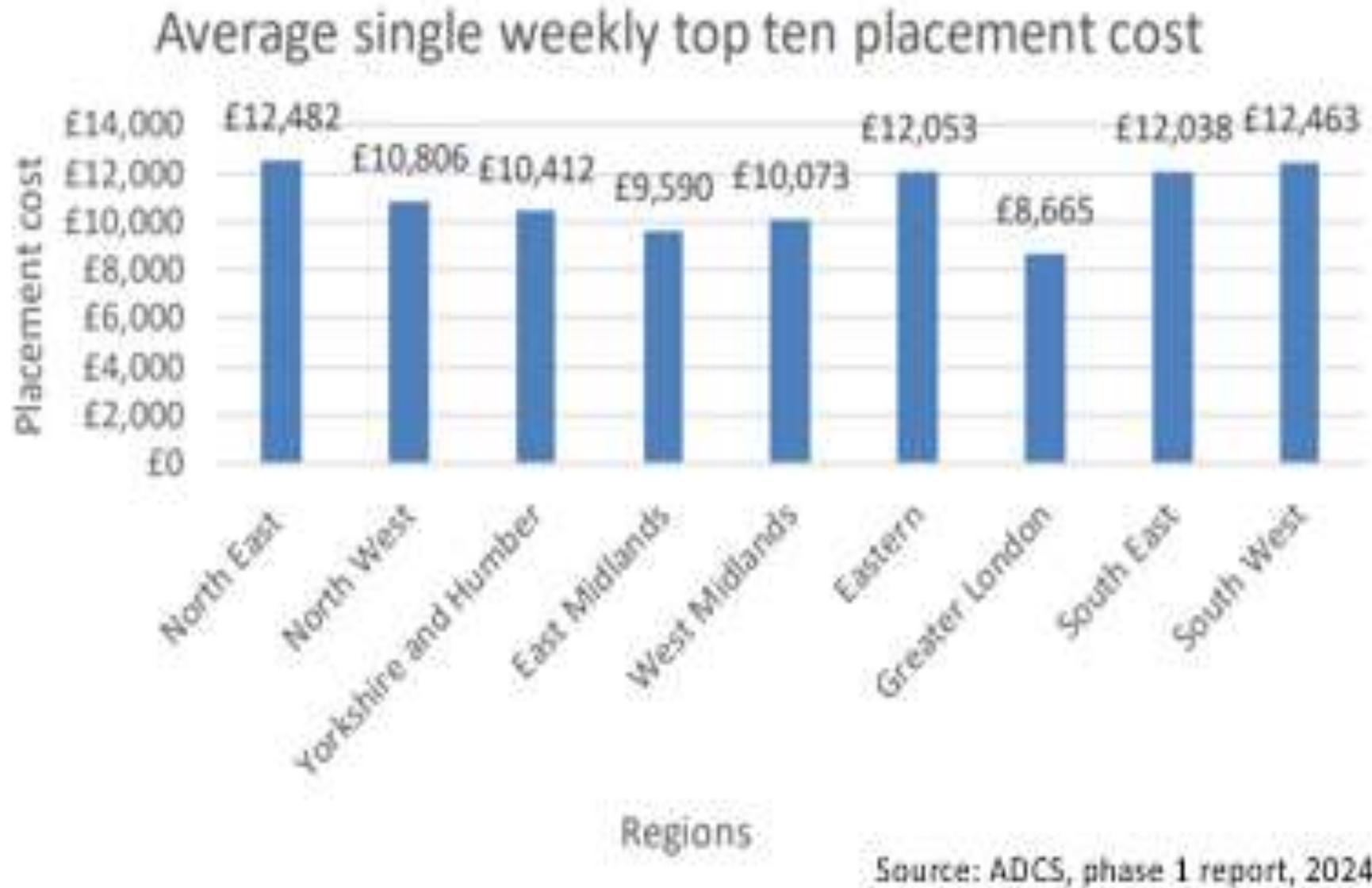


Aggregate impact of funding reforms (%age Core Spending Power)











Select Authority, Indicator Group & Year to analyse with **Nearest Neighbours**

Authority: Hartlepool v

Indicator Group: Primary v

Year: 2022-23 v

Results Breakdown

Indicators of Financial Stress		Indicator	Min	Indicator Value	Max
← Higher Risk	Lower Risk →				
Reserves Sustainability Measure	<div style="width: 100%; height: 10px; background: linear-gradient(to right, #ccc, #ccc);"></div>	Reserves Sustainability Measure	15.14	100.00	100.00
Level of Reserves	<div style="width: 100%; height: 10px; background: linear-gradient(to right, #ccc, #ccc);"></div>	Level of Reserves	15.12%	44.58%	77.39%
Change In Reserves	<div style="width: 100%; height: 10px; background: linear-gradient(to right, #ccc, #ccc);"></div>	Change In Reserves	-16.54%	60.70%	100.72%
Interest Payable/ Net Revenue Expenditure	<div style="width: 100%; height: 10px; background: linear-gradient(to right, #ccc, #ccc);"></div>	Interest Payable/ Net Revenue Expenditure	0.56%	3.16%	14.19%
Gross External Debt	<div style="width: 100%; height: 10px; background: linear-gradient(to right, #ccc, #ccc);"></div>	Gross External Debt	£95,605k	£95,605k	£734,464k
Social care ratio	<div style="width: 100%; height: 10px; background: linear-gradient(to right, #ccc, #ccc);"></div>	Social care ratio	65.13%	77.07%	96.82%
Fees & Charges to Service Expenditure Ratio	<div style="width: 100%; height: 10px; background: linear-gradient(to right, #ccc, #ccc);"></div>	Fees & Charges to Service Expenditure Ratio	6.66%	11.19%	13.44%
Council Tax Requirement / Net Revenue Expendi...	<div style="width: 100%; height: 10px; background: linear-gradient(to right, #ccc, #ccc);"></div>	Council Tax Requirement / Net Revenue Expenditure	47.95%	51.92%	67.15%
Growth Above Baseline	<div style="width: 100%; height: 10px; background: linear-gradient(to right, #ccc, #ccc);"></div>	Growth Above Baseline	-4.19%	-4.19%	17.25%

