

**Hartlepool Town Deal Board**

**Wednesday, 3<sup>rd</sup> September 10 am – 12 noon**

**Microsoft Teams**



**PRESENT:**

Name	Organisation / Representing
Darren Hankey (DH)	Chair – Hartlepool College of Further Education
Maxine Craig (MC)	Vice Chair - Independent
Jonathan Brash (JB)	Member of Parliament
Elizabeth Hutchinson (EH)	Tees Valley Combined Authority (TVCA)
Gary Wright (GW)	North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust
Martin Raby (MR)	Northern School of Art
Reshma Begum (RB)	Federation of Small Businesses
Roslyn Adamson (RA)	National Museum of the Royal Navy (NMRN)
Mark Robinson (MRO) – <i>substitute for Beverley Bearne</i>	Hartlepool Development Corporation (HDC)
Sarah Ainslie (SA)	Seymour Civil Engineering
Paul Taylor (PT)	Hartlepool Borough Council (HBC)
Lesley Grant (LG)	Hartlepool Borough Council (HBC)

NO	DETAIL	ACTION
1.	<p><b><u>WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS (CHAIR)</u></b></p> <p>The Chair (DH) opened the meeting, welcomed all members, and extended a special welcome to Mark Robinson, Chair of the Hartlepool Development Corporation (HDC). Introductions were carried out</p>	
2.	<p><b><u>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</u></b></p> <p>Apologies for absence received from:</p> <p>Brenda Harrison (BH)  Denise McGuckin (DMc)  Toni Rhodes (TR)  Jonathan Gilroy (JG)  Adam Hearld (AH)  Connor Kerr (CK)</p> <p><b><u>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</u></b></p> <p>All declarations have previously been recorded</p>	
3.	<p><b><u>MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING – June, 11<sup>th</sup> 2025</u></b></p> <p>No matters of accuracy were raised</p> <p><b><u>Actions from Previous Meeting</u></b></p> <p>All actions are to be covered under agenda items</p>	

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4.	<p><b><u>HARTLEPOOL DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION (HDC)</u></b></p> <p>MRo gave a verbal update</p> <p><b>Middleton Grange Shopping Centre</b></p> <p>There is an Action Day planned to look at operation improvements to enhance net income. A collaborative approach is then to be taken involving key stakeholders and senior members/officers at Hartlepool Borough Council (HBC)</p> <p>Binns building has been highlighted as a key focus area requiring joint effort and clear delivery timeframes.</p> <p>The Vice Chair highlighted the value of previous footfall updates at Middleton Grange Shopping Centre</p> <p>MRo confirmed that procurement is underway to secure top partners who can help deliver meaningful change at the centre</p> <p>The Vice Chair emphasised the urgency of sharing the development narrative with the public. JB supported launching a campaign to showcase plans for Middleton Grange Shopping Centre. <i>The Chair requested that a joint message from HBC and HDC be issued to the public as soon as possible</i></p> <p><b>Production Village</b></p> <p>Planning submission outcome is expected next month. It is widely supported and seen as a transformative project for Hartlepool, showcasing ambition and vision setting the town apart nationally</p> <p><b>Town Hall Theatre</b></p> <p>The Theatre recently hosted the HDC board meeting. There is work ongoing to assess how it is to be brought into the transformation of the wider town centre</p> <p><b>Waterfront Housing Development</b></p> <p>No new updates</p> <p><b>Planning Challenges</b></p> <p>Concerns have been raised around HMOs. There are efforts underway with HBC to maintain strong control over development within both the HDC area and the wider town</p> <p>JB raised that HMOs are an area of significant concern and highlighted the need for broader discussions around the planning function. JB and MRo are due to meet shortly</p> <p><b>Anti-Social Behaviour</b></p> <p>Funding may be available through the development corporation. This issue is a priority for The Hartlepool Board, with ideas already presented</p> <p>JB suggested that a cross-party meeting with the Safer Hartlepool Partnership would be welcomed by the Partnership and the Police looking at what HDC might offer</p>	HBC/HDC COMMS

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	<p><b>Strategic Planning &amp; Resources</b>  There is emphasis on supporting the Development Corporation's Chief Operating Officer ensuring adequate resources and funding are in place to deliver current and future projects in partnership with key stakeholders</p>	
5.	<p><b>PROGRAMME UPDATE EXCEPTION REPORTING</b></p> <p><b>Wesley Chapel (Jomast)</b>  Slides were shared and PT provided a verbal update</p> <p>Preparatory works are underway on the substation to form foundations and divert drainage. Order placed for fit-out at Lower Ground level, Upper Ground level, and the Bar. Tendering in progress for case goods (fitted furniture) for the bedroom areas. First fix joinery works are well advanced. Ceramic tiling to bathrooms is well advanced</p> <p>Installation of the new lift is nearing completion. Mechanical and electrical (M&amp;E) ductwork and ancillaries are progressing well and remain on programme. Project completion remains on track for early 2026</p> <p>Board members are invited to attend site tours, with PPE provided. <i>Members wishing to arrange a visit should contact Lesley Grant directly to organise</i></p> <p>The Chair mentioned meeting a very impressive apprentice currently on site at the Wesley Chapel who had provided a video update on the progress alongside himself and Councillor Hargreaves</p> <p>The Menu for the venue is in development and will be circulated to board members when available</p> <p><b>Civil Engineering Skills Academy (Seymour)</b>  Slides were shared and SA gave a verbal update</p> <p><b>Exeter Street</b>  In September 2025, Exeter Street welcomed 8 learners onto the Level 2 Pipefitting Scholarship, sponsored by the Engineering Construction Industry Training Board (ECITB). Additionally, 15 learners enrolled in the Net Zero Industry Scholarship in Plating, supported by Net Zero Teesside Power and the Northern Endurance Partnership, further strengthening the site's commitment to industry-relevant skills development</p> <p><b>Brenda Road</b>  In June 2025, Seymour was awarded the Constructing Excellence North East (CENE) 'People &amp; Culture' Award, recognising its contribution to workforce development and inclusive practices. The team is scheduled to attend the Constructing Excellence National Awards in London in November</p> <p>In September 2025, collaboration began with the North East Institute of Technology to help shape a Groundworker Skills Bootcamp, designed to support the region's housing and civil infrastructure ambitions</p>	ALL

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	<p>Looking ahead to January 2025, a tree planting scheme is planned in partnership with Trees for Tees Valley, contributing to environmental enhancement and biodiversity at the Brenda Road site</p> <p>SA took members through KPI Progress to date confirming additional learners and additional achievements delivered across reporting periods, surpassing targeted outputs</p> <p>Looking ahead, Brenda Road will welcome more HCFE learners from January 2026, including Level 1 Bricklaying, Level 2 full-time learners, and T Level students in Design, Surveying, and Planning</p> <p>SA will present data at the next board meeting to showcase local engagement – work is underway to firm up figures on local and regional spend. Exeter Street data remains challenging due to a single contractor. Social Value reporting has proved complex however efforts are ongoing with HCFE's data team to extract information and produce a robust social value calculation for the Civil Engineering Skills Academy</p> <p>JB congratulated the team on the recent award and highlighted the impressive impact of the Skills Academy, requesting that website figures be regularly updated to showcase key statistics and actively promote achievements</p> <p>JB and PH requested a site visit to Exeter Street, noting it as an excellent facility. SA will coordinate to arrange the visit</p> <p><b><u>Health &amp; Social Care Academy (NHS)</u></b></p> <p>Slides were shared and GW gave a verbal update on the latest Business Activity including the launch of new prospectus (September 2025) and the room bookings systems launch (September 2025)</p> <p>Social media launched (August 2025) linked to the wider University Hospitals Tees with a far-reaching audience and multiple social media accounts leading to efficient utilisation of resources across the group</p> <p>GW provided an overview of the new courses available, including mental health training, which was introduced following inspiration from the Vice Chair at the previous board meeting</p> <p>Special Careers event had taken place with over 10 schools represented, around 30 students throughout the day with an age range year 9/10 and supported by University Hospitals Tees with over 9 different activity stations</p> <p>Next Steps to include circulation of new prospectus, new dashboard to monitor activity, course developments/additions, advertising of Academy facilities, further support of wellbeing initiatives, development of simulation service, building teaching faculty to actively enhance and further develop existing programmes to ensure continuous improvement and greater impact</p>	

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	<p>KPI progress - GW took members through the latest update on enrolment numbers, highlighting the surpassing of the targeted outputs</p> <p>MR congratulated GW on the success of the project and enquired about the number of course participants from Hartlepool. GW responded that all career events had been targeted at Hartlepool schools and local colleges. <i>While acknowledging that this is not currently a KPI, GW confirmed that this aspect will be monitored going forward</i></p> <p>EH raised a question about how the programme links with wider business support organisations, particularly in relation to sector-specific growth opportunities and training, such as mental health related initiatives. EH suggested there could be value in creating stronger connections to ensure businesses know where to access relevant training. GW emphasised the importance of offering high-quality training locally, noting that the facilities are among the best in the area and continue to attract strong interest. <i>GW to share the link to the training prospectus, EH will circulate</i></p> <p><b><u>Reimagining Middleton Grange (HBC)</u></b></p> <p>Slides were shared and PT gave a verbal update</p> <p>RIBA stage 2 has now been completed and formally signed off. HBC outlined the proposed delivery route for RIBA Stages 3 to 7, including the involvement of the design team, potential novation agreements, and collateral warranties. Procurement activity is progressing with an Expression of Interest (EOI) issued via the NEPO framework in July 2025. A total of seven EOIs were received, indicating strong market interest in the project and its scale. Engagement continues with the remaining tenants at Middleton Grange Shopping Centre, coordinated by HBC, HDC, TVCA, and JLL, with one active tenant still in place. It was noted that 'The Entertainer' will not be relocating, which is disappointing. Work also continuing on the Schedule of Accommodation and occupancy planning for the repurposing of the Binns building</p> <p>Hartlepool Borough Council (HBC) has received formal VAT and tax advice regarding third-party assets, noting that direct delivery of the capital scheme is not feasible due to the freehold being held by HDC. As a result, HBC and HDC have agreed to develop a Service Level Agreement (SLA) to support scheme delivery. Joint soft market testing is underway to identify a suitable delivery partner with both development management and asset management capabilities. A joint HDC/HBC focus day is scheduled for 15<sup>th</sup> September to outline the programme, define roles, and agree timelines. The SLA details will be developed over the next four weeks</p> <p>Work is progressing on the Communications Strategy, including the development of key messages</p> <p>The Risk Register has been updated with significant reductions in vacant possession and delivery route risks, including market interest. However, some risks particularly around the delivery timeline remain high and will continue to be monitored</p> <p><b><u>Waterfront Connectivity (HBC)</u></b></p> <p>Slides were shared and PT gave a verbal update</p>	<p>GW</p> <p>GW/EH</p>

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	<p>The Project Delivery Group continues to oversee progress on the Waterfront Connectivity project. The Wayfinding Strategy, including totem pole and signage location surveys is progressing well with reports and designs expected by the end of September 2025. Design work for the slipway floating pontoons and connecting bridge is underway, with contractor submissions due on 30 September and 30 October 2025, respectively. The slipway acquisition was completed in August 2025. Phased public realm works along Maritime Avenue, Victoria Terrace, and the Lanyard Avenue/Mecca Bingo route are scheduled to commence on 15 September 2025. Updates on the project will be featured in the next edition of Hartbeat magazine. Progress also continues on planning applications for Museum Plaza and Slake Terrace. The MHCLG site visit on 18 June 2025 was highly complimentary of the project's progress and acknowledged the challenges related to land ownership. The Engagement with key stakeholders, including the MIMO and Hartlepool Marina Ltd, remains ongoing to support delivery and coordination</p> <p>PT referenced the current financial update of all 8 phases. RA noted that the update does not acknowledge the lease arrangements still to be resolved, and expressed concern that the timeline may be too tight</p> <p><b><u>Request for Assigning Remaining Unallocated Budget (SA)</u></b></p> <p>SA provided an overview of the paper circulated the previous week and asked members to consider approving, in principle, the allocation of a portion of the remaining Town Deal contingency funds to cover £90,414 in additional costs incurred in the successful completion of the project</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Seymour has been managing an anticipated overspend since July 2024, accruing £90,414 between July and January to ensure project completion and safeguard learning facilities</li> <li>• The overspend has been regularly reported and is attributed to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inflationary pressures from the outset</li> <li>• COVID-19 impacts</li> <li>• Supply chain and material cost increases</li> <li>• Planning delays</li> <li>• A major cost increase (£60K) due to changes in UK building regulations requiring a new supplier</li> <li>• Additional unbudgeted service updates</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>Board Discussion</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MR raised concerns about the cost uncertainty of the Reimagining Middleton Grange project and emphasised the need to prioritise successful delivery of all projects</li> <li>• DH queried whether a decision could be made now</li> <li>• PT clarified that current technical guidance allows flexibility up to 30%, but not across programmes. A new funding simplification letter from MHCLG was received yesterday, and technical guidance is still under review</li> <li>• Historically, the approach has been to value engineer and descope to keep projects on track and within budget</li> </ul>	

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	<i>The Chair acknowledged the request is not rejected. It will be revisited once technical guidance is reviewed and as other projects progress. A decision may be possible in 2026</i>	
6.	<p><b><u>COMMUNICATIONS AND ENGAGEMENT</u></b></p> <p><b>Reimagining Middleton Grange</b> The Chair emphasised the need to strengthen communications and engagement around the Reimagining Middleton Grange project</p> <p><b>Wesley Chapel</b> A promotional video was released following the last board meeting and has received over 9,000 views, demonstrating strong public engagement</p> <p>MRo noted that a new promotional video for Hartlepool Development Corporation will be released shortly. The video highlights the positive work undertaken and aims to further raise the profile of the Development Corporation</p> <p>Slides will be circulated from CK post meeting</p>	LG
7.	<p><b><u>RISK REVIEW (PT)</u></b> <u>Governance, Audit and Risk</u></p> <p><b>Funding Simplification Update</b> PT informed members that a letter was received yesterday from the Under Secretary of State for Building Safety, Fire and Local Growth at MHCLG, announcing a new funding simplification process. This includes the creation of a new Local Regeneration Fund, which will consolidate the Town Deal and Levelling Up Fund into a single reporting framework for monitoring and evaluation purposes. Historically, each regeneration programme had separate reporting requirements, and this new approach aims to streamline monitoring across all programmes. PT will circulate the letter and take time to review the technical guidance.</p> <p>In conversation with JG, it was confirmed that no new M&amp;E requirements are expected under this process until April 2026</p> <p>In the meantime, colleagues are asked to continue submitting quarterly monitoring reports using the current template to maintain consistency and benchmark progress ahead of the new reporting arrangements</p>	PT
8.	<p><b><u>ANY OTHER BUSINESS (CHAIR)</u></b> The Chair thanked Ros Adamson (RA) for her valuable contributions, noting that this would be her final meeting as she transitions away from the Royal Navy Museum. Her input on the projects was recognised as significant, with consistently valid and insightful contributions. The Chair, on behalf of members, extended best wishes to Ros Adamson for success in her new venture.</p>	
	<p><b><u>DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING</u></b> Wednesday, 10<sup>th</sup> December 2025 10 am – 12 pm on TEAMS</p>	

Action/Decision Log				
Item	Description	A/D	Action/Decision	Owner
4.	<b>HARTLEPOOL DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION (HDC)</b> Middleton Grange Shopping Centre	A	The Vice Chair emphasised the urgency of sharing the development narrative with the public. JB supported launching a campaign to showcase plans for Middleton Grange Shopping Centre. <i>The Chair requested that a joint message from HBC and HDC be issued to the public as soon as possible</i>	HBC/HDC Comms
5.	<b>PROGRAMME UPDATE EXCEPTION REPORTING</b> Wesley Chapel	A	Board members are invited to attend site tours, with PPE provided. <i>Members wishing to arrange a visit should contact Lesley Grant directly to organise</i>	ALL
5.	<b>PROGRAMME UPDATE EXCEPTION REPORTING</b> Health & Social Care Academy	A	MR congratulated GW on the success of the project and enquired about the number of course participants from Hartlepool. GW responded that all career events had been targeted at Hartlepool schools and local colleges. <i>While acknowledging that this is not currently a KPI, GW confirmed that this aspect will be monitored going forward</i>	GW
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5.	<b>Request for Assigning Remaining Unallocated Budget</b>	D	SA provided an overview of the paper circulated the previous week and asked members to consider approving, in principle, the allocation of a portion of the remaining Town Deal contingency funds to cover £90,414 in additional costs incurred in the successful completion of the project <i>The board acknowledged the request is not rejected. It will be revisited once technical guidance is reviewed and as other projects progress. A decision may be possible in 2026</i>	ALL
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