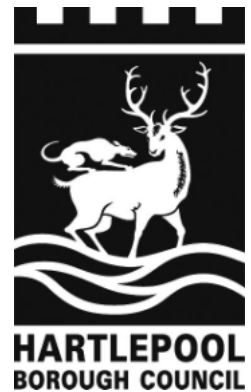


# PERFORMANCE PORTFOLIO DECISION SCHEDULE



**Wednesday 14 September 2011**

**at 4.00 pm**

**in Committee Room C, Civic Centre, Hartlepool**

Councillor J Brash, Cabinet Member responsible for Performance will consider the following items.

**1. KEY DECISIONS**

No items

**2. OTHER ITEMS REQUIRING DECISION**

2.1 Managing Pressure at Work – *Chief Customer and Workforce Services Officer*

**3. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION**

3.1 Complaints to the Local Government Ombudsman in 2010/11 – *Assistant Chief Executive*

3.2 35<sup>th</sup> Phase of View point – Citizen's Panel Results – *Assistant Chief Executive*

3.3 Single Status Agreement Appeals – *Chief Customer and Workforce Services Officer*

3.4 Equality and Diversity Update – *Chief Customer and Workforce Services Officer*

3.5 Employee Attendance 2011/12 – *Chief Customer and Workforce Services Officer*

**4. REPORTS FROM OVERVIEW OF SCRUTINY FORUMS**

No items

**5. LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) (VARIATION) ORDER 2006**

## **EXEMPT ITEMS**

Under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the paragraphs referred to below of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006

### **6. EXEMPT KEY DECISIONS**

No items

### **7. OTHER EXEMPT ITEMS REQUIRING DECISION**

- 7.1 Temporary Cover Arrangements – Child and Adult Services Department (para 1) – *Chief Customer and Workforce Services Officer*

**PERFORMANCE PORTFOLIO**  
**Report to Portfolio Holder**  
**14<sup>th</sup> September 2011**



**Report of:** Chief Customer & Workforce Services Officer

**Subject:** MANAGING PRESSURE AT WORK

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## SUMMARY

### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To inform the Portfolio Holder of the adoption of a new managing stress at work policy and an associated guidance document for managers and advise the Portfolio holder of some of the issues regarding managing pressure within the Council.

### 2. SUMMARY OF CONTENTS

The report provides background to the development of revised policies and management guidance on managing stress at work and the circumstances in the Council regarding this issue.

### 3. RELEVANCE TO PORTFOLIO MEMBER

The Portfolio Holder has responsibility for Performance Management.

### 4. TYPE OF DECISION

Non-key.

### 5. DECISION MAKING ROUTE

Performance Portfolio Holder only.

### 6. DECISION(S) REQUIRED

The Portfolio Holder is requested to endorse the revised managing stress at work policy and associated management guidance and note the contents of the report regarding the current issues as regards pressure at work amongst staff.

**Report of:** Chief Customer & Workforce Services Officer

**Subject:** MANAGING PRESSURE AT WORK

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**1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To inform Portfolio Holder of the adoption of a new managing stress at work policy and an associated guidance document for managers and advise the Portfolio Holder of some of the issues regarding managing pressure within the Council.

**2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 The HSE commissioned research into the causes of stress and as a result of this research produced in 2001 guidance on managing stress at work using what they described as the management standards. In 2009 the HSE visited the Council and found that whilst the Council had put in place support mechanisms for those who were having difficulties with stress a comprehensive risk assessment on the causes of this stress had not been undertaken.
- 2.2 The guidance gives methods by which this assessment could be undertaken however the Council had already a mechanism to identify particular areas of concern regarding stress by the use of employee surveys. In order to undertake further work on this issue focus groups were held on those areas perceived to be “hot spots” based on the findings of the employee survey. This identified some issues which were to be addressed by an appropriate action plan however the significant structural and operational issues introduced by the reduced funding position resulted in a revised approach being necessary.

**3. CONSIDERATION OF ISSUES**

- 3.1 The HSE has visited the authority on a number of occasions and contacted the authority to ensure that the Council continues to address issues regarding stress. It is therefore it is essential that the Council ensures it has arrangements in place to manage the issue.
- 3.2 The significant financial issues faced by the Council have placed substantial pressures on all staff throughout the organisation through redundancy, staff redeployment and the pressure of implementing these changes. This period of unprecedented change shows no signs of reducing and in some circumstances are actually increasing. As a result the Council has recently agreed with the Trade Unions through the

single Table meeting to adopt a revised policy on stress and associated manager's guide. Copies of these revised policies are attached as **Appendix 1 and 2**). The issues regarding stress are causing significant concerns regarding the amount of work senior officers from the Council are undertaking and the impact this may have on their work life balance.

- 3.3 Following concerns raised by elected members in the Council Working Group in respect of the capacity of senior management ahead of potential structural changes the Performance portfolio holder asked for this to be examined. A subsequent recent study of the hours of work undertaken by individuals of the various Departmental Management Teams shows that the average hours worked by senior officers is 50 hours per week and a summary of the information collected is attached as **Appendix 3**). It should be noted that the working time regulations specify that the average maximum working time is 48 hours and whilst this was not meant to apply to those who are flexible as to how they work it does give an indication as to the level beyond which the negative effects on health, work-life balance and performance can occur. It should be noted the standards applied to junior doctors whose long hours was known to increase the risk of judgement failures and therefore poor patient care.
- 3.4 It is accepted that people respond to pressure differently and some thrive on "the challenge" however from an organisational perspective to allow such a situation to continue without addressing some of the underlying causes could result in allegations that the Council has been negligent in their duties and responsibilities as per the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974. There is also a substantial risk that as the result of an error of judgement the Council could result in a significant criminal, civil or reputational risk.
- 3.5 Although the optimum performance can vary between the individual's the constant working of excessive hours can result in a loss of productivity, performance and have substantial health effects. The most known case was that of a civil claim where John Walker sued his employer Northumberland County Council for damages due to "psychiatric injury" associated with work related stress. In this case damages of £20000 were initially awarded although through agreement between the parties the case was eventually settled for £175 000. This does not include the legal and officer time costs which are substantial in a case like this. This case clearly demonstrates that the council failed in their duty to protect their staff from excessive work load.
- 3.6 There are no simple solutions to address what is a complex area but by ensuring the Council as an organisation focuses on those issues which are a priority and acknowledge that whilst some activities might be beneficial, resources simply do not allow work on this activity to be undertaken. This can be particularly difficult when political decisions are made that place additional workload on officers but then no subsequent action is actually taken.

- 3.7 There is a fine line between requests for additional clarification, supporting evidence to enable decisions to be made and requests for information that involve substantial work but is not proportionate to the benefit to either the Council or the public. In order to ensure there is a better understanding of the cost in officer time of undertaking this additional work it is proposed that where the work is unplanned or not accounted for in the relevant service plan then a cost benefit analysis should be undertaken. It is envisaged that by drawing attention to the cost of undertaking the work then those commissioning the additional work may better understand the implications this has on planned service.

#### **4. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 4.1 That the Portfolio Holder notes the contents of the report and the risks to staff from pressure at work;
- 4.2 The Performance Portfolio Holder to receive a report at a future meeting with proposals for his consideration as to how the risks identified may be effectively managed.

#### **5. CONTACT OFFICER**

Stuart Langston  
Health, Safety and Wellbeing Manager  
01429 523560

Stuart.langston@hartlepool.gov.uk



# Management of Stress at Work Policy

## MANAGEMENT OF STRESS AT WORK

### **POLICY**

Hartlepool Borough Council recognises and accepts the financial and legal responsibilities and duties which it has for the health, safety and welfare of its employees and others affected by the activities of the Council.

Hartlepool Borough Council is primarily concerned with stress arising from the working environment, but it also recognises that events occurring in an employee's personal life may also lead to stress and potentially impact on the individual's performance at work.

The Council is committed to being a supportive employer so that where practicable appropriate assistance is provided to an employee to minimise the risk of health effects occurring as a result of stress

### **Scope and Purpose**

It is recognised that the activities undertaken by Hartlepool Borough Council may give rise to risks to the health, safety and welfare of persons who either work on behalf of, or in connection with, the Council. The purpose of this policy is to describe the Council's approach to minimising, where practicable, the risk to people's health from stress. Stress in this context is that defined by the HSE as 'the adverse reaction people have to excessive pressures or other types of demand placed on them'. It arises when they perceive that they cannot cope with those demands.

The [Corporate Health and Safety Policy](#) makes clear the Council's commitment to provide, as far as is reasonably practicable a safe and healthy working environment for all its employees;

This policy applies to all employees of the Council. The policy complements the Council's approach to risk management by following the principles contained within the Corporate Health and Safety Policy and should be read in conjunction with that Policy. In addition to the general duties of protecting the health, safety and well-being of employees the following principles apply to the Council's approach to dealing with stress:

- the management of stress will be dealt with in a way that is non-discriminatory and in accordance with the Council's Equality, Diversity and Employment policies;
- employees will be dealt with consistently and fairly across the Council;
- the Council will aim to promote a positive and preventative rather than punitive approach;
- the Council will be sensitive and supportive, as far as is reasonably practicable, to those suffering the effects of stress;
- the management of stress, including monitoring of stress-related information will be conducted with respect for individual confidentiality



and in accordance with the requirements of the Data Protection and Access to Medical Reports Acts;

- open communication will be encouraged and promoted;
- the Council's stress management approach will be monitored and reviewed to ensure that it continues to meet the Council's aims and complies with these principles. Employees and, trade union representatives will be encouraged to be involved in this process;
- symptoms of stress are preventable if sources of pressure at work are identified and appropriate action taken to reduce or control them;
- the risk of stress occurring may be reduced by employees adopting healthy lifestyles and adopting positive coping strategies, and seeking assistance and support at appropriate times.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

### **Chief Executive**

As indicated within the Corporate Health and Safety Policy ultimate responsibility for compliance with legal requirements and with this Policy rests with the Chief Executive.

### **All Strategic and Operational Managers**

Managers have delegated responsibility to ensure they protect the health, safety and welfare of those who are affected by the activities undertaken by the Council. It is therefore the responsibility of those managers to;

- demonstrate their commitment and support to this policy by ensuring that the principles and approaches to managing stress are implemented;
- reflect the policy's principles and approaches within their own management practice;
- ensure that resources are available to ensure that stress management approaches are implemented, including the availability of appropriately trained risk assessors and the provision of suitable and sufficient training of managers and of employees to enable them to fulfill their role;
- support line managers and ensure positive action is taken where there is evidence of work related stress impacting on employees health and/ or performance;
- monitor the incidence of stress and take appropriate action in light of qualitative and quantitative data provided for Council staff in relation to stress;
- adopt an open attitude, ensuring that they are accessible to employees who wish to discuss problems and anxieties and that communication methods are effective;
- adopt a flexible approach, wherever possible, to work schedules, in order to help avoid conflicts between work and personal life;
- ensure that employees have access to appropriate training in order to recognise and manage stress;
- ensure that employees have access to, and attend, identified training needs in respect of their job;

- ensure that employees are provided with clear and realistic objectives and that performance is managed effectively and fairly;
- ensure that risk assessments are undertaken on all jobs on a regular basis, (such as during a restructuring exercise, whenever an employee is suffering from work related stress or a cause of work related stress is identified) and that appropriate action is taken where necessary;
- follow the Council's procedures and use appropriate support where necessary, including referring employees to Occupational Health if their health, performance or behaviour may be adversely affected by stress.
- ensure that employees have reasonable workloads, are not overworking and are taking their full leave entitlement;
- ensure that regular discussions take place with employees regarding their health generally and how they are coping with the pressures at work, e.g. during one to one meetings or as part of the appraisal process;
- implement, as appropriate, the actions outlined in any associated policies and guidance relevant to this policy (such as the council policies on recruitment and selection, management of risk, corporate health and safety, attendance management and violence and aggression to staff);
- take measures to avoid and/or prevent, wherever practicable, the possible sources of stress (as outlined in the guidance attached to this policy) for their employees and themselves;
- ensure sickness absence/return to work interviews are undertaken in respect of all periods of sickness absence, ensure concerns regarding work related stress are fully explored and appropriate control measures implemented.

### **Oversight and Co-ordinating Role**

As a part of the responsibilities imposed by the Corporate Health and Safety Policy, the implementation of this Policy and associated working arrangements will be reviewed at appropriate intervals by representatives of the relevant department and the Customer and Workforce Services Division. Any amendments are communicated to relevant managers.

### **Supervisors and Employees**

All supervisors and employees will ensure that they:

- comply with safe systems of work;
- Familiarise themselves, comply and assist with the implementation of this Policy and any other relevant policies and guidance;
- support the Council's mental health initiatives;
- recognise that they may be a source of stress to others, accept responsibility and take action to deal with this;
- attend appropriate training so that they are better able to recognise and manage stress;
- identify causes of stress in the workplace and report it appropriately, through the use of the Council's procedures.

- recognise that the risk of stress occurring may be reduced by employees adopting healthy lifestyles and/or positive coping strategies, and seeking assistance and support at appropriate times.

In order to support this policy, the following services are available to managers and employees:

- occupational health (OH) service - to provide advice and guidance on the impact of stress on health and what steps the Council and/or employee may take;
- counselling service - to provide a confidential service to employees in order to discuss concerns related to work or personal circumstances;
- workforce services section - to provide support and guidance to managers and employees in dealing with stress and in the use of the Council's related policies and procedures such as the risk assessment process and what steps can be taken to minimise or eliminate risks.

### **Monitoring, Review and Audit**

At department level, systems will be in place to monitor the effectiveness of this policy and the mechanism for ensuring those employees who are affected by this policy have been supported as far as is reasonably practicable.

As the officer with an oversight and co-ordinating role in this respect, the Chief Customer and Workforce Services Officer who will ensure that this Policy and the associated guidance is kept under review, including periodic formal review and, if required, revision and reissue.

Using, in part, the results of monitoring carried out for and provided by Directors and other Senior Managers, the Chief Customer and Workforce Services will report periodically to the Corporate Management Team on the operation corporately of this Policy.



# **Stress at Work Guidance for Managers**

## STRESS AT WORK – GUIDANCE FOR MANAGERS

### Background

Hartlepool Borough Council accepts that stress at work is a serious issue, and will take action to reduce avoidable work-related stress. It will also take steps to provide employees with support when excessive work-related stress arises.

Stress is extremely complex, both in its causes and its cures, and as such it is important that the manager gains an understanding of why a person is suffering from stress in order to be better able to develop solutions to assist an individual with the issues causing the stress. It should be noted that work-related stress can combine with stress arising from other sources, sometimes in unpredictable ways.

The Council firmly believes that the organisational culture, and particularly the way in which managers manage their employees, is one of the most important considerations when dealing with work related stress. It is therefore essential that managers try to be as supportive as much as they reasonably can within the working environment.

The following guidance offers managers a way to check that they have the fundamental systems in place to protect their staff and to take appropriate action, where necessary.

### What is stress?

The HSE defines stress as 'the adverse reaction people have to excessive pressures or other types of demand placed on them'. It arises when they perceive that they cannot cope with those demands.

The stress response is natural and not in itself an illness. Its effects are often short-lived and cause no lasting harm. However, it is well established that stress can result in physical and psychological illness when exposure is excessive and prolonged. Work-related stress is not reportable under RIDDOR.

To prevent and manage work-related stress, managers need to:

- **Accept** that work-related stress might be a problem for their staff.
- **Understand** what work-related stress is and the relationship between work and home stress.
- **Listen** to their staff and to take action on what they find out.
- **Set expectations** with their staff, so that they understand what managers can and cannot do for them.
- **Make time** to tackle stress properly.

### Legal Requirements

Under health and safety law all employers have a legal responsibility to ensure the health safety and welfare at work of their employees. This includes minimising the risk of stress-related illness or injury to employees. Ill health arising from, or exacerbated by, stress-related ill health at work may constitute a disability under the Disability Discrimination Act if it is prolonged. It is important to remember that it is the manager who takes responsibility for compliance with these legal requirements.

### **The Role of Management**

The Council recognises that whilst stress can be difficult to manage that the 'Management standards framework' outlined by the HSE provides the framework to managing stress. This document can be found at: <http://www.hse.gov.uk/stress/standards/index.htm>.

Much of the responsibility for managing stress will fall on managers within the Council. With this in mind they need to know what stress is and also understand what skills, abilities and behaviours are necessary to manage employees in a way that minimises work-related stress.

### **How to identify signs and symptoms of stress in individuals**

There are several clear signs which indicate that people are experiencing significant stress at work. Managers should aim to identify issues as early as possible so that action can be taken before the pressure becomes a problem; by doing so it will be easier to reduce and eliminate the causes.

Stress can manifest itself in many different ways. Some of the items in the lists below may not be indicative of stress if **people** always behave in the ways described. Managers may need to manage these people differently. Managers are particularly looking for changes in the way employees behave that could be linked with excessive pressures.

| <b><u>Work Based Symptoms</u></b>   | <b><u>Emotional Symptoms</u></b>  |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Declining or inconsistent performance</li> <li>• Uncharacteristic errors</li> <li>• Loss of control over work</li> <li>• Loss of motivation</li> <li>• Indecision</li> <li>• Lapses in memory</li> <li>• Increased time at work</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tearfulness</li> <li>• Short temperedness</li> <li>• Irritability or anger</li> <li>• Increased sensitivity</li> <li>• Anxiety</li> <li>• Frustration</li> <li>• Feeling drained</li> <li>• Guilt</li> </ul> |

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unexplained absence</li> <li>• Lack of holiday</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Loss of humour</li> </ul>  |
| <p><b><u>Mental Symptoms</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Confusion</li> <li>• Muddled thinking</li> <li>• Inability to plan</li> <li>• Reduced social contact</li> </ul> | <p><b><u>Changes in Behaviour</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Arriving late at work</li> <li>• Leaving work early</li> <li>• Extended lunches</li> <li>• Absenteeism</li> <li>• Mood swings</li> <li>• Getting less work done</li> <li>• Nervous habits such as biting nails</li> <li>• Increased smoking or drinking</li> <li>• Loss of appetite</li> <li>• Changes in sleeping patterns</li> </ul> |

The causes of stress may be related to work, home, relationships and personal life or be a combination of all these factors. Some people may show many of these symptoms, others may not. The symptoms may also be due to an underlying health problem.

### **How to identify signs and symptoms of stress within a group of employees**

It is important to be aware that stress can occur within groups of workers, and not just individuals. Signs of stress to look out for in a group include:

- Disputes and prolonged arguments in the group
- Increase in staff turnover
- Increase in complaints and staff grievances
- Increased sickness absence
- Staff reporting stress problems
- Difficulty attracting new staff
- Poor performance
- Customer dissatisfaction or complaints

### **Dealing with non-work related stress**

It is important to be mindful that there may be external stressors outside of the workplace. An employee is not obliged to tell their manager of their personal

problems, however, there are some practical things that managers could do to support them, which are detailed below:

- **Be sympathetic and proactive** - Arrange a confidential meeting with the person, allowing them the opportunity to discuss any problems they wish and allowing the manager time to voice their own concerns. It may help to clarify whether the person's problems are work-related or personal.
- **Be flexible** - Consider offering the person more flexible working hours.
- **Offer outside support** - If appropriate, the manager could suggest that the employee visit their doctor. The manager could also suggest support groups. A list of sources of help can be found in appendix 1 of this guide.
- **Outline the support and services on offer** - this may include, for example, a referral to the Occupational Health Advisor (see the management of stress at work policy).

### **Stress and Mental Health at Work**

Work-related stress and mental health often go hand in hand. The symptoms of stress and common mental health problems are similar, for example, loss of appetite, fatigue and tearfulness can be symptoms of both.

Work-related stress may trigger an existing mental health problem that the person may otherwise have successfully managed without letting it affect their work. For people with existing mental health issues, work-related stress may exaggerate their problem. If work-related stress reaches a point where it has triggered an existing mental health problem, it becomes hard to separate one from the other. Managers have a role in making reasonable adjustments and helping the person to manage the problem at work. For guidance as to how to support an employee with mental health difficulties managers may find it useful to consult the following resources:

'A line manager's resource – A practical guide to managing and supporting people with mental health problems in the workplace'. To access this document click [here](#).

'Wellbeing resource book for new managers". To access this document click [here](#).

### **Bullying and Harassment**

An employee who is being bullied or harassed at work may experience work-related stress as a result. They should consult their immediate line manager or where this person is involved then contact their departmental Human Resources Business Partner representative. Managers should consult their departmental Human Resources Business Partner representative Council for further information on how to manage cases of bullying and harassment.

### **What managers should do if they identify stress in one of their employees**



Where a line manager has concerns that staff may be exhibiting possible signs of excessive stress that is affecting their work performance, conduct or relationships with others which could in turn affect their work performance, he/she should take immediate action. The manager should try to have a private discussion with the member of staff about the situation. This could be a very sensitive matter and it is quite likely the member of staff may become agitated or upset and may deny they have any issues. The manager has a responsibility for the health and safety of the staff they manage and must ensure that the individual does not put anyone, including themselves, at risk.

The manager should explain their concerns and inform the member of staff of the help available. **It is strongly advised that the manager seek the advice of the Occupational Health Advisor and a timely referral should be made using the medical referral form.** This can be accessed by clicking [here](#):

In some instances the member of staff may wish to speak to another organisation for assistance some of the common organisations that can provide support is attached as Appendix 1.

Where there are concerns about the potential for stress, for example during significant changes in structure or working practices, an individual demonstrating the symptoms of stress or it has been diagnosed by a GP on a fit note then it is important that an appropriate risk assessment is undertaken.

### **Stress Risk Assessments**

A stress risk assessment is similar to any other risk assessment. It is a process which highlights the hazards and risks associated with the operation of the Council in relation to the mental rather than the physical health of its employees.

The stress risk assessments are particularly important as they may be called upon to provide documentary evidence to demonstrate that the Council had adopted good practice and had fully complied with the law.

The Council has robust risk assessment processes in place and these should be used undertake assessments at an appropriate level.

- At Department, Division or School level - the assessment should be completed by the Department Management Team in conjunction with the appropriate HR Business Partner.
- At Team level - the assessments may need to take account of different establishments or acknowledge varying working arrangements. An example form is attached in Appendix 2.

- At individual employee level - the assessment will normally be completed in association with occupational health following a period of absence due to stress and will ensure that measures are put in place to protect the returning employee from further risk.

The stress risk assessment form covers six key areas which need to be considered as part of the exercise, as follows:

- Demands
- Support
- Control
- Relationships
- Role
- Change

Staff will need to be consulted about the content of the assessments in order to give the assessment credibility. If a Team assessment is necessary, then this should involve the team. The line manager then takes responsibility for pulling the ideas together into a final risk assessment document.

Examples of model stress risk assessments which give an indication of the level of detail required can be obtained from Workforce Services Division. It is very important to make sure that the assessments are not over-complicated and that the additional action identified is realistic and achievable. It is also important to keep the assessment focussed upon issues which are within the control and influence of the employing organisation.

Once a risk assessment is complete additional actions may be necessary to reduce the risk further. The actions should be implemented by the relevant person. Where the findings of the assessment cannot be implemented locally then they should be escalated to the next tier of management where appropriate.

### **Development of skills as a manager**

The skills required to prevent and reduce stress at work can be developed. The Council encourages managers to assess whether they currently have the behaviours identified as effective for preventing and reducing stress at work by completing the on-line [Stress Management Indicator Tool](#). This will assist managers to reflect on their behaviour and management style.

**The Council offers a management development programme for all managers, from the most senior right through to first line supervisors.**

## **Appendix 1**

### ***Further Support and Services Available Outside of Work***

|                   |  |  |
|-------------------|--|--|
| Alcohol           | <b>Drinkline</b> - Information and support for anyone concerned about their own or someone else's drinking   | 0800 917 8292  |
| Bereavement       | <b>Cruse Bereavement Line</b> - Helpline for bereaved people and those caring for bereaved people.   | 0844 477 9400  |
| Carers            | <b>Carers Line</b> - Advice and information for all carers.  | 0808 808 7777  |
| Young People      | <b>Childline</b> - Helpline for children and young people in danger, distress or with any problem.<br><br><b>NSPCC</b> - For anyone concerned about a child at risk of abuse.              | 0800 1111<br><br>0808 800 5000   |
| Disability        | <b>DIAL</b> - UK network of disability information and advice services run by people with direct experience of disability  | 01302 310 123  |
| Domestic Violence | <b>Women's Aid</b> - Practical advice and emotional support for women experiencing domestic violence.<br><br><b>REFUGE</b> - Advice and support for anyone experiencing domestic violence. | 0808 2000 247<br><br>0808 200 0247   |
| Drugs             | <b>National Drugs Helpline</b> - For drug users, their families, friends and carers  | 0800 77 66 00  |
| Emotional Crisis  | <b>The Samaritans</b> - Confidential, emotional support for anyone in a crisis.  | 08457 90 90 90   |
| Family            | <b>Careline</b> - National charity providing a confidential telephone counselling service.<br><br><b>Parentline</b> - Helpline for the parents and carers of children                      | 0845 122 8622<br><br>0808 800 2222   |
| Money             | <b>National debtline</b> - Help for anyone in debt or concerned that they may fall into debt   | 0808 808 4000  |
| Older People      | <b>Age Concern</b> - For older people, their families and people working with them   | 0800 00 99 66  |
| Social Welfare    | <b>Shelter.</b> - Helpline for anyone facing a housing emergency.  | 0808 800 4444<br><br><a href="http://www.adviceguide.org.uk/">http://www.adviceguide.org.uk/</a> |

|  |   |  |
|--|---|--|
|  | <b>Citizens' Advice Bureaux</b> - Free,<br>confidential advice on a host of<br>topics |  |
|--|---|--|

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# Risk Assessment Form

|   |                  |                                |
|---|------------------|--------------------------------|
| <b>Directorate:</b>   | <b>Division:</b> | <b>Reference:</b>              |
| <b>Service:</b> <i>All routine activities carried out by .....service</i> |                  | <b>Site:</b>                   |
| <b>People at Risk:</b> <i>All staff</i>                                   |                  | <b>Additional Information:</b> |

| Possible sources of stress             | Identified Risk/ Implications   | Risk Rating (High/Med /Low | Existing Control Measures   | Additional Action Required  | Person responsible date for action/target date where appropriate |
|--|---|----------------------------|---|---|--|
| <b>Demands</b>                         |   |                            |   |   |  |
| <b>Demanding work patterns.</b>        | <i>Increased stress levels<br/>Poor work/life balance.</i>                        | <i>M</i>                   | <i>Managers identify areas where there are already concerns regarding workload, complaints of stress, high sickness levels to ensure this is factored into any proposals.</i> | <i>Service Manager to ensure that concerns form part of any consideration regarding structure.</i>      |  |
| <b>Complex or demanding Workloads.</b> | <i>Excessive pressures or demands on managers and/or an individual leading to</i> | <i>M</i>                   | <i>Sufficient resources are provided in order to deliver Service Plan/targets. Arrangements in place to ensure services are not set up to fail.</i>                           | <i>Managers to restructure using formal consultation arrangements and listen to concerns about work</i> |  |

| Possible sources of stress  | Identified Risk/ Implications   | Risk Rating (High/Med /Low | Existing Control Measures  | Additional Action Required   | Person responsible date for action/target date where appropriate |
|---|---|----------------------------|--|--|--|
|   | <i>Increased stress levels.</i>   |                            |  | <i>environment/workload</i>  |  |
| <b><i>Emotionally demanding workloads, coupled with unrealistic customer expectations.</i></b>  | <i>This aspect of the work is extremely wearing on staff and could lead to anxiety, frustration and stress.</i>   |                            | <i>Managers consider the role and remit of any services to ensure the published goals of the service are realistic.</i>  | <i>Senior managers will be asked to consider the level of service delivered and ensure that public information is managed so that unrealistic targets etc are not put in the public domain</i> |  |
| <b><i>Unacceptable timescales arising from requirements of external bodies (mandatory or statutory requirement, external audits</i></b> | <i>The possibility that colleagues could feel compelled to work excessive hours and/or will overwork which could lead to stress, tiredness, frustration, anxiety.</i> |                            | <i>Information regarding the possibility of continuing with enhanced staffing arrangements beyond this timescale will be communicated to staff regularly</i><br><br><i>Negotiation regarding resources or timescales</i> | <i>Concerns raised to Director to challenge politically/corporately the issues causing the excessive work.</i>   |  |
| <b><i>Reduced staffing resources during periods of staff turnover and sickness absences.</i></b>  | <i>Staff capacity is overstretched leading to poor performance, frustration and stress.</i>   |                            | <i>Services reviewed so they can be reduced consistently with the resources available to implement</i>   | <i>Service managers to ensure any reduction in services are communicated in relevant political arena</i>   |  |
| <b><i>Poor work environment.</i></b>  | <i>Ergonomi/officec risks which could lead to frustration</i>   |                            | <i>Appropriate equipment/ accommodation is provided for service delivery</i>   |  |  |

| Possible sources of stress   | Identified Risk/ Implications         | Risk Rating (High/Med /Low | Existing Control Measures   | Additional Action Required   | Person responsible date for action/target date where appropriate |
|--|---------------------------------------|----------------------------|---|--|--|
| <p><i>Overcrowded, noisy or untidy work space.</i></p> <p><i>Poor workstations or Storage arrangements</i></p> | <i>and stress.</i>                    |                            |   |  |  |
|  |                                       |                            |   |  |  |
| <i>Staff role expectations may not match service requirements in practice.</i>                                 | <i>Frustration leading to stress,</i> |                            | <i>Clear communication from Director /Senior manager of the structure and requirements of individuals in relation to their role in the department/organisation.</i> | <i>Clear communication from Director to reinforce situation regularly.</i> |  |

|                 |            |                 |            |                   |
|-----------------|------------|-----------------|------------|-------------------|
| Signature:..... | Name:..... | Job Title:..... | Date:..... | Review Date:..... |
|-----------------|------------|-----------------|------------|-------------------|



# Risk Assessment Form

|  |                  |                                |
|--|------------------|--------------------------------|
| <b>Directorate:</b>  | <b>Division:</b> | <b>Reference:</b>              |
| <b>Activity:</b> <i>All routine activities carried out by ..... team members</i> |                  | <b>Site:</b>                   |
| <b>People at Risk:</b> <i>All staff</i>  |                  | <b>Additional Information:</b> |

| Possible sources of stress             | Identified Risk/ Implications                              | Risk Rating (High/Med /Low) | Existing Control Measures   | Additional Action Required  | Person responsible date for action/target date where appropriate |
|--|--|-----------------------------|---|---|--|
| <b><i>Demands</i></b>                  |  |                             |   |   |  |
| <b><i>Demanding work patterns.</i></b> | <i>Increased stress levels<br/>Poor work/life balance.</i> | <i>M</i>                    | <i>Managers monitor work patterns using the time recording systems and should agree any unusual hours of work.<br/><br/>Appraisals are conducted on a regular basis and service planning takes into account achievable workloads. Smart objectives to be set and work plans identified.</i> | <i>Manager to monitor work/life balance &amp; ensure staff take proper breaks</i> |  |



| Possible sources of stress  | Identified Risk/ Implications   | Risk Rating (High/Med /Low | Existing Control Measures  | Additional Action Required   | Person responsible date for action/target date where appropriate |
|---|---|----------------------------|--|--|--|
| <b>Complex or demanding Workloads.</b>  | <i>Excessive pressures or demands on an individual leading to Increased stress levels.</i>                      | <i>M</i>                   | <i>Service Plans match skills and abilities to job demands. Appraisal objectives are agreed and take into account the capabilities of employees.</i>   | <i>Managers to listen to concerns about work environment<br/><br/>Training, mentoring, coaching etc to be considered</i>   |  |
| <b>Emotionally demanding workloads, coupled with unrealistic customer expectations.</b> | <i>This aspect of the work is extremely wearing on staff and could lead to anxiety, frustration and stress.</i> |                            | <i>Activity-based risk assessments are in place in service areas which provide services to difficult or demanding clients.</i><br><br><i>Teams are encouraged to be mutually supportive when aware that a team member has taken a difficult call or is dealing with a difficult issue.</i><br><br><i>Various training options have been designed to develop skills that help employees deal with stressful workloads, such as receiving irate telephone calls from members of the public.</i><br><br><i>Any significant instances of verbal abuse will be reported on the Safety Incident Report Form (SIRF) and</i> | <i>Senior managers will be asked to consider the level of service delivered and agreed courses include stress awareness, time management and assertiveness</i><br><br><i>Staffing rotated to try to cope with workload pressures in general.</i> |  |

| Possible sources of stress  | Identified Risk/ Implications   | Risk Rating (High/Med /Low | Existing Control Measures  | Additional Action Required  | Person responsible date for action/target date where appropriate |
|---|---|----------------------------|--|---|--|
|   |   |                            | <i>appropriately investigated by the line manager.</i>   |   |  |
| <b>Unacceptable timescales arising from requirements of external bodies</b> (mandatory or statutory requirement, external audits or Council targets). | <i>The possibility that colleagues could feel compelled to work excessive hours and/or will overwork which could lead to stress, tiredness, frustration, anxiety.</i> |                            | <i>Information regarding the possibility of continuing with enhanced staffing arrangements beyond this timescale will be communicated to staff regularly</i><br><br><i>Negotiation regarding resources or timescales</i> |   |  |
| <b>Reduced staffing resources during periods of staff turnover and sickness absences.</b>   | <i>Staff capacity is overstretched leading to poor performance, frustration and stress.</i>   |                            | <i>Put appropriate 'cover' arrangements in place. New members of staff do, however, have to be trained to do the job.</i><br><br><i>Short term enhanced level of line management involvement is required.</i>            | <i>Staff to raise any issues at an early stage. Training issues in relation to new team members need to be addressed.</i><br><br><i>Written protocols to be drawn up in order to facilitate cover arrangements should individual be absent.</i> |  |
| <b>Poor work environment.</b><br><br><b>Overcrowded,</b>  | <i>Ergonomic risks which could lead to frustration and stress.</i>  |                            | <i>The office accommodation has been organised to ensure that the best use is made of the available space.</i>   | <i>If necessary, arrange for DSE assessments to be undertaken and review these assessments to reflect</i>   |  |

| Possible sources of stress  | Identified Risk/ Implications   | Risk Rating (High/Med /Low | Existing Control Measures  | Additional Action Required  | Person responsible date for action/target date where appropriate |
|---|---|----------------------------|--|---|--|
| <p><i>noisy or untidy work space.</i></p> <p><i>Poor workstations or Storage arrangements</i></p> |   |                            | <p><i>DSE workstation assessments are conducted and reviewed in line with statutory requirements.</i></p> <p><i>Storage arrangements have also been rationalised to ensure that all areas are easy to access.</i></p> <p><i>Scanning of paper files into electronic system for future use is proceeding.</i></p> | <p><i>changes.</i></p> <p><i>Budget for any outstanding workstation requirements.</i></p> <p><i>Ensure managers carry out workplace inspections on a regular basis.</i></p> |  |
|   |   |                            |  |   |  |
| <p><i>Staff role expectations may not match service requirements in practice.</i></p>             | <p><i>Frustration leading to stress,</i></p>                            |                            | <p><i>All members of staff are encouraged to utilise specialist skills and initiative in line with the organisational ethos and commitment to investors in people.</i></p> <p><i>All training aspirations and requirements are discussed as part of the existing appraisal process.</i></p>                      | <p><i>None Required.</i></p>  |  |
|   |   |                            |  |   |  |
| <p><i>Senior managers may find it difficult to support team</i></p>                               | <p><i>Increased pressure within the section during such periods</i></p> |                            | <p><i>Prioritisation of the workloads of senior manager and staff to be</i></p>  |   |  |

| Possible sources of stress  | Identified Risk/ Implications  | Risk Rating (High/Med /Low | Existing Control Measures   | Additional Action Required  | Person responsible date for action/target date where appropriate |
|---|--|----------------------------|---|---|--|
| <i>members at times when high volume or difficult workloads issues arise.</i>                           | <i>could result in frustration, anxiety and stress.</i>                |                            | <i>considered</i><br><br><i>Support team working arrangements-cover, 'buddying', monitoring etc.</i>  |   |  |
|   |  |                            |   |   |  |
| <i>Colleagues in other services will not provide statutory or other information in a timely manner.</i> | <i>Anxiety, frustration and stress.</i>                                |                            | <i>If necessary, boundaries of acceptable behaviour will be communicated to customers.</i>  | <i>Manager to consider writing to colleagues to urge them to supply appropriate service.</i>                |  |
| <i>Conflict or bullying between colleagues</i>  | <i>Anxiety, frustration and stress.</i>                                |                            | <i>Boundaries of acceptable behaviour are well established within the organisation. Dignity at work procedures are in place.</i>                        | <i>The council's commitment to healthy working emphasises the need to rid the organisation of bullying.</i> |  |
| <i>Line management relationships becoming strained due work pressures or individual</i>                 | <i>Stress and anxiety leading to ill health and absence from work.</i> |                            | <i>The requirement to maintain good working relationships is the responsibility of all line managers.</i><br><br><i>Where possible, senior managers</i> | <i>None required</i>  |  |

| Possible sources of stress  | Identified Risk/ Implications   | Risk Rating (High/Med /Low | Existing Control Measures   | Additional Action Required  | Person responsible date for action/target date where appropriate |
|---|---|----------------------------|---|---|--|
| <i>conflicts.</i>   |   |                            | <i>intervene before problems escalate.</i>  |   |  |
|   |   |                            |   |   |  |
| <b>Reduced Government grants, job threats, cut backs, new roles and responsibilities, lack of promotion</b> | <i>Increased pressure within the section during such periods could result in frustration, anxiety and stress.</i> |                            | <i>Team Briefings or Directorate Meetings – provide employees with information on reasons for changes.</i><br><br><i>Consultation with employees to enable them to influence proposals.</i><br><br><i>Processes for managing future change within the team to be kept under review.</i> | <i>Employees to be made aware of timetable and impact of changes. Training and support to be given.</i> |  |

|                 |            |                 |            |                   |
|-----------------|------------|-----------------|------------|-------------------|
| Signature:..... | Name:..... | Job Title:..... | Date:..... | Review Date:..... |
|-----------------|------------|-----------------|------------|-------------------|



# Stress Risk Assessment

|  |                  |                                |
|--|------------------|--------------------------------|
| <b>Directorate:</b>  | <b>Division:</b> | <b>Reference:</b>              |
| <b>Activity:</b> <i>All routine activities carried out by ..... team members</i> |                  | <b>Site:</b>                   |
| <b>People at Risk:</b> <i>All staff</i>  |                  | <b>Additional Information:</b> |

| Possible sources of stress  | Identified Risk/ Implications   | Risk Rating (High/Med /Low | Existing Control Measures   | Additional Action Required | Person responsible date for action/target date where appropriate |
|---|---|----------------------------|---|----------------------------|--|
| <b>Demands</b>  |   |                            |   |                            |  |
| <b>(1) Nature of work/ job design</b><br>(e.g. volume of work, tasks inappropriate to ability, too much/little variety, unrealistic deadlines, too much/lack of | <i>Individual has already had sick leave due to demands of role there is a risk of recurrence</i> |                            | <i>Phased return in place, clarity of role within team provided</i> |                            |  |

| Possible sources of stress   | Identified Risk/ Implications  | Risk Rating (High/Med /Low | Existing Control Measures   | Additional Action Required | Person responsible date for action/target date where appropriate |
|--|--|----------------------------|---|----------------------------|--|
| <i>supervision, lack of breaks, specific risks associated with role, such as dealing with particularly changing behaviour from service users or driving)</i><br><br><i>Specify:</i>                          |  |                            |   |                            |  |
| <b>(2)</b><br><b>Accommodation/ environment</b><br><i>(e.g. lack of/poor light, space, temperature, equipment, hygiene, ventilation, catering/rest facilities, parking, noise, over crowding, isolation)</i> | <i>The individual is complaining that light in the office is causing eye strain which is resulting in headaches.</i> |                            | <i>As part of reasonable adjustments a desk lamp has been provided.</i> |                            |  |

| Possible sources of stress   | Identified Risk/ Implications                              | Risk Rating (High/Med /Low | Existing Control Measures   | Additional Action Required  | Person responsible date for action/target date where appropriate |
|--|--|----------------------------|---|---|--|
| <i>Specify:</i>  |  |                            |   |   |  |
| <b>(3) Relationships</b><br>(e.g. clashes of personality/ working styles, discrimination, bullying or harassment, poor communication, impersonal treatment, unrealistic expectations)<br><br><i>Specify:</i> | Individual is concerned that the team is “out to get them” |                            | Managers is closely observing the team to ensure in appropriate behaviour is not tolerated. | Team stress risk assessment to be completed to determine if issue is more wide spread<br><br>Mediation may help break down causes of barriers within the team to creat a more harmonious working environment. |  |
| <b>(4) Resourcing</b><br>(Resourcing issues that are posing problems upon the workers ability to so their job e.g.   | Individual taking work home on a regular basis.            |                            | Service plan targets reviewed and are achievable.   | Time management course may assist in prioritising work load   |  |



| Possible sources of stress   | Identified Risk/ Implications                                     | Risk Rating (High/Med /Low | Existing Control Measures  | Additional Action Required  | Person responsible date for action/target date where appropriate |
|--|---|----------------------------|--|---|--|
| <i>time constraints, unmet training needs, equipment and budget shortfalls)</i><br><br><i>Specify:</i>   |   |                            |  |   |  |
| <b>(5) Personal (Including health and disability issues, as well as any problematic life events or circumstances that may be affecting ability to cope)</b><br><br><i>Specify:</i> | <i>Individual was off a substantial period with a back injury</i> |                            | <i>Individual has been offered counselling to help cope with injury.</i> | <i>Workplace assessment to be undertaken to see if improvements can be made to assist in working in the office.</i> |  |
| <b>(6) Any other hazards or concerns</b>   | <i>None</i>   |                            |  |   |  |

| Possible sources of stress | Identified Risk/ Implications | Risk Rating (High/Med /Low | Existing Control Measures | Additional Action Required | Person responsible date for action/target date where appropriate |
|----------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------|--|
| <i>Specify:</i>            |                               |                            |                           |                            |  |

|  |                   |
|--|-------------------|
| Signature:.....Name:.....Job Title:.....Date:..... | Review Date:..... |
|--|-------------------|

### Hours worked

- The figures cover a 4 week period in June
- Where there has been leave or sickness an average of the standard working day over the period has been applied and included
- The figures include weekend working

|   |     | Child and<br>Adults | Regen and<br>Neighbourhoods | Chief<br>Executives |
|---|-----|---------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------|
| mgt team  |     | 6                   | 5                           | 4                   |
| Total contracted hours  | 148 | 888                 | 740                         | 592                 |
| Total hours   |     | 1269                | 1115                        | 842                 |
| Average working week  |     | 53                  | 56                          | 53                  |
| Maximum   |     | 76                  | 65                          | 69                  |
| minimum   |     | 39                  | 47.5                        | 37                  |
| Additional hours worked                                       |     | 381                 | 375                         | 250                 |
| Additional average hours per week /<br>management team member |     | 16                  | 19                          | 16                  |
| Total hours   |     |                     |                             | 862                 |
| Average working week  |     |                     |                             | 54                  |
| Minimum   |     |                     |                             | 45                  |
| Additional average hours per week /<br>management team member |     |                     |                             | 17                  |

### Summary

- The average hours worked by Chief Officers over the period in question is 54 per week
- Most chief officers are working approximately 50% of additional hours over the contracted period
- Most officers are routinely working more than 50 hours per week

## **PERFORMANCE PORTFOLIO**

Report to Portfolio Holder

14th September 2011



**Report of:** Assistant Chief Executive

**Subject:** COMPLAINTS TO THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT  
OMBUDSMAN IN 2010/11

---

### **SUMMARY**

#### **1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

To report to the Portfolio Holder on the content of the Local Government Ombudsman's Annual Review of complaints made against the authority in 2010/11.

#### **2. SUMMARY OF CONTENTS**

The report covers the Local Government Ombudsman's Annual Review of complaints received about Hartlepool Borough Council in 2010/11.

#### **3. RELEVANCE TO PORTFOLIO MEMBER**

The Portfolio Member has responsibility for performance management issues.

#### **4. TYPE OF DECISION**

Non-key

#### **5. DECISION MAKING ROUTE**

Portfolio Holder meeting on 14<sup>th</sup> September 2011

#### **6. DECISION(S) REQUIRED**

That the report be noted.

**Report of:** Assistant Chief Executive

**Subject:** COMPLAINTS TO THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT  
OMBUDSMAN IN 2010/11

---

## **1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To report to the Portfolio Holder on the content of the Local Government Ombudsman's Annual Review Letter detailing a summary of complaints made against the authority in 2010/11.

## **2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 The Local Government Ombudsman provides an independent, impartial investigation of complaints against local authorities where complainants remain dissatisfied with their local Council's actions or failure to act.
- 2.2 The Local Government Ombudsman (LGO) reports complaints performance to local authorities annually. All councils receive an annual review letter, from the LGO which details:
- the complaints and enquiries received by the Ombudsman;
  - decisions made on complaints received; and
  - current developments in the Ombudsman's work.

The details of complaints handled in 2010/11 are provided in **Appendix 1**, as is the full text of the Ombudsman's Annual Review.

## **3. ANNUAL LETTER FROM THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT OMBUDSMAN – 2010/11**

### **Enquiries and complaints received**

- 3.1 In the year to 31 March 2011 the Ombudsman received a total of 27 enquiries and complaints, which is a rise of almost 60% on the previous year (17 enquiries and complaints). However, from October 2010 all complaints about injustice connected to adult social care services came under the Ombudsman's jurisdiction, meaning that the figure is not directly comparable with the previous year. If the 3 enquiries and complaints relating to adult social care were removed from the calculations there was a 41% rise to 24 enquiries and complaints. Nationally there was an increase of 21% in the number of enquiries and complaints received by the LGO, and although this is lower than the rise in relation to Hartlepool the relatively small numbers involved mean that a small rise in actual numbers relate to a higher percentage rise.

### 3.2 Of the 27 enquiries and complaints received by the LGO: -

- In five cases advice was given to the complainant
- Four complaints were judged to be premature. These complaints were either sent on to the Council with a request that the matter be put through our own complaints procedure or, alternatively, the complainant was advised to make a formal complaint themselves to the Council.
- A further four complaints had been initially determined by the Ombudsman as premature but re-submitted by complainants dissatisfied with the way in which the Council had dealt with their complaint.
- The remaining 14 complaints were new complaints and forwarded to the Ombudsman's investigative team.

### 3.3 The actual number of complaints forwarded to the Ombudsman's investigative team therefore increased from 11 in 2009/10 (3 resubmitted and 8 new complaints) to 18 in 2010/11 – an increase of just under 64%. The national increase is 7.5% but once again the small numbers involved in Hartlepool mean a relatively small number will result in a large percentage increase. For comparison purposes, and looking at all 124 Single Tier Authorities (Unitary, Metropolitan or London Borough), Hartlepool had the 5<sup>th</sup> lowest number of complaints determined in 2010/11. This is an improvement on 2009/10 when Hartlepool had the 6<sup>th</sup> lowest number of complaints determined.

#### **Complaints outcomes**

### 3.4 13 complaints were determined during the year, a figure which differs from the number of complaints received because of work in hand at the beginning and the end of the year. This figure includes 1 adult social care complaint. Of those complaints determined:

- four complaints saw the Local Government Ombudsman exercise the general discretion available not to pursue the matter;
- in another four cases no evidence of maladministration by the Council was sufficient to justify the Local Government Ombudsman's continued involvement;
- the adult social care investigation was discontinued as the injustice had been remedied\*
- the Council agreed to settle the remaining four complaints accepting that something had gone wrong and that it was appropriate to provide a remedy of some description for the complainant.

\*Adult Social Care decisions use the new decision reasons that will be used for all complaint decisions from 1 April 2011.

#### **Local settlements**

### 3.5 The Local Government Ombudsman will often discontinue enquiries into a complaint when a council takes or agrees to take action that the Ombudsman

consider to be a satisfactory response – these are called local settlements. The four complaints which the Council agreed to settle during the year amounts to 33.3% of the total number of complaints determined and which were within the LGO's jurisdiction, excluding the Adult Social Care complaint. When this complaint is included, and including "injustice remedied" as a local settlement, this figure rises to 5 complaints, or 38%.

- 3.6 The settlements differed depending on the individual circumstances of the complaints, but varied from a written apology to remedying the perceived injustice – for example offering to reseed affected lawns following reinstatement work that had been carried out received a number of complaints from residents.

### **Complaints handling**

- 3.6 All authorities are asked to respond to Local Government Ombudsman enquiries within 28 calendar days. The Council took on average 27.3 days to respond to enquiries during the year, an increase from 21.2 days in the previous year.

### **Recommendations from the Ombudsman**

- 3.7 The 2010/11 Annual Review by the Local Government Ombudsman is positive in tone and does not highlight any areas of concern or make any recommendations for action. No public reports against the Council were issued.

### **Local Government Ombudsman developments**

- 3.7 The review letter outlines some current developments in the LGO's work. These include the change in way decisions are communicated to complainants and councils, designed to increase transparency and to ensure that decisions are clear and comprehensible.
- 3.8 Last year the Ombudsman reported that the launch of the new schools complaints service, introduced by the Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009, would be phased in. The Education Bill currently before Parliament proposes to rescind this new jurisdiction from July 2012 so it is unlikely that this will result in any changes within Hartlepool.

## **4. RECOMMENDATIONS**

That the report be noted.

## **5. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Annual Letters from the Local Government Ombudsman for previous years.

**6. CONTACT OFFICER**

**Peter Turner, Performance and Consultation Manager,  
Chief Executive's Department, Corporate Strategy Division  
Hartlepool Borough Council  
Tel No: (01429) 523648 Email: [peter.turner@hartlepool.gov.uk](mailto:peter.turner@hartlepool.gov.uk)**



# Local Government OMBUDSMAN

24 June 2011

Mr Paul Walker  
Chief Executive  
Hartlepool Borough Council  
Civic Centre  
HARTLEPOOL  
TS24 8AY

Our Ref: Annual Review /AS/DH

(Please quote our reference when contacting us and, if using email, please put the reference number in the email subject header)

Dear Mr Walker

## **Annual Review Letter**

I am writing with our annual summary of statistics on the complaints made to me about your authority for the year ending 31 March 2011. I hope the information set out in the enclosed tables will be useful to you.

The statistics include the number of enquiries and complaints received by our Advice Team, the number that the Advice Team forwarded to my office and decisions made on complaints about your council. Not all complaints are decided in the same year that they are received. This means that the number of complaints received and the number decided will be different.

The statistics also show the time taken by your authority to respond to written enquiries and the average response times by type of authority.

## ***Communicating decisions***

We want our work to be transparent and our decisions to be clear and comprehensible. During the past year we changed the way we communicate our decisions and reasons. We now provide a stand-alone statement of reasons for every decision we make to both the citizen who has complained and to the council. These statements replace our former practice of communicating decisions by letter to citizens that are copied to councils. We hope this change has been beneficial and welcome comments on this or any other aspect of our work.

Beverley House  
17 Shipton Road  
York  
YO30 5FZ

T: 01904 380200  
F: 01904 380269  
W: [www.lgo.org.uk](http://www.lgo.org.uk)

**Advice Team:** 0300 061 0614

**Anne Seex**  
Local Government Ombudsman  
**Michael King**  
Deputy Ombudsman

In April 2011 we introduced a new IT system for case management and revised the brief descriptions of our decisions. My next annual letter will use the different decision descriptions that are intended to give a more precise representation of complaint outcomes and also add further transparency to our work.

### ***Extended powers***

During 2010/11 our powers were extended to deal with complaints in two significant areas.

In October 2010 all complaints about injustice connected to adult social care services came under our jurisdiction. The greater use of direct payments and personalised budgets mean that it is particularly important for us to be able to deal with such complaints irrespective of whether a council has arranged the care. The increasing number of people who arrange and pay for their own social care now have the right to an independent and impartial examination of any complaints and concerns they may have about their care provider.

In the six months to April 2011 we received 75 complaints under our new adult social care powers. Between 2009/10 and 2010/11 complaints about care arranged or funded by councils doubled from 657 to 1,351.

The Apprenticeships, Skills, Children & Learning Act 2009 introduced powers for us to deal with complaints about schools by pupils or their parents. This was to be introduced in phases and currently applies in 14 council areas. By the end of 2010/11 we had received 169 complaints about schools in those areas and 183 about schools in other areas where we had no power to investigate. The Education Bill currently before Parliament proposes to rescind our new jurisdiction from July 2012.

Our new powers coincided with the introduction of Treasury controls on expenditure by government departments and sponsored bodies designed to reduce the public spending deficit. This has constrained our ability to inform care service users, pupils and their parents of their new rights.

### ***Assisting councils to improve***

For many years we have made our experience and expertise available to councils by offering training in complaint handling. We regard supporting good complaint handling in councils as an important part of our work. During 2010/11 we surveyed a number of councils that had taken up the training and some that had not. Responses from councils where we had provided training were encouraging:

- 90% said it had helped them to improve their complaint handling
- 68% gave examples of how the knowledge and skills gained from the training had been applied in practice
- 55% said that complaints were resolved at an earlier stage than previously
- almost 50% said that citizens who complained were more satisfied.

These findings will inform how we develop and provide training in the future. For example, the survey identified that councils are interested in short complaint handling modules and e-learning.

Details of training opportunities are on our web site at [www.lgo.org.uk/training-councils/](http://www.lgo.org.uk/training-councils/)

More details of our work over the year will be included in the 2010/11 Annual Report. This will be published on our website at the same time as the annual review letters for all councils (14 July).

If it would be helpful to your Council I should be pleased to arrange for me or a senior manager to meet and explain our work in greater detail.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Anne Seex'.

Anne Seex  
Local Government Ombudsman



## Local authority report - Hartlepool BC

for the period ending - 31/03/2011

For further information on interpretation of statistics click on this link to go to [www.lgo.org.uk/CouncilsPerformance](http://www.lgo.org.uk/CouncilsPerformance)

### LGO Advice Team

| Enquiries and complaints received             | Adult Care Services | Benefits & Tax | Corporate & Other Services | Education & Childrens Services | Environmental Services & Public Protection & Regulation | Highways & Transport | Housing | Other | Planning & Development | Total |
|---|---------------------|----------------|----------------------------|--------------------------------|---|----------------------|---------|-------|------------------------|-------|
| Formal/informal premature complaints          | 0                   | 1              | 0                          | 0                              | 1   | 1                    | 0       | 0     | 1                      | 4     |
| Advice given                                  | 2                   | 1              | 1                          | 1                              | 0   | 0                    | 0       | 0     | 0                      | 5     |
| Forwarded in investigative team (resubmitted) | 0                   | 0              | 0                          | 0                              | 3   | 0                    | 0       | 0     | 1                      | 4     |
| Forwarded to investigative team (new)         | 1                   | 1              | 4                          | 2                              | 0   | 1                    | 4       | 0     | 1                      | 14    |
| Total   | 3                   | 3              | 5                          | 3                              | 4   | 2                    | 4       | 0     | 3                      | 27    |

### Investigative Team

| Decisions   | Reports: maladministration and injustice | Local settlements (no report) | Reports: Maladministration no injustice | Reports: no Maladministration | No Maladministration (no report) | Ombudsman's discretion (no report) | Outside jurisdiction | Total |
|-------------|--|-------------------------------|---|-------------------------------|----------------------------------|------------------------------------|----------------------|-------|
| 2010 / 2011 | 0  | 4                             | 0                                       | 0                             | 4                                | 4                                  | 0                    | 12    |

# Adult social care decisions made from 1 Oct 2010\*

|             | To discontinue investigation, injustice remedied | Total |
|-------------|--|-------|
| 2010 - 2011 | 1  | 1     |

\*These decisions are not included in the main decisions table above. They use the new decision reasons from 1/10/10.

## Provisional comparative response times 01/04/2010 to 31/03/20 11

| Response times          | First enquiries       |                           |
|-------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------|
|                         | No of first Enquiries | Avg no of days to respond |
| 01/04/2010 / 31/03/2011 | 6                     | 27.3                      |
| 2008 / 2009             | 5                     | 21.2                      |

| Types of authority         | <= 28 days<br>% | 29 - 35 days<br>% | >= 36 days<br>% |
|----------------------------|-----------------|-------------------|-----------------|
| District councils          | 65              | 23                | 12              |
| Unitary authorities        | 59              | 28                | 13              |
| Metropolitan authorities   | 64              | 19                | 17              |
| County councils            | 66              | 17                | 17              |
| London boroughs            | 64              | 30                | 6               |
| National parks authorities | 75              | 25                | 0               |

| Response times<br>adult social care<br>1/10/10 - 31/3/11 | First enquiries       |                           |
|--|-----------------------|---------------------------|
|  | No of first Enquiries | Avg no of days to respond |
| 2010/2011  | 1                     | 11.0                      |

## **PERFORMANCE PORTFOLIO**

Report to Portfolio Holder

**14<sup>th</sup> September 2011**



**Report of:** ASSISTANT CHIEF EXECUTIVE

**Subject:** 35TH PHASE OF VIEWPOINT – CITIZEN'S PANEL RESULTS

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### **SUMMARY**

#### **1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To provide an explanation of why topics were included in Viewpoint 35, and what departments plan to do with the results.
- 1.2 To inform the Portfolio Holder of the results from the 35<sup>th</sup> phase of Viewpoint that was distributed to panel members in March 2011.
- 1.3 To provide feedback on what has been done with results from Viewpoint 29, 30, 31 and 32.

#### **2.0 SUMMARY OF CONTENTS**

- 2.1 A report of the results from the 35<sup>th</sup> Viewpoint questionnaire that included: Alcohol consumption in Hartlepool; Culture & Leisure activities in Hartlepool; Hartlepool Beaches; and Hartlepool and the 2012 Olympics; and the rationale behind why these were included in Viewpoint.
- 2.2 Feedback from what has been done with previous Viewpoint results.

#### **3.0 RELEVANCE TO PORTFOLIO MEMBER**

- 3.1 The Portfolio Member has responsibility for consultation issues.

#### **4.0 TYPE OF DECISION**

- 4.1 Non-key.

#### **5.0 DECISION MAKING ROUTE**

- 5.1 Portfolio Holder meeting on 14<sup>th</sup> September 2011

#### **6.0 DECISION REQUIRED**

- 6.1 That the results of the survey be noted.

**Report of:** ASSISTANT CHIEF EXECUTIVE

**Subject:** 35<sup>th</sup> Phase of Viewpoint – Citizen's Panel Results

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## **1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To provide an explanation of why the topics included in Viewpoint 35 were included, and what departments plan to do with the results.
- 1.2 To inform the Portfolio Holder of the results from the 35<sup>th</sup> phase of Viewpoint that was distributed to panel members in March 2011.
- 1.3 To provide feedback on what has been done with results from Viewpoint 29, Viewpoint 30, Viewpoint 31 and Viewpoint 32.

## **2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 Viewpoint, Hartlepool Borough Council's citizen's panel, is one of the ways the council consults and involves local people in the governance of Hartlepool. It is a statistically balanced panel of local people who receive questionnaires at regular intervals throughout the year, asking for their views on a variety of local issues facing the council and Hartlepool as a whole.
- 2.2 Each phase of Viewpoint covers various topics and within this phase there were questions on:
  - Alcohol consumption in Hartlepool
  - Culture & leisure activities in Hartlepool
  - Hartlepool beaches
  - Hartlepool, and the 2012 Olympics
- 2.3 Viewpoint 34 was sent in December 2010 to all 1,424 active members of the panel. A response rate of 74 per cent was achieved with 1033 questionnaires being returned. This survey had the highest number of returns in the ten year history of the panel.
- 2.4 The data obtained through Viewpoint surveys are weighted for analysis purposes. This is because, although the full panel is statistically balanced to provide a representative sample for Hartlepool, not all panel members complete the questionnaire at each phase.
- 2.5 The results have been reported back to the relevant departments within the council and will be reported back to Viewpoint members via a regular newsletter. A copy of the overall report will also be placed in the members' library, in all public libraries across the Borough for public access and has been placed on the council's website.
- 2.6 Since Viewpoint was launched in August 1999, the council has asked Viewpoint members to let us know their thoughts and opinions on 144 topics. Some of these topics have been repeated in order to monitor change over time; however, as a rule

topics will only be repeated in Viewpoint after three years. As we refresh a third of our panel annually, we should have a new panel every three years, and therefore Viewpoint members will not be answering questions they have already answered.

- 2.7 The Regeneration and Neighbourhoods Department is the most frequent user of Viewpoint; however all departments have used Viewpoint at some point since it was launched. Cleveland Police Authority, Cleveland Fire Brigade, and Radio Hartlepool have also asked questions through Viewpoint as external agencies. See table 2.1 for the breakdown of departmental use of Viewpoint.

**Table 2.1 Use of Viewpoint by departments – number of topics covered up to and including Viewpoint 35**

|                               | %  | (No.) |
|-------------------------------|----|-------|
| Regeneration & Neighbourhoods | 53 | (79)  |
| Chief Executive's Department  | 21 | (31)  |
| Child & Adult Services        | 22 | (33)  |
| External agencies             | 3  | (5)   |
| <b>(N=148)</b>                |    |       |

- 2.8 Attached as Appendix A are the headline results for Viewpoint 35.

### 3. WHY TOPICS WERE INCLUDED IN VIEWPOINT 35

#### Alcohol consumption

Contact Officer: Carole Johnson, Head of Health Improvement, Health Improvement, Child and Adults Department

- 3.1 The decision to include alcohol in this questionnaire was to gain peoples views around issues relating to alcohol consumption in Hartlepool. Alcohol affects many people in many ways even if they don't drink it themselves. Alcohol can have a massive impact on individuals, communities, anti-social behaviour, violent crime, resources and the North East economy.
- 3.2 Alcohol is more readily available and more affordable and in return people tend to drink more than the recommended daily/weekly allowance on a regular basis. National health research and more recently consultation by Balance, the North East alcohol office, confirms that alcohol is more readily available and in relative terms more affordable that it was in 1980, with people increasingly buying alcohol in supermarkets and drinking more at home. Balance conducted the 'Big Drink Debate' in 2010 when over 11,000 North East residents reported their drinking habits. Findings illustrated that individuals did not know the recommended allowances, took advantage of discount and drink promotions and tended to drink more than the recommended daily/weekly allowance on a regular basis.
- 3.3 The information gained from this questionnaire will feed into the Local Alcohol Strategy for Hartlepool and go towards informing the Action Plans for future work in Hartlepool.



- 3.4 Viewpoint 35 questions are only one part of the consultation on minimum pricing. Further consultation is taking place with a different survey being distributed through schools and a marketing/information event in Middleton Grange Shopping Centre. The entire consultation is due to close in October 2011.

#### Culture & leisure activities in Hartlepool

Contact Officer: Michelle Daurat, Events and Visitor Service Manager, Cultural Services, Child and Adults Department

- 3.5 Questions were included in Viewpoint to help formulate a marketing plan to increase the proportion of people visiting the various culture and leisure venues in Hartlepool, including Hartlepool's Maritime Experience, The Museum of Hartlepool, Hartlepool Art Gallery, and Hartlepool Town Hall Theatre. The Cultural Services team stated that the survey had given them a lot of useful and sometimes surprising results, which they will use when programming the venues and when planning print, promotions and distribution.

#### Hartlepool Beaches

Contact Officer: Debbie Kershaw, Quality and Safety Officer, Parks and Countryside, Regeneration and Neighbourhoods Department

- 3.6 In September 2010, the Foreshore Management team went through an Internal Audit review, and one of the issues raised was that of customer satisfaction surveys had not been issued to residents to gauge public views on the services provided. Therefore, Viewpoint was used as a means of gauging public opinion on Hartlepool beaches. The Foreshore Management team plan to use the Viewpoint results to determine satisfaction with current services and to improve services where needed, and also to encourage more people to attend beach side events.

#### Hartlepool and the 2012 Olympics

Contact Officer: Maxine Crutwell, Recreation Development Officer, Sports and Recreation, Child and Adults Department

- 3.7 The Sports and Recreation team requested an Olympic themed Viewpoint topic to gauge public opinion on the London 2012 Olympics and to find out how residents wanted to see the Local Authority act upon the up and coming games. Being so far away from the games itself, the Sport and Recreation service felt a duty to ensure residents of Hartlepool felt part of the Olympics, which will act as a platform to engage new audiences into sport within Hartlepool.

### **KEY FINDINGS FROM VIEWPOINT 35**

#### **Alcohol consumption in Hartlepool**

Alcohol and your consumption

- 3.8 We wanted to know if Viewpoint members knew what the recommended daily alcohol unit allowance is for males and females. The recommended daily alcohol unit allowance for males is 3-4 units per day and for women 2-3 units per day. Viewpoint members underestimated the limits, with the majority thinking that the recommended daily alcohol unit allowance for males was 2-3 units per day (49%) and 1-2 units per day (66%) for woman. It is also important to note that 16% of Viewpoint members did not know what the daily limit is for men and 15% did not know what the limit is for females. We are planning to include questions in a future Viewpoint about Alcohol and minimum pricing, and will use this opportunity to try to explore if people are actually aware of what a unit of alcohol is.
- 3.9 Next, we asked Viewpoint members if they keep track of how many units they drink at any one time. Nineteen percent (N=226) of Viewpoint members told us they don't drink alcohol, and have therefore been excluded from this analysis. The majority of Viewpoint members (55%) said they either always or sometimes keep track of how many units they drink at any one time. However, 45% told us that they never keep track of how many units they drink.

Alcohol and anti-social behaviour

- 3.10 We wanted to know if Viewpoint members thought that teenagers hanging around on the street, underage drinking, or young people using drugs were problems in Hartlepool. Viewpoint members thought all three issues were problems in Hartlepool. Eight out of ten (81%) members thought underage drinking was a problem, three quarters (74%) thought young people using drugs was a problem, and two thirds (64%) thought that teenagers hanging around on the street was a problem in Hartlepool.
- 3.11 Next, we wanted to know if Viewpoint members had witnessed or experienced various types of anti-social behaviour as a result of underage drinking in their local areas and in Hartlepool town centre. Viewpoint members were more likely to say they had witnessed swearing or bad language in Hartlepool town centre (80%) and in their local area (66%). They were also more likely to have witnessed people being loud, rowdy or noisy (71% in Hartlepool Town Centre and 60% in their local area), and litter (66% in Hartlepool Town Centre and 64% in their local area).
- 3.12 We presented Viewpoint members with a list of some social problems, and asked them to tell us which they thought were problems in Hartlepool due to excessive alcohol consumption. Nine out of ten (90%) Viewpoint members thought that anti-social behaviour was a social problem in Hartlepool related to excessive alcohol consumption, and over three quarters (77%) thought that criminal offences was a problem.

Measures to tackle the sale of cheap, strong alcohol

- 3.13 We explained to Viewpoint members how the Government is thinking about introducing a minimum price per unit at which alcohol can be sold as part of a wide ranging package of measures to reduce alcohol misuse and the harm it does. We wanted to know what Viewpoint members thought of this proposal.

- 3.14 First of all, we asked Viewpoint members if they think there should be a minimum price per unit of alcohol, and 44 per cent said yes there should. However, a third (36%) said no and one in five (19%) said they were not sure if there should be a minimum price per unit of alcohol.
- 3.15 Next, we asked Viewpoint members if they agreed or disagreed with a list of statements to do with an increase in the cost of cheap alcohol. Overall, seven out of ten (69%) Viewpoint members thought that an increase in the cost of cheap alcohol would punish the majority of people who drink responsibly, and 55% thought it would hit the pockets of Hartlepool residents hard. The same proportion of Viewpoint members (55%) disagreed that an increase in the cost of cheap alcohol would cut drinking problems, and over half (51%) of Viewpoint members disagreed that an increase would reduce underage drinking. For several of the statements, a large proportion of Viewpoint members said they did not know what the effect of this increase would be; particularly with regards to whether the number of crimes would increase in order to fund rising alcohol costs (29%), whether there would be any change at all (28%) or whether it would reduce hospital admissions (21%).

### **Culture & leisure activities in Hartlepool**

- 3.16 We wanted to find out if Viewpoint members had used any of the cultural services ran by Hartlepool Borough Council, including Hartlepool's Maritime Experience, the Museum of Hartlepool, Hartlepool Art Gallery, and Hartlepool Town Hall Theatre.
- 3.17 Three out of ten (31%) Viewpoint members had visited Hartlepool Art Gallery and Town Hall Theatre in the last 12 months, and four out of ten had visited Hartlepool's Maritime experience (38%) or the Museum of Hartlepool (41%) in the past 12 months. However, a third of Viewpoint members had not visited one of these facilities in the past year.
- 3.18 We asked Viewpoint members who had visited one of these venues in the last 12 months to tell us how often they visit them. Viewpoint members were more likely to visit Hartlepool Art Gallery (30%) and the Museum of Hartlepool (27%) frequently (more than three times a year). Forty-one percent of Viewpoint members said they visit Hartlepool's Maritime Experience less than once a year.
- 3.19 Next, we asked the Viewpoint members who had visited one of these venues in the last 12 months to tell us what they think about it. The majority of Viewpoint members were positive about all four venues asked about, with between 91% and 96% saying they thought the venue was good or very good.
- 3.20 When asked where Viewpoint members would look for information about the events at these venues, respondents were more likely to say they would look in the Hartlepool Mail (67%) and Hartbeat (58%).
- 3.21 Viewpoint members were told how the 'What's On' publication is widely distributed to various locations across Hartlepool twice a year, and that it contains a diary of leisure and entertainment events for the current season. We wanted to know if Viewpoint members had seen the current 'What's On' publication, and 41% said they had. Over

half (51%) said they hadn't and nine per cent said they do not know if they have seen this publication.

- 3.22 Next, we asked Viewpoint members if they knew there is a reduced rate for Hartlepool residents to attend events and activities at the Hartlepool Maritime Experience, and only a third of respondents said they were aware. Two thirds (66%) said they were not aware of this reduced rate.

### Hartlepool Town Hall Theatre

- 3.23 Viewpoint members were asked to tell us what, if anything, stops them from seeing events more often at the Town Hall Theatre, and Viewpoint members were more likely to say they do not know what is on (31%). Members were also more likely to say that events are too expensive (24%), they have no time to go (22%), or that they are not interested in the events being shown at the Town Hall (22%). Five per cent of respondents suggested in the 'other' category that the lack of car parking was a factor to them not attending events more often.
- 3.24 When asked what would encourage them to see events more often at the Town Hall Theatre, three-hundred and forty-two members (28%) did not answer this question, which suggests that nothing could encourage them to see more events at Hartlepool Town Hall Theatre. These non-responders have been omitted from the overall calculations. Out of the respondents who answered this question, eight of out ten (78%) respondents said they would be encouraged if there were more variety of shows.
- 3.25 Next, Viewpoint members were presented with a list of different types of shows and asked what, if anything, they would like to see at Hartlepool Town Hall Theatre. Viewpoint members were more likely to say they would like to see live bands (55%) and comedy nights (52%) at Hartlepool Town Hall Theatre. Members were also likely to say they would like to see variety shows (31%), more drama shows (30%), and light entertainment 29%). Also, Viewpoint members with children under the age of 18 living in the household also suggested they would like to see more pantomimes (30%) and more children's theatre (30%).
- 3.26 Viewpoint members were asked to tell us if they were aware they could buy tickets for events at Hartlepool Town Hall by going to the Council's website, or by calling or visiting the tourist information centre (art gallery). Viewpoint members were more likely to be aware that they could buy tickets for events in person at the Tourist Information Centre (53%) or buy calling the Information Centre (47%). Thirty percent of Viewpoint members said they were aware they could get tickets online through the Council's website, which is reassuring as this facility has only recently been introduced.

### **Hartlepool Beaches**

- 3.27 Viewpoint members were asked to tell us which, if any, beaches in Hartlepool they had visited in the past year. Viewpoint members were more likely to say they had visited Seaton Carew beach (81%) in the last year. Half (50%) of Viewpoint members said they had visited Headland Fish Sands.

- 3.28 Viewpoint members were then asked to tell us how often they visited the four main Hartlepool Beaches. Viewpoint members were more likely to say they visited Seaton Carew beach frequently, with a third of Viewpoint members saying they had visited the beach in the last week. Viewpoint members were least likely to say they visit Headland Fish Sands frequently, with two thirds (65%) saying they had last visited this beach between 6 and 12 months ago.
- 3.29 The majority of Viewpoint members (between 45% and 54%) felt that all four Hartlepool beaches were clean and clear of litter and dog dirt. Viewpoint members were more likely to think this true of Seaton Carew beach (54%).
- 3.30 Viewpoint members were more likely to agree that there are enough litter bins and dog litter bins at Seaton Carew beach (46%). However, more Viewpoint members disagreed with this statement than agreed in relation to Headland North Sands beach (40%), Headland Block Sands beach (38%), and Headland Fish Sands beach (37%).
- 3.31 Two thirds (63%) of Viewpoint members agreed that the signage at Seaton Carew was good, compared with between 42% and 48% for the Headland beaches.
- 3.32 Over half (56%) of Viewpoint members felt the beach information at Seaton Carew beach was good, compared to between 37% and 43% for the three beaches at the Headland.
- 3.33 Results were mixed when asked about the paddling pools at Headland Block Sands beach and Seaton Carew beach with between 25% and 30% of Viewpoint members agreeing that the facility was good, and 40% of respondents disagreeing with this statement for both Seaton Carew and Headland Block Sands beaches.
- 3.34 Over half (51%) of Viewpoint members agreed that there were enough visible lifeguards at Seaton Carew beach. Just under half (48%) of Viewpoint members disagreed with this statement when referring to Headland North Sands beach. Results were mixed for Headland Block Sands beach and Headland Fish Sands beach. For these beaches, a third (34% and 36% respectively) agreed with this statement, and a third (35% and 33% respectively) disagreed with this statement.
- 3.35 Viewpoint members told us that they were satisfied with all four of Hartlepool beaches, but were more likely to say they were satisfied with Seaton Carew beach (68%, compared to between 56% and 57% for Headlands beaches).
- 3.36 Viewpoint members were then presented with a list of beach side events and were asked to tell which they had attended in the past. Nearly nine out of ten (88%) respondents said they had attended the Tall Ships event and two thirds (67%) said they have attended a fireworks display in the past.
- 3.37 Viewpoint members were then asked what types of events they would be interested in attending at Hartlepool beaches in the future. Members were more likely to say they would like to attend concerts (62%), family fun days (52%) or car boot sales (45%) at Hartlepool beaches in the future.
- 3.38 Viewpoint members were asked to tell us what activities they do when they visit one of Hartlepool's beaches, and the majority of members (between 78% and 84%) said they

use the beach to go for a walk to walk the dog at all four of Hartlepool's beaches. About half of Viewpoint members (between 45% – 51%) use the beach to sit and relax (with the exception of Headland North sands, where only 38% of respondents said they sit and relax here).

- 3.39 We asked Viewpoint members to tell us if there are any other activities they do when they visit one of Hartlepool's beaches, and ninety-nine Viewpoint members responded. Twenty percent of Viewpoint members told us they go fishing at the beach.

### **Hartlepool and the 2012 Olympics**

- 3.40 Viewpoint members were asked to tell us if they knew the Olympics was to be held in London in 2012; 99% of Viewpoint members told us they were aware of this. Next, they were asked to tell us if they thought the Olympics would encourage them to adopt a healthier lifestyle, and eight out of ten (79%) members said no, it wouldn't.
- 3.41 Viewpoint members were presented with a list of activities that the Council were considering holding in the run up to the 2012 Olympics, and were asked to tell us which events, they would be interested in attending. Forty-two percent of Viewpoint members did not answer this question (501), suggesting that there were no events they were interested in attending. This highlighted to us that we overlooked the option for Viewpoint members to specify that there were no events they were interested in attending. We will make sure we take the lessons learnt from this questionnaire forward when designing future Viewpoint questions. These respondents have been omitted from the below analysis. Out of the Viewpoint members who said they would be interested in attending an Olympic themed event, six out of ten (60%) said they would be interested in water based activities delivered at the marina. Over half (55%) said they would like to attend a 'One Year Countdown' event in July, and half (50%) said they would like to attend an Olympic themes holiday programme.
- 3.42 Viewpoint members were asked to tell us if they would be willing to pay to attend an Olympic Legacy event, and half (50%) said they would only pay if there were a small charge. A third (32%) said they would only attend an Olympic Legacy event if it were free.
- 3.43 Viewpoint members were asked to tell us which Hartlepool athletes they had heard of before receiving the latest Viewpoint survey. Twenty-eight percent of respondents (N=330) did not answer this question and have been omitted from this analysis. Viewpoint members were more likely to say they had heard of Amanda Coulson (78%) and Gemma Lowe (76%).
- 3.44 Next, we wanted to know if Viewpoint members could think of any other excelling athletes from Hartlepool, and forty Viewpoint members responded. Amongst those mentioned by Viewpoint members were Feeney Bros (boxing), Lisa Newton (Swimming), and Anne Marie Kelly (Dressage).

## **4. FEEDBACK FROM PREVIOUS VIEWPOINT SURVEYS**

- 4.1 One of the main aims of the Viewpoint panel is to provide service departments with useable information to assist in service development and delivery. The Corporate

Strategy Division has collected feedback from departments on how Viewpoint results have been used and how they have influenced service provision. This information will be fed back to Viewpoint members to keep them up to date on how their contribution is being used.

4.2 The feedback provided in this report is from topics covered in:

- Viewpoint 29 (June 2009)
- Viewpoint 30 (October 2009)
- Viewpoint 31 (December 2009)
- Viewpoint 32 (April 2010)

4.3 All feedback will be included in the newsletter that accompanies Viewpoint 37, which will be mailed out in October 2011, and will also be uploaded on the Council's website.

#### Council Meetings, Viewpoint 29

4.4 Questions were included in Viewpoint in June 2009 to find out if Viewpoint members are aware that certain public meetings take place, if Viewpoint members had attended a meeting before, and how they would like to find out about these meetings in the future.

4.5 Forty-three percent of Viewpoint members said they would be encouraged to attend future Council meetings if they were advertised better. Viewpoint members also told us that they would like to find out about these public meetings through a list published in the Hartlepool Mail (71%). Since then, the Democratic Services team have requested this press release goes out to Hartlepool Mail with the date, time and venue of meetings, and has requested this press release to then be added to the Council's internet site and Facebook and Twitter pages. This information is sent out on the last Friday of each month.

4.6 Over a third (34%) of Viewpoint members said they would like to see a list of meetings displayed at the Central Library, which prompted checks which confirmed that this information was being displayed clearly at this venue. Half (49%) said they would be encouraged to attend in the future if there was more information about what would be covered at each meeting, which has prompted checks that these details are included on the Council's website.

4.7 In addition, the Democratic Services team produce a document called 'It's your Council', which details how members of the public can get involved. This document has been left in public libraries and at the One Life health centre, and is available on the Council's website by going to [http://www.hartlepool.gov.uk/downloads/file/7141/its\\_your\\_council](http://www.hartlepool.gov.uk/downloads/file/7141/its_your_council).

#### Transport, Viewpoint 30

4.8 In October 2009, some questions were included in Viewpoint to understand more about the types of transport Viewpoint members use and the journeys they make. The information from this Viewpoint topic was used to develop the third Local Transport Plan and was also used to inform the development of the Council's Local Sustainable Transport bid. This was a bid for around £750,000 of government funding to deliver

sustainable transport projects within Hartlepool over a four year period. Unfortunately, the team discovered the funding bid was unsuccessful in July 2011.

#### Recycling and Kerbside Collections, Viewpoint 30

- 4.9 Questions were included in Viewpoint in October 2009, to find out how satisfied members of the public were with various aspects of the recycling service offered by Hartlepool Borough Council. Viewpoint members told us they were not very satisfied with the recycling containers provided or the level of street cleanliness/tidiness after the collection. Viewpoint members also provided several comments on these aspects when asked to tell us about any improvements that can be made to the kerbside collection service.
- 4.10 Following on from these comments and low levels of satisfaction, the Waste and Environmental Services team have decided to undertake a full public consultation on the recycling collection service, including the recycling containers, which will be included in Viewpoint in October 2011.
- 4.11 In addition, 17 percent of Viewpoint members said they would be encouraged to recycle more if there were better or new communal recycling facilities at supermarkets or car parks. Over the past couple of years the Bring Centres in Hartlepool have been improved and now have new containers which accept a greater range of materials, and they have been tidied up and up and have new iconography in line with the Hartlepool Waste Recycling Centre and literature.

#### A new nuclear power station for Hartlepool, Viewpoint 31

- 4.12 In December 2009 we included some questions in Viewpoint about a new nuclear power station for Hartlepool. This consultation was part of a wider consultation process conducted by the Council to help understand public opinion in relation to the development of a new nuclear power station in Hartlepool. The Government had produced a series of draft National Policy Statements (PPS) relating to energy generation one of which related to Nuclear Power Generation. The PPS identified shortlisted potential sites, including one at Hartlepool adjacent to the existing nuclear power station, for the construction of a new generation of nuclear power stations as part of an overall strategy for future power generation. In addition to Viewpoint, the consultation also included an on-line questionnaire (on the Council's website), and a Question Time style event which allowed an invited panel of experts to respond to and debate a series of questions, and discussions with key groups and organisations including Hartlepool Partnership, and the NAP, Economic and Environmental Forums. The results of all the consultation was collated and presented to Cabinet on 15th February 2010 who agreed a response to the Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC). The consultations overall reflected the feed back received through the Viewpoint consultation which indicate a significant majority in favour of a new nuclear power station in Hartlepool. DECC has subsequently produced final versions of the PPS which include Hartlepool as a shortlisted site for a new nuclear power station.



Help yourself to Council services, Viewpoint 32

- 4.13 In April 2010 we asked Viewpoint members some questions about contacting the Council, and which methods they would prefer to use. Viewpoint members were asked to tell us how they would prefer to contact the council to pay for things, to apply for things, to report things, and to book things. For each of these, Viewpoint members were more likely to say they would use online forms or an automated telephone service, to contact the Council. Very few Viewpoint members said they would use a speech recognition service, text or SMS, or use kiosks with computers.
- 4.14 Therefore, the Central Services team have decided to develop more online forms each year so that customers have access 24 hours a day, 7 days a week to report, book and pay for services. Examples of new forms which have been developed are for street cleansing requests and pot-hole reports. Also, some existing online forms have been updated to be more specific and relevant, for example the forms to report street light problems or to report a dead animal. Access to online forms is available via the Council's website and, for those who do not have their own computer, access to the internet is available at the Central and branch libraries
- 4.15 The Council have also implemented an automated telephone, self serve system for payments, which 27% of Viewpoint members said they would be interested in.

The Internet and You, Viewpoint 32

- 4.16 In April 2010, we included some questions in Viewpoint to find out about internet access in Hartlepool and also to find out how Viewpoint members would like to use the Council's website.
- 4.17 From the results we found out that 78% of Viewpoint members have access to a computer with internet connection in their home. This has increased from 72% in 2006, 61% in 2004, and 45% in 2002. It is important for the Council to monitor the proportion of Hartlepool residents with internet access, as it helps to inform what services we could deliver online with inherently disenfranchising the local population. For example, the Council is moving towards more online self serve mechanisms, which will also save the Council money. An additional 10 online services were added during 2010/11. These additional services are as follows:
- Online books
  - Report anti social behaviour
  - Community Centre Bookings
  - Fixed Penalty fine payments
  - Allotment Application/Waiting list
  - Report a pothole
  - Fly tipping report
  - Weight Management Service
  - Online audio books
  - Report a stray dog
- 4.18 In addition, three quarters (76%) of Viewpoint members said they were aware they can access the internet free from their local library. As the Council moves towards more

online methods of contact and communication, it is important to let Hartlepool residents know that they can access these services free of charge through the local library.

- 4.19 Corporate ICT asked Viewpoint members how they would like to use the Council's website, and Viewpoint members said they would like to get information about Council services, such as planning, recycling, and Council jobs. In light of this, Corporate ICT has developed the Council's website homepage to highlight these services. Viewpoint members also said they would like to use the Council's website to complete Council forms. In line with the 'Help yourself to Council services' feedback above, the Council are developing more online forms for people to contact the Council through our website.

#### Awareness of Benefits, Viewpoint 32

- 4.20 Some questions were included in Viewpoint In April 2010 to find out if people knew where to go for advice and information about benefits, and if they know how to claim them. The results highlighted that only 23% of Viewpoint members were aware that people who are self employed can claim benefits. This information will be used to target a take up campaign specifically at this group before the end of this financial year.
- 4.21 The Benefits Team have never had any accurate information on the number of customers who use the website but had always assumed it was quite low. The results show that 37% of respondents would use the website therefore more resources have been put into adding and updating benefits information and more self serve options have been included.
- 4.22 Viewpoint members were asked to tell us where they would like to see information about benefits; the most popular sources were in local newspapers/ council magazines and leaflets delivered to the customer's home. The Benefits Team has recently taken responsibility for assessing entitlement to free school meals and have worked closely with the Public Relations team to get publicity in the Hartlepool Mail and have continued to use Hartbeat. In addition, leaflets were handed at a number of events and at parent evenings in schools before the end of term. The Borough Council was concerned that up to 600 children may be missing out on free school meals. In addition, with the Government providing an additional £430 for each pupil claiming free school meals, increasing take up could bring an additional £258,000 to Hartlepool schools. This has been a very successful campaign. Since the beginning of our most recent campaign we have successfully awarded 177 free school meals (at the time of writing) to customers who weren't previously in receipt of this benefit. Benefits staff are continuing to contact potential customers and the number of awards is expected to increase further.

## **5. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 5.1 It is recommended that the Portfolio Holder note the results.

**6. CONTACT OFFICER**

Lisa Anderson, Research Officer  
Chief Executive's Department, Corporate Strategy Division  
Hartlepool Borough Council

Tel No: (01429) 523041

Email: [lisa.anderson@hartlepool.gov.uk](mailto:lisa.anderson@hartlepool.gov.uk)

## Appendix 1 – Viewpoint 34 Headline Results

VP35, March 2001, 74% response rate, 1033 completed questionnaires (all results are weighted to 1200 responses). # = less than 0.5%; - = no response; \* = excluded from calculations

# Your views are important

This latest Viewpoint questionnaire should only take about 10 to 15 minutes to complete and seeks your views on: **Alcohol consumption in Hartlepool; Culture & leisure activities in Hartlepool; Hartlepool's beaches; and Hartlepool and the 2012 Olympics.** When you have completed the questionnaire please return it to us in the enclosed reply paid envelope, no stamp required, by **1<sup>st</sup> April 2011**.

## Alcohol consumption in Hartlepool

Alcohol consumption in the UK has more than doubled over the last 40 years, and in the North East, almost a third of men and a quarter of women are drinking more than the recommended limits. Excessive alcohol consumption can have serious consequences, not only for the individual, but for communities. For example, in the North East, alcohol specific hospital admissions are up to 60% higher than the national average; 46% of all violent crime is alcohol related; and alcohol related issues cost the North East economy more than £1bn a year. A large contributory factor to why the North East has an alcohol problem is that alcohol is more affordable today, in relative terms, than it was in 1980. We would like to find out Viewpoint members knowledge about the recommended weekly alcohol limits, whether you think alcohol related anti-social behaviour is a problem in your local area, and what your thoughts are about a measures to tackle the sale of cheap, strong alcohol.

**If you would like any further information on this topic please contact:  
Sharon Robson on (01429) 523783 or via e-mail [sharon.robson2@nhs.net](mailto:sharon.robson2@nhs.net)**

### Alcohol and your consumption

- 1. Do you know what the recommended daily alcohol unit allowance is for males and females? (Please tick one box per column)**

|                     | Male (N=1149) | Female (N=1145) |
|---------------------|---------------|-----------------|
| 1 – 2 units per day | 17%           | 66%             |
| 2 – 3 units per day | 49%           | 17%             |
| 3 – 4 units per day | 18%           | 1%              |
| 4 – 5 units per day | 1%            | #               |
| Don't know          | 16%           | 15%             |

**2. Do you keep track of how many units you drink at any one time? (N=1167)**Yes, always  
18%Yes, sometimes  
26%No, never  
36%Don't drink alcohol  
19%Alcohol and anti-social behaviour**3. Please let us know how much of a problem you find the following things in Hartlepool.** (Please tick one box on each row)

|   | Very big problem | Fairly big problem | Not a very big problem | Not a problem at all |
|---|------------------|--------------------|------------------------|----------------------|
| Teenagers hanging around on the street (N=1149) | 21%              | 42%                | 31%                    | 6%                   |
| Underage drinking (N=1143)                      | 34%              | 47%                | 16%                    | 3%                   |
| Young people using drugs (N=1128)               | 32%              | 41%                | 21%                    | 5%                   |

**4. Have you witnessed or experienced any of the following types of anti-social behaviour as a result of underage drinking in a) your local area, and b) Hartlepool town centre?** (Please tick all that apply in each column)

|  | a) Your local area<br>(N=956) | b) Hartlepool town centre<br>(N=960) |
|--|-------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Swearing/using bad language                  | 66%                           | 80%                                  |
| Being loud, rowdy or noisy                   | 60%                           | 71%                                  |
| Drinking alcohol                             | 58%                           | 54%                                  |
| Just being a general nuisance                | 50%                           | 60%                                  |
| Littering (e.g. spitting gum on the street)  | 64%                           | 66%                                  |
| Blocking the pavement                        | 34%                           | 40%                                  |
| Being abusive/harassing or insulting people  | 26%                           | 36%                                  |
| Fighting with each other                     | 24%                           | 38%                                  |
| Taking drugs                                 | 16%                           | 22%                                  |
| Intimidating or threatening people           | 21%                           | 30%                                  |
| Blocking the entrance to shops               | 38%                           | 40%                                  |
| Damaging property or cars                    | 31%                           | 18%                                  |
| Writing graffiti                             | 25%                           | 23%                                  |
| Carrying knives                              | 3%                            | 5%                                   |
| Physically assaulting people                 | 8%                            | 11%                                  |
| Mugging or robbing people                    | 5%                            | 8%                                   |
| Not doing anything in particular / loitering | 58%                           | 55%                                  |
| Other behaviours (please write below)        | 4%                            | 2%                                   |

**5. Which of the following social problems related to excessive alcohol consumption do you think are problems in Hartlepool?** (Please tick all that apply)  
(N=1159)

|                                    |     |
|------------------------------------|-----|
| Teenage pregnancies                | 58% |
| Criminal offences                  | 77% |
| Unemployment                       | 50% |
| Domestic violence                  | 70% |
| Relationship breakdowns/problems   | 59% |
| Drink driving offences             | 65% |
| Child neglect                      | 51% |
| High number of hospital admissions | 69% |
| Anti-social behaviour              | 90% |

Measures to tackle the sale of cheap, strong alcohol

Research has proved that the price of alcohol has a huge influence on how much we drink. In the North East, one in three of us admits that discounts and drinks promotions increase the amount we consume. To reduce alcohol misuse and the harm it does, it is suggested that we need to tackle the sale of cheap, strong alcohol. To do this the Government is consulting about introducing a minimum price per unit at which alcohol can be sold, as part of a wide-ranging package of measures. The minimum price will be about 50p per unit.

**6. Do you think there should be a minimum price per unit of alcohol?** (N=1155)

|     |     |          |
|-----|-----|----------|
| Yes | No  | Not sure |
| 44% | 36% | 19%      |

**7. Please let us know if you agree or disagree with the following statements:**  
(Please tick one box per row)

| <b>An increase in the cost of cheap alcohol would...</b>                            | <b>Agree</b> | <b>Disagree</b> | <b>Don't know</b> |
|---|--------------|-----------------|-------------------|
| ... reduce underage drinking (N=1155)   | 38%          | 51%             | 12%               |
| ... punish the majority of people who drink responsibly (N=1139)                    | 69%          | 26%             | 5%                |
| ... cut binge drinking problems (N=1143)  | 33%          | 55%             | 13%               |
| ... will hit the pockets of Hartlepool residents hard (N=1125)                      | 55%          | 27%             | 19%               |
| ... reduce the number of alcohol related crimes (N=1140)                            | 36%          | 47%             | 16%               |
| ... increase the number of crimes in order to fund increased alcohol costs (N=1120) | 45%          | 26%             | 29%               |
| ... reduce the number of hospital admissions (N=1137)                               | 34%          | 44%             | 21%               |

|                                 |     |     |     |
|---------------------------------|-----|-----|-----|
| ... not change anything (N=978) | 40% | 32% | 28% |
|---------------------------------|-----|-----|-----|

## Culture & leisure activities in Hartlepool

We would like to find out if you have used any of the cultural services run by Hartlepool Borough Council, including the Hartlepool Town Hall Theatre, the Museum of Hartlepool, and Hartlepool's Maritime Experience. Also, we would like to find out what types of events you would like to see at Hartlepool Town Hall Theatre to help Hartlepool Borough Council plan their theatre events from spring onwards.

**If you would like any further information on this topic please contact:**  
**Claire Munroe on (01429) 523445 or via e-mail [Claire.munroe@hartlepool.gov.uk](mailto:Claire.munroe@hartlepool.gov.uk)**

**8. Which of the following, if any, have you visited in the last 12 months?** (Please tick all that apply) (N=1159)

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| Hartlepool's Maritime Experience (formerly Historic Quay) | 38% |
| The Museum of Hartlepool                                  | 41% |
| Hartlepool Art Gallery                                    | 31% |
| Hartlepool Town Hall Theatre                              | 31% |
| None of the above   | 33% |

**9. If you have visited one of these venues in the last 12 months, please tell us how often you visit them?** (Please tick one box per row)

|  | More than<br>three times a<br>year | Once or twice<br>a year | Less than<br>once a year | Never / can't<br>remember |
|--|------------------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|
| Hartlepool's Maritime Experience (N=589) | 14%                                | 45%                     | 41%                      | *                         |
| The Museum of Hartlepool (N=612)         | 27%                                | 42%                     | 31%                      | *                         |
| Hartlepool Art Gallery (N=485)           | 30%                                | 36%                     | 34%                      | *                         |
| Hartlepool Town Hall Theatre (N=500)     | 18%                                | 45%                     | 37%                      | *                         |

**10. Thinking about the last time you visited one of these venues, what did you think about it?** (Please tick one box per row)

|  | Very<br>good | Good | Poor | Very<br>poor | Not visited<br>/ Don't<br>know | Very<br>good /<br>good | Poor /<br>very poor |
|--|--------------|------|------|--------------|--------------------------------|------------------------|---------------------|
| Hartlepool's Maritime Experience (N=784) | 45%          | 50%  | 4%   | 1%           | *                              | 96%                    | 4%                  |
| The Museum of Hartlepool (N=735)         | 37%          | 56%  | 6%   | 1%           | *                              | 93%                    | 7%                  |

|   |     |     |    |    |   |     |    |
|---|-----|-----|----|----|---|-----|----|
| Hartlepool Art Gallery<br>(N=570)       | 35% | 56% | 8% | 1% | * | 91% | 9% |
| Hartlepool Town Hall<br>Theatre (N=575) | 31% | 60% | 8% | 1% | * | 91% | 9% |

**11. Where would you look for information about the events at these venues? (Please tick all that apply) (N=1130)**

|   |                                  |
|---|----------------------------------|
| 67% Hartlepool Mail (adverts & articles)                  | 44% Internet                     |
| 58% Hartbeat  | 9% Banners                       |
| 31% What's On publication                                 | 34% Posters                      |
| 27% Tourist Information Centre                            | 39% Leaflets                     |
| 14% Other local or regional entertainment guides/listings | 4% Other (please write in below) |
| Other: Library (2%)<br>Other (3%)                         |                                  |

**12. The 'What's On' publication is widely distributed to various locations across the borough twice a year. It contains a diary of leisure and entertainment events for the current season. Have you seen the current "What's On" publication? (N=1159)**

|            |           |                  |
|------------|-----------|------------------|
| Yes<br>41% | No<br>51% | Don't know<br>9% |
|------------|-----------|------------------|

**13. Did you know that there is a reduced rate for Hartlepool residents to attend events and activities at the Hartlepool Maritime Experience? (This rate is currently £4 per adult and £3.50 per child) (N=1166)**

|            |           |
|------------|-----------|
| Yes<br>34% | No<br>66% |
|------------|-----------|

#### Hartlepool Town Hall Theatre

**14. Just thinking about the Hartlepool Town Hall Theatre, what, if anything, stops you from seeing events there more often? (Please tick all that apply) (N=1081)**

|   |  |
|---|--|
| 24% Events are too expensive                                  | 31% Don't know what's on                     |
| 22% No time to go   | 9% Poor health                               |
| 22% Not interested in the events being shown at the Town Hall | 5% Difficult to get to the Town Hall         |
| 17% Events on at the Town Hall are not very good/interesting  | 10% Not interested in going to the Town Hall |
| 8% Don't know where to get tickets                            | 8% Other (please write in below)             |



Other: Lack of car parking (5%)  
Other (3%)

**15. What would encourage you to see events more often at the Town Hall Theatre?**  
(Please tick all that apply) (N=858)

|                                |                                  |
|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 20% Season tickets / discounts | 27% Early booking discount       |
| 7% Group discounts             | 78% More variety of shows        |
| 16% Ease of making a booking   | 4% Other (please write in below) |
| Other:                         |                                  |

**16. Which of the following, if any, would you like to see at Hartlepool Town Hall Theatre?** (Please tick all that apply) (993)

|   |                     |
|---|---------------------|
| 30% More drama shows                            | 55% Live Bands      |
| 23% Children's Theatre                          | 13% Classical Music |
| 9% Opera  | 52% Comedy nights   |
| 9% Contemporary dance                           | 12% Shakespeare     |
| 12% Contemporary music                          | 24% Tribute bands   |
| 29% Light Entertainment e.g. cabaret/music hall | 25% Pantomime       |
| 27% Specialist Music Nights                     | 13% Brass Bands     |
| 31% Variety shows                               | 15% Ballet          |
| 15% Traditional shows                           | 1% Other            |

**17. Did you know that you could buy tickets for events at Hartlepool Town Hall Theatre in the following places?** (Please tick all that apply)

|  | Yes | No  |
|--|-----|-----|
| Phone the Tourist information centre (Art Gallery) (N=1091)        | 47% | 53% |
| In person at the Tourist information centre (Art Gallery) (N=1102) | 53% | 48% |
| Online (through the Council's website) (N=1039)                    | 30% | 70% |

**18. Would you like to join a mailing list to find out about future events and shows at Hartlepool Town Hall Theatre? If yes, please let us know your preferred method of contact below:**

By post \*

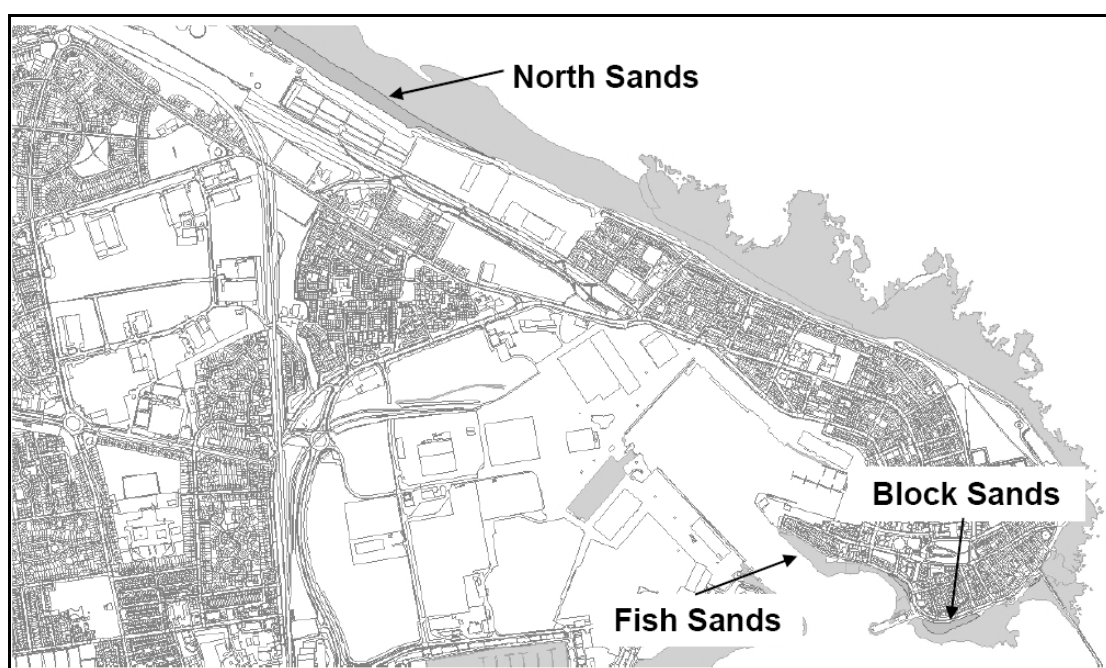
Via email \*

\* To follow

## Hartlepool Beaches

Hartlepool has a diverse foreshore, ranging from rugged rocky areas of the Headland to sandy Seaton Carew and its amenities; in addition the beaches are used for various reasons ranging from the family day out at the seaside, getting away from it all or enjoying the wildlife at the special protected areas. We would like to gain your views and opinions of the beaches and their facilities and services.

**If you would like any further information on this topic please contact:**  
Debbie Kershaw on (01429) 523412 or via e-mail [debbie.kershaw@hartlepool.gov.uk](mailto:debbie.kershaw@hartlepool.gov.uk)



**19. Have you visited any of the following Hartlepool Beaches in the past year?**  
(Please tick all that apply) (N=1186)

|                          |  |
|--------------------------|--|
| 81% Seaton Carew         | 39% Headland North Sands   |
| 50% Headland Fish Sands  | 20% Other beach in Hartlepool  |
| 42% Headland Block Sands | 13% Have not visited a beach in Hartlepool in the past year (Go to Q.28) |

**20. We would like to know how recently you last visited one of Hartlepool's four main beaches. Was it...** (Please tick one box on each line)

|                             | ...in the last week | ...in the last month | ...in the last six months | ...in the last year |
|-----------------------------|---------------------|----------------------|---------------------------|---------------------|
| Seaton Carew (N=947)        | 33%                 | 24%                  | 25%                       | 18%                 |
| Headland Fish Sands (N=580) | 10%                 | 25%                  | 42%                       | 23%                 |

|                              |     |     |     |     |
|------------------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Headland Block Sands (N=478) | 13% | 24% | 43% | 20% |
| Headland North Sands (N=445) | 19% | 27% | 33% | 21% |

We would like to find out what you think about these beaches in Hartlepool. Please tell us whether you agree or disagree with the following statements. If you have not visited one these four Hartlepool beaches in the past 12 months, please go to **Question 28**. (Please tick one box on each row) \* Don't know option removed from analysis

**21. The following Hartlepool beaches are clean and clear of litter and dog dirt**

|                              | Agree | Neither agree nor disagree | Disagree |
|------------------------------|-------|----------------------------|----------|
| Seaton Carew (N=924)         | 54%   | 27%                        | 20%      |
| Headland Fish Sands (N=580)  | 50%   | 26%                        | 24%      |
| Headland Block Sands (N=521) | 45%   | 28%                        | 27%      |
| Headland North Sands (N=472) | 45%   | 28%                        | 27%      |

**22. There are enough litter bins and dog little bins at the following Hartlepool beaches**

|                              | Agree | Neither agree nor disagree | Disagree |
|------------------------------|-------|----------------------------|----------|
| Seaton Carew (N=851)         | 46%   | 21%                        | 33%      |
| Headland Fish Sands (N=539)  | 36%   | 27%                        | 37%      |
| Headland Block Sands (N=496) | 37%   | 25%                        | 38%      |
| Headland North Sands (N=449) | 36%   | 24%                        | 40%      |

**23. The signage at the following Hartlepool beaches are good**

|                              | Agree | Neither agree nor disagree | Disagree |
|------------------------------|-------|----------------------------|----------|
| Seaton Carew (N=851)         | 46%   | 21%                        | 33%      |
| Headland Fish Sands (N=539)  | 36%   | 27%                        | 37%      |
| Headland Block Sands (N=496) | 37%   | 25%                        | 38%      |
| Headland North Sands (N=449) | 36%   | 24%                        | 40%      |

**24. The beach information boards at the following Hartlepool beaches are good.**

|                              | Agree | Neither agree nor disagree | Disagree |
|------------------------------|-------|----------------------------|----------|
| Seaton Carew (N=848)         | 56%   | 38%                        | 6%       |
| Headland Fish Sands (N=536)  | 43%   | 48%                        | 10%      |
| Headland Block Sands (N=472) | 39%   | 49%                        | 12%      |
| Headland North Sands (N=455) | 37%   | 48%                        | 16%      |

**25. The paddling pools at the following Hartlepool beaches are good**

|                              | Agree | Neither agree nor disagree | Disagree |
|------------------------------|-------|----------------------------|----------|
| Seaton Carew (N=700)         | 25%   | 35%                        | 40%      |
| Headland Block Sands (N=541) | 30%   | 30%                        | 40%      |

**26.****26. There are enough visible lifeguards at the following Hartlepool beaches.**

|                              | Agree | Neither agree nor disagree | Disagree |
|------------------------------|-------|----------------------------|----------|
| Seaton Carew (N=719)         | 51%   | 27%                        | 22%      |
| Headland Fish Sands (N=456)  | 36%   | 31%                        | 33%      |
| Headland Block Sands (N=410) | 34%   | 31%                        | 35%      |
| Headland North Sands (N=370) | 18%   | 34%                        | 48%      |

**27. Overall, how satisfied are you with the following Hartlepool beaches?**

|                              | Satisfied | Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied | Dissatisfied |
|------------------------------|-----------|------------------------------------|--------------|
| Seaton Carew (N=926)         | 68%       | 24%                                | 7%           |
| Headland Fish Sands (N=607)  | 56%       | 33%                                | 10%          |
| Headland Block Sands (N=542) | 57%       | 32%                                | 11%          |
| Headland North Sands (N=508) | 57%       | 33%                                | 10%          |

**28. What improvements, if any, would you like to see made to the following Hartlepool beaches? (Please write in the space provided)**

|   |   |
|---|---|
| a. Seaton Carew: (N=361)<br><b>TO FOLLOW IN MAIN REPORT</b>         | b. Headland Fish Sands: (N=189)<br><b>TO FOLLOW IN MAIN REPORT</b>  |
| c. Headland Block Sands: (N=183)<br><b>TO FOLLOW IN MAIN REPORT</b> | d. Headland North Sands: (N=164)<br><b>TO FOLLOW IN MAIN REPORT</b> |

**29. Have you attended any of the following beach side events?**

(Please tick all that apply) (N=1039)

|                       |                   |
|-----------------------|-------------------|
| 67% Fireworks display | 16% Race for life |
| 88% Tall Ships event  | 12% Midnight Walk |

|                   |                                  |
|-------------------|----------------------------------|
| 10% Kite festival | 29% Boxing Day Dip               |
| 49% Carnival      | 3% Thundercat racing             |
| 3% Big tidy up    | 1% Other (please write in below) |

30.

**30. Would you be interested in attending any of the following activities or events at Hartlepool's beaches in the future?** (Please tick all that apply) (N=909)

|   |                           |
|---|---------------------------|
| 25% Beach Sporting events (e.g. rugby)        | 27% Raft race             |
| 18% Beach lifeguard / lifesaving competitions | 57% Family fun days       |
| 16% Sponsored events such as a sea swim       | 38% Water sports displays |
| 35% Wildlife events (rock pooling etc)        | 17% Banana rides          |
| 16% Beach volley ball                         | 18% Fit camps             |
| 45% Car boot sales                            | 15% Triathlon / biathlon  |
| 21% Donkey rides                              | 34% Beach party           |
| 38% Crazy golf                                | 62% Concerts              |
| Other (please write in): 3%                   |                           |

**31. Which of the following activities do you do when you visit one of Hartlepool's beaches?** (Please tick all that apply)

|                         | Seaton Carew<br>(N=985) | Headland Fish<br>Sands<br>(N=565) | Headland<br>Block Sands<br>(N=487) | Headland<br>North Sands<br>(N=444) |
|-------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Walking / dog walking   | 84%                     | 79%                               | 78%                                | 82%                                |
| Jogging / running       | 14%                     | 5%                                | 8%                                 | 9%                                 |
| Cycling                 | 20%                     | 13%                               | 15%                                | 15%                                |
| Paddling in the sea     | 33%                     | 25%                               | 19%                                | 19%                                |
| Swimming                | 4%                      | 2%                                | 1%                                 | 1%                                 |
| Surfing / body boarding | 1%                      | 1%                                | 0                                  | #                                  |
| Canoeing / kayaking     | 1%                      | 1%                                | 0                                  | 0                                  |
| Wind / kite surfing     | 1%                      | #                                 | 0                                  | 1%                                 |
| Horse riding            | 2%                      | 1%                                | 2%                                 | 2%                                 |
| Flying a kite           | 7%                      | 2%                                | 2%                                 | 8%                                 |
| Sit and relax / Picnic  | 51%                     | 48%                               | 45%                                | 38%                                |
| Bird watching           | 12%                     | 12%                               | 14%                                | 16%                                |

**32. Are there any other activities you do when you visit one of Hartlepool's beaches? If so, please use the space below to tell us about them. (N=99)**

|               |       |              |       |
|---------------|-------|--------------|-------|
| Fishing       | (20%) | Sand casting | (11%) |
| Beach combing | (14%) | Rock pooling | (10%) |
| Photography   | (12%) | Other        | (38%) |

## Hartlepool, and the 2012 Olympics

There is just over one year left until the Olympic Games, which will be held in London from 24<sup>th</sup> July 2012. In the run up to the 2012 Olympics, we would like to create an Olympic Legacy for the town, and would like to know what programmes or events Hartlepool residents want as part of this legacy.

**If you would like any further information on this topic please contact:**  
**Maxine Crutwell on (01429) 523404 or via e-mail [sport.recreation@hartlepool.gov.uk](mailto:sport.recreation@hartlepool.gov.uk)**

**33. Before receiving this questionnaire, did you know that the Olympics will be held in London in 2012? (N=1166)**

|     |    |
|-----|----|
| Yes | No |
| 99% | 1% |

**34. Do you think the Olympics will encourage you to adopt a healthier lifestyle? (N=1149)**

|     |     |
|-----|-----|
| Yes | No  |
| 21% | 79% |

**35. The Council would like to run a range of events in the run up to the 2012 Olympics. Which of the following events, if any, would you be interested in attending? (Please tick all that apply) (N=1200)**

|  |     |
|--|-----|
| A 'One Year Countdown' event in July, which includes family activities such as story telling, street theatre, sports displays and circus skills. | 32% |
| Olympic themed activities based held at Mill House Leisure Centre, Headland Sports Hall, Grayfields, Summerhill and the Borough Hall.            | 26% |
| Water-based activities delivered at the marina (Hartlepool is a pre Olympic training camp for sailing)   | 35% |
| Arts Exhibitions, e.g., highlighting talented Hartlepool female athletes - past & present  | 19% |
| Olympic themed holiday programmes (such as festivals, challenges and competitions, and sports specific activities)                               | 29% |
| No answer  | 42% |

**36. Do you have any other ideas of events we could do as part of our Olympic Legacy? If so, please use the space below to tell us about them: (N=110)**

Don't waste money (43%)  
Through schools (27%)  
Other (30%)

**37.**

**38. Would you be willing to pay a charge to attend an Olympic Legacy event? (N=899)**

Would still attend events if there were a charge 18%  
Would only pay if there was small charge 50%  
Would only attend an Olympic Legacy event if it were free 32%

**39. Listed below are just a few of Hartlepool's excelling athletes, some of whom will be aiming to qualify for the 2012 Olympics. We would like to know which of the following athletes you have heard of before receiving this survey: (Please tick all that apply) (N=1200)**

|  |     |
|--|-----|
| Savannah Marshall* (Boxer)                     | 31% |
| Amanda Coulson* (Boxer)                        | 57% |
| Gemma Lowe* (Swimming)                         | 55% |
| Alex Craig (Fencing)                           | 9%  |
| Ashleigh Wood (Athletics)                      | 10% |
| Lindsey Johnson (Football - plays for England) | 30% |
| Amy Coulson (Karate - International level)     | 20% |
| No answer                                      | 28% |

\* Will be aiming to qualify for the 2012 Olympics

**40. Can you think of any other excelling athletes from Hartlepool? If so, please use the space below to tell us who:**

|                             |       |
|-----------------------------|-------|
| Feeney Bros – Boxing        | (17%) |
| Lisa Newton – Swimming      | (17%) |
| Anne Marie Kelly – Dressage | (17%) |
| Cope – Boxing               | (9%)  |
| Tony Morrell – Athletics    | (8%)  |
| Other                       | (50%) |

**41. Would you be interested in volunteering to help out with Hartlepool's Olympic Legacy? If so, please tick the box below:**

Yes, I would be interested in helping out with Hartlepool's Olympic Legacy, and am happy for my details to be passed onto the Sports and Recreation team within Hartlepool Borough Council.

☐ 1

**Thank you for completing this round of View point. Please return the questionnaire in the**

|  |
|--|
| <b>post-paid envelope by 1<sup>st</sup> April 2011</b> |
|--|

By completing this questionnaire you give Hartlepool Borough Council the authority to collect and retain information about you. The information collected about you will be held securely and will be processed to produce statistical reports. No personal data will be disclosed. In order to run Viewpoint Citizens Panel, the Council has entered into a contract with ADTS, and will share the information with that organisation.

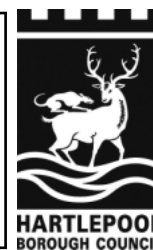
For the purposes of provision of this service, ADTS acts as a department of the Council and is bound by the contract to treat your information confidentially. Hartlepool Borough Council is the Data Controller for the purposes of the Data Protection Act.



## **PERFORMANCE PORTFOLIO**

Report to Portfolio Holder

14 September 2011



**Report of:** Chief Customer and Workforce Services Officer

**Subject:** SINGLE STATUS AGREEMENT APPEALS

---

### **SUMMARY**

#### **1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

To provide an update on progress on appeals received and obtain ratification of Appeals Panel outcomes in respect of High, Medium, Low and Very Low Priority Appeals.

#### **2. SUMMARY OF CONTENTS**

The report provides a background to the Appeals Procedure together with an update on the progress of appeals received and requests ratification of Appeals Panel outcomes in respect of High, Medium, Low and Very Low Priority Appeals.

#### **3. RELEVANCE TO PORTFOLIO MEMBER**

Corporate Issues.

#### **4. TYPE OF DECISION**

Non Key.

#### **5. DECISION MAKING ROUTE**

Portfolio meeting only.

#### **6. DECISION(S) REQUIRED**

To note progress on appeals received and ratify Appeals Panel outcomes in respect of High, Medium, Low and Very Low Priority Appeals.

**Report of:** Chief Customer and Workforce Services Officer

**Subject:** SINGLE STATUS AGREEMENT APPEALS

---

## 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To provide an update on progress on appeals received and obtain ratification of Appeals Panel outcomes in respect of High, Medium, Low and Very Low priority appeals.

## 2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Single Status Appeals Procedure was agreed at the Performance Portfolio Holder meeting on 27 June 2008. This has been reviewed in the light of experience of operating it for High Priority Appeals and a revised Appeals procedure has been implemented following Performance Portfolio ratification.

- 2.2 The revised procedure provides:

- “The Executive Member with responsibility for Workforce Services will be regularly advised of appeals received and progress made in dealing with them” and;
- “All Appeal Panel outcomes must be ratified by the Executive Member with responsibility for Workforce Services or Governors (Governing Body, Pay Review Committee or Appeals Committee), as appropriate, prior to any changes being implemented.”

- 2.3 Appeals are prioritised in accordance with the Single Status Agreement as detailed in Table 1.

**Table 1**

| Priority | Type of Appeal   |
|----------|--|
| High     | Appeals received from current employees who are continuing to receive protection at 1 July 2008/Appeals which do not need an Appeals Panel to meet/ Appeals from employees who leave the Council from areas where job losses are needed/ Appeals from employees who retire from the Council due to ill health and the Teesside Pension Fund Doctor (for LGPS members) or the Council's Occupational Health Advisor (for non LGPS members) has determined that they meet the Local Government Pension Fund Tier 3 |

|                 |  |
|-----------------|--|
|                 | Ill Health criteria  |
| <b>Medium</b>   | Appeals received from current employees who were receiving protection prior to 1 July 2008/Appeals received from current employees who do not gain initially |
| <b>Low</b>      | Appeals received from current employees who gained initially   |
| <b>Very Low</b> | Former employees   |

- 2.4 A timetable for processing all outstanding appeals by December 2011 is now in place.
- 2.5 Provision for the ongoing costs of appeal outcomes has been made in the Council's base budget since 2007/08 to meet the cost of implementing any successful appeals from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2007. This provision was initially set at £400,000, inclusive of employers national insurance and pension costs, for 2007/08. This figure has been increased in the budget by the annual cost of living pay award and is currently £415,000. Schools have made separate provision in their own budgets for appeals by school staff.

### 3. CURRENT POSITION ON APPEALS

- 3.1 Outstanding appeals (including where the outcome has not yet been ratified) are shown in Table 2. This table will be updated on an ongoing basis to remove those appeals which have been withdrawn or ratified.

**Table 2**

| Department                      | Posts Appealed (and number of appellants)/Priority |                |                |                |                  |
|---------------------------------|--|----------------|----------------|----------------|------------------|
|                                 | High   | Medium         | Low            | Very Low       | Total            |
| Chief Executive's               | 0 (0)  | 14 (28)        | 2 (2)          | 1 (1)          | 17 (31)          |
| Child and Adults                | 1 (4)  | 18 (29)        | 16 (26)        | 7 (7)          | 42 (66)          |
| Regeneration and Neighbourhoods | 0 (0)  | 15 (17)        | 24 (28)        | 4 (4)          | 43 (49)          |
| Schools                         | 0 (0)  | 0 (0)          | 1 (1)          | 0              | 1 (1)            |
| <b>Total</b>                    | <b>1 (4)</b>                                       | <b>47 (74)</b> | <b>43 (57)</b> | <b>12 (12)</b> | <b>103 (147)</b> |

- 3.2 The Outcomes of Appeals ratified previously are detailed in Table 3 below.

**Table 3**

|                                 | Pay band increased on Appeal and Outcome Ratified (no of appellants) | Pay band stayed the same on Appeal and Outcome Ratified (no of appellants) | Pay band decreased on Appeal and Outcome Ratified (no of appellants) |
|---------------------------------|--|--|--|
| Chief Executive's               | 4 (6)  | 13 (20)  | 1 (1)  |
| Child and Adults                | 6 (7)  | 28 (59)  | 6 (7)  |
| Regeneration and Neighbourhoods | 9(9)   | 44(57)   | 6(10)  |
| Schools                         | 1 (1)  | 5 (5)  | 0 (0)  |
| <b>Total</b>                    | <b>20 (23)</b>   | <b>90 (141)</b>  | <b>13 (18)</b>   |

- 3.3 Table 3 will be updated in future Job Evaluation outcome ratification reports to your Portfolio Holder meeting to reflect outcomes ratified at this and previous meetings.

#### **4. PROGRESS ON APPEALS**

- 4.1 Since the last report the Appeals Panel has met on 6 occasions and has agreed outcomes, subject to ratification, in respect of 16 appeals relating to 27 appellants
- 4.2 In determining the appeal outcomes, the Appeal Panels have considered the submissions made by the appellant as well as 'sore-thumbing' the original evaluation. This is essential to ensure the robustness of individual evaluations and the job evaluation scheme as a whole. Whilst there are three possible overall outcomes (pay band increases, pay band remains the same or pay band decreases), this may mask changes to particular factor levels and/or 'tidying up' of evaluations.
- 4.3 A summary of the outcomes, of the Appeals Panels, subject to ratification, is set out in Table 4.

Table 4

|                                 | Pay band increased on Appeal and Outcome Ratified (no of appellants + those affected by the outcome) | Pay band stayed the same on Appeal and Outcome Ratified (no of appellants) | Pay band decreased on Appeal and Outcome Ratified (no of appellants + those affected by the outcome) |
|---------------------------------|--|--|--|
| Chief Executive's               | 1(1)   | 2(2)   | 0 (0)  |
| Child and Adults                | 2(2)   | 2(11)  | 0 (0)  |
| Regeneration and Neighbourhoods | 3(3)   | 5(5)   | 0 (0)  |
| Schools                         | 1(3)   | 0(0)   | 0 (0)  |
| <b>Total</b>                    | <b>7(9)</b>  | <b>9(18)</b>   | <b>0(0)</b>  |

4.4 As indicated above, the Portfolio Holder is responsible for ratifying the outcomes in respect of Council employees whereas Governors are responsible for ratifying the outcomes in respect of school employees. Similarly, the Council is responsible for any changes in employee costs for Council employees whereas schools are responsible for any changes in employee costs for school employees (hence no ongoing costs are identified above in respect of school employees).

4.5 Further details of the outcomes of individual appeals is included in the "Not for Publication" **Appendix A** attached to this report.

**This item contains exempt information under Schedule 12A Local Government Act 1972, namely information relating to a particular employee, former employee or applicant to become an employee of the Council (para 1)**

4.6 The Portfolio Holder will continue to receive regular reports regarding the appeals programme and appeal outcomes for Council employees that require ratification before they can be implemented. Appeal decisions for school employees require Governor ratification before they can be implemented and, where appropriate, arrangements will be made to obtain such ratification in respect of appeals from school employees.

4.7 Trade unions will be updated regularly at the monthly Single Table Meeting with Hartlepool Joint Trade Unions Committee

Representatives regarding the appeals programme and appeal decisions which have been ratified.

## **5. RECOMMENDATION**

- 5.1 The Portfolio Holder notes the progress made and ratifies the Appeals Panel Outcomes in respect of Council employees (as detailed in the “Not for Publication” schedule attached to this report) and the new Appeals Procedure.

## **6. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 6.1 The Appeals Procedure is an integral part of the Single Status agreement and requires that the Executive Member with responsibility for Workforce Services be regularly advised of progress made in dealing with appeals received and ratifies the outcomes of Appeals Panels in respect of Council employees.

## **7. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Cabinet report 23 December 2007.  
Cabinet report 27 May 2008.  
Performance Portfolio report 27 June 2008  
Performance Portfolio report 26 September 2008  
Performance Portfolio report 2 February 2009  
Performance Portfolio report 26 February 2009  
Performance Portfolio report 17 April 2009  
Finance and Performance Portfolio report 14 July 2009  
Finance and Performance Portfolio report 5 November 2009  
Finance and Performance Portfolio report 23 February 2010  
Finance and Performance Portfolio report 23 March 2010  
Finance and Performance Portfolio report 30 April 2010  
Finance and Performance Portfolio report 18 May 2010  
Cabinet report 16 August 2010  
Performance Portfolio report 26 October 2010  
Cabinet report 21 February 2011  
Performance Portfolio report 22 February 2011  
Performance Portfolio report 23 March 2011

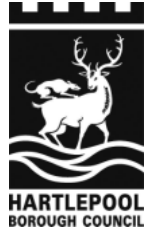
## **8. CONTACT OFFICER**

Wally Stagg  
Organisational Development Manager  
01429 523476  
[wally.stagg@hartlepool.gov.uk](mailto:wally.stagg@hartlepool.gov.uk)

## **PERFORMANCE PORTFOLIO**

Report to Portfolio Holder

14 September 2011



**Report of:** Chief Customer & Workforce Services Officer

**Subject:** EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY UPDATE

---

### **SUMMARY**

#### **1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

To provide the Portfolio Holder with an update on the actions that are being undertaken to ensure that the Council meets the requirements of the Equality Act 2010.

#### **2. SUMMARY OF CONTENTS**

The report provides updated information in relation to the progress made on the action plan that was included in the Annual Diversity report presented to the Portfolio Holder at his meeting held on 3 August 2011.

#### **3. RELEVANCE TO PORTFOLIO MEMBER**

The Portfolio Holder has responsibility for equality and diversity under Performance.

#### **4. TYPE OF DECISION**

Non-key decision.

#### **5. DECISION MAKING ROUTE**

Performance Portfolio Holder meeting on 14 September 2011.

#### **6. DECISION(S) REQUIRED**

That the Portfolio Holder notes the report.

**Report of:** Chief Customer & Workforce Services Officer

**Subject:** EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY UPDATE

---

**1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To provide the Portfolio Holder with an update on the actions that are being undertaken to ensure that the Council meets the requirements of the Equality Act 2010.

**2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 The Equality Act 2010 places Public Sector duties on the Council which must ensure that it

- pays due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations across all of the protected characteristics.
- demonstrates equality across all strands, including age, sexual orientation and religion or belief by building on the existing duties relating to disability, gender and race, and improves the coverage in relation to gender reassignment.
- publishes information (the requirements are still being finalised)
- prepares and publish one or more objectives

- 2.2 A cross departmental working group led by The Chief Customer & Workforce Services Officer was considered the Equality Act in detail and drew up a high-level action plan to ensure that we met the requirements of the Act. The main actions are to –

- State that the council will comply with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010
- Publish data on all protected characteristics
- Improve guidance and provide additional information and/or training for managers and Elected Members
- Engage with stakeholders and develop an engagement strategy
- Update the Strategic Customer Group on the Equality Act requirements to ensure they can fulfil their monitoring and reporting role effectively
- Monitor how effectively we are meeting the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and produce appropriate reports
- Review of procurement and commissioning information and documentation to ensure all services and any 3<sup>rd</sup> parties are fully compliant with the Act
- Research other local authority responses and adapt plan accordingly



- 2.3 To ensure that these actions are progressed, a task and finish group, which is a sub-group of the Strategic Customer Services Group, has met on a number of occasions to agree processes to be followed and to co-ordinate activities across the Council and maintain progress. Departmental representatives on the group are also their department's Diversity Champions and will co-ordinate activities so that equality and diversity continues to be embedded within each departmental service area.

### **3. KEY ISSUES & PROJECTS FOR 2011-12**

- 3.1 An action plan, attached as **Appendix A**, has been drawn up based on the limited guidance that is currently available. It is expected that further guidance on the new public sector equality duty will be available soon. Once further guidance is available, the action plan will be reviewed and amended as necessary.

### **4. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 4.1 That the Portfolio Holder notes the progress and endorses the action plan.

### **5. CONTACT OFFICER**

Christine Armstrong  
Customer & Support Services Officer  
Email: [christine.armstrong@hartlepool.gov.uk](mailto:christine.armstrong@hartlepool.gov.uk)  
Telephone: 01429 523016

## APPENDIX A

| Actions & Sub-Actions   | Progress   | Lead Officer                    | Milestone |
|---|--|---------------------------------|-----------|
| <b>1. State that the council will comply with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010</b>   |  |                                 |           |
| - Include a statement in this year's corporate plan   | Complete   | Joanne Machers                  | 31.07.11  |
| <b>2. Publish data on all protected characteristics</b>   |  |                                 |           |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Gather existing data held on all protected characteristics</li> <li>- Develop corporate database to record data centrally</li> <li>- Review data to identify gaps</li> <li>- Develop plan to gather missing information</li> <li>- Publish data</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Depts currently gathering data</li> <li>- Specification with Corp ICT team</li> </ul>   | Christine Armstrong             | 31.12.11  |
| <b>3. Improve guidance and provide additional information and/or training for managers and Elected Members</b>  |  |                                 |           |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Clarify managers' responsibilities when developing or changing their service to ensure that engagement and data collection/analysis is carried out</li> <li>- Identify how changes to policies and procedures have affected protected groups.</li> <li>- Redesign and combine Impact Needs Requirement Assessment (INRA) and Diversity Impact Assessment (DIA) into single form.</li> <li>- Investigate provision of an electronic template based on the business continuity model which will provide a framework for undertaking the equality assessment</li> <li>- Ensure that managers include reference to commissioning and procurement services in Equality Impact Assessment.</li> <li>- Use the Management Academy as a vehicle to update managers on the requirements of the Act</li> <li>- Provide equality training for General Purposes Committee to underpin decisions relating to staff appeals</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Service Review Guide updated</li> <li>- Equality Impact Assessment</li> <li>- Complete</li> <li>- Specification with Corp ICT team</li> <li>- Complete</li> <li>- 05.09.11</li> </ul> | Joanne Machers and Andrew Atkin | 31.12.11  |
| <b>4. Engage with stakeholders and develop an engagement strategy</b>   |  |                                 |           |
| - Undertake corporate review of consultation and engagement arrangements  | In progress  | Andrew Atkin                    | 30.09.11  |
| <b>5. Monitor how effectively we are meeting the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and produce appropriate reports</b>  |  |                                 |           |
| - Add a standard item to agenda for Strategic Customer Service Group to provide updates and further guidance  | Complete   | Christine Armstrong             | 31.7.11   |
| <b>6. Review of procurement and commissioning information and documentation to ensure all services and any 3<sup>rd</sup> parties are fully compliant with the Act</b>  |  |                                 |           |
| To update   | Complete   | David Hart                      | 30.6.2011 |

| Actions & Sub-Actions   | Progress  | Lead Officer        | Milestone |
|---|-----------|---------------------|-----------|
|   |           |                     |           |
| <b>7. Research other local authority responses and adapt plan accordingly</b>   |           |                     |           |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Participate the North East Regional Employers Organisation Equality &amp; Diversity group</li> <li>- Engage with regional workshops to discuss and consider what data should be published</li> </ul> | - Ongoing | Christine Armstrong | Ongoing   |

## PERFORMANCE PORTFOLIO

Report to Portfolio Holder  
14<sup>th</sup> September 2011



**Report of:** Chief Customer & Workforce Services Officer

**Subject:** EMPLOYEE ATTENDANCE 20011/12 –  
1<sup>st</sup> QUARTER

---

### SUMMARY

#### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To update the Portfolio Holder on sickness absence management performance up to the first quarter of 2011/12, and actions taken across the Council.

#### 2. SUMMARY OF CONTENTS

The report provides details of employee sickness absence for the first quarter of 2011/12 and actions taken across the Council.

#### 3. RELEVANCE TO PORTFOLIO MEMBER

Corporate issues.

#### 4. TYPE OF DECISION

Non-key decision.

#### 5. DECISION MAKING ROUTE

Portfolio Holder only.

#### 6. DECISION(S) REQUIRED

Note the report.

**Report of:** Chief Customer & Workforce Services Officer

**Subject:** EMPLOYEE ATTENDANCE 2011/12 – 1<sup>st</sup> QUARTER

## 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To update the Portfolio Holder on performance up to the first quarter of 2011/12 and actions taken in relation to employee absence.

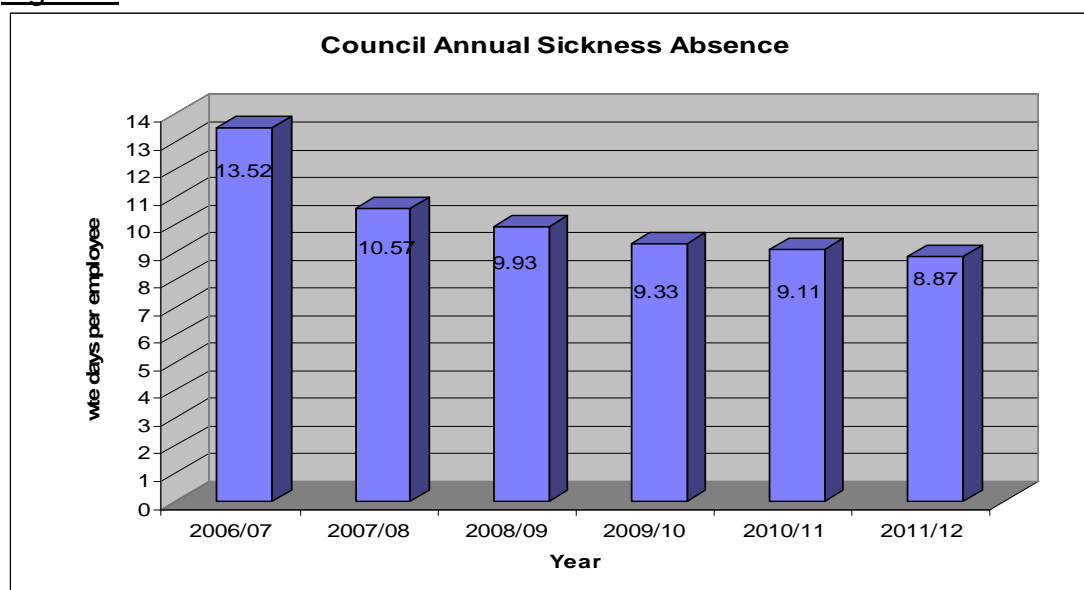
## 2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The extent to which employees are absent from work due to illness has a direct impact on the quality, level and cost of the provision of services. As such the Council have included this as a Local Performance Indicator (HRPI 5A) – The number of working days/shifts lost due to sickness absence in its group of Corporate Health Performance Indicators.

## 3. THE COUNCIL'S PERFORMANCE FOR THE 1<sup>st</sup> QUARTER OF 2011/12

- 3.1 The target figure for 2011/12 for the Council is 8.80 days absence per wte employee (whole time equivalent). The end of year prediction at the end of the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter shows we are just above target at 8.87 days per wte per employee per annum as illustrated in Figure 1 below. This still shows a continuous cycle of improvement since 2006. The Council continues to focus on sickness absence management to ensure the Council achieves its target of 8.80 wte average sickness per employee for the 2011/12 year.

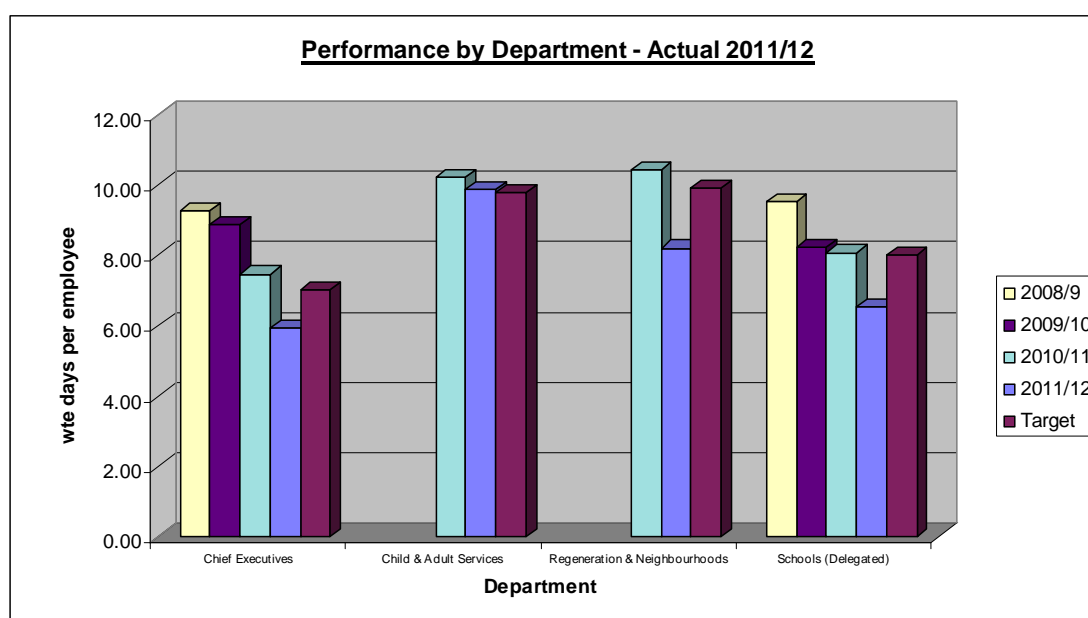
Figure 1



- 3.2 Figure 2 below illustrates the actual performance for each Department and Schools as at 30 June 2011. This can be compared to performance over the last three years for Chief Executives and Schools. The data for Child & Adult Services and Regeneration & Neighbourhoods shows just the 2010/11 data and 2011/12 (to June) due to the recent restructuring and therefore the lack of comparable data. The final column shows the approved 2011/12 annual target for each Department, and Schools.

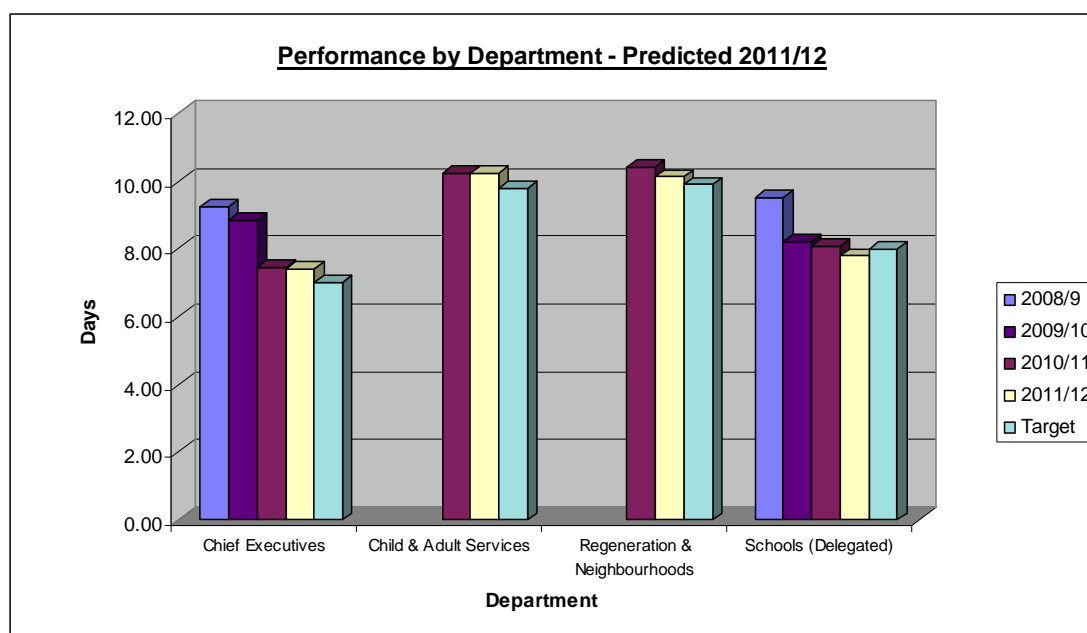
The figure identifies that there is an overall downward trend in sickness absence rates across all compared with the last three years. This shows at this stage in the year the Council should meet its overall sickness absence target for the year.

**Figure 2**



- 3.3 Figure 3 below identifies the end of year prediction figures for each Department and Schools as at 30 June 2011 and forecasts the performance as at 31 March 2012. This can be compared to the actual performance over the last three years. The final column shows the approved 2011/12 annual target for each Department, and Schools.

These figures illustrate what would be an overall improvement in sickness absence rates across the Council. Chief Executives, Regeneration & Neighbourhoods and Schools are on track to meet their targets. Child & Adult are forecasting slightly over target, however it is expected that with the resolution of a number of long term cases this will fall below target in July.

**Figure 3**

### 3.4 Long, Medium and Short Term Sickness Absence Analysis

Figure 4 below shows a breakdown of long, medium or short term sickness absence in the Council for the past 5 years and up to June 2011 for the 2011/12 year. The final column shows the impact this had on the overall Council sickness absence figure.

In 2011 there is a decline in long and short term sickness absence which accounts for the overall downward trend in the decrease for the Council. The 2008/09 sharp decrease in long term cases can be offset by the increase in medium terms cases which shows as a slight anomaly to the overall trend caused by a fluctuation of long and medium terms cases within Schools. The long term cases increased in 2009/10 and 2010/11, likely as a result of the Council's efficiency agenda together with key resources diverted away from sickness absence management.

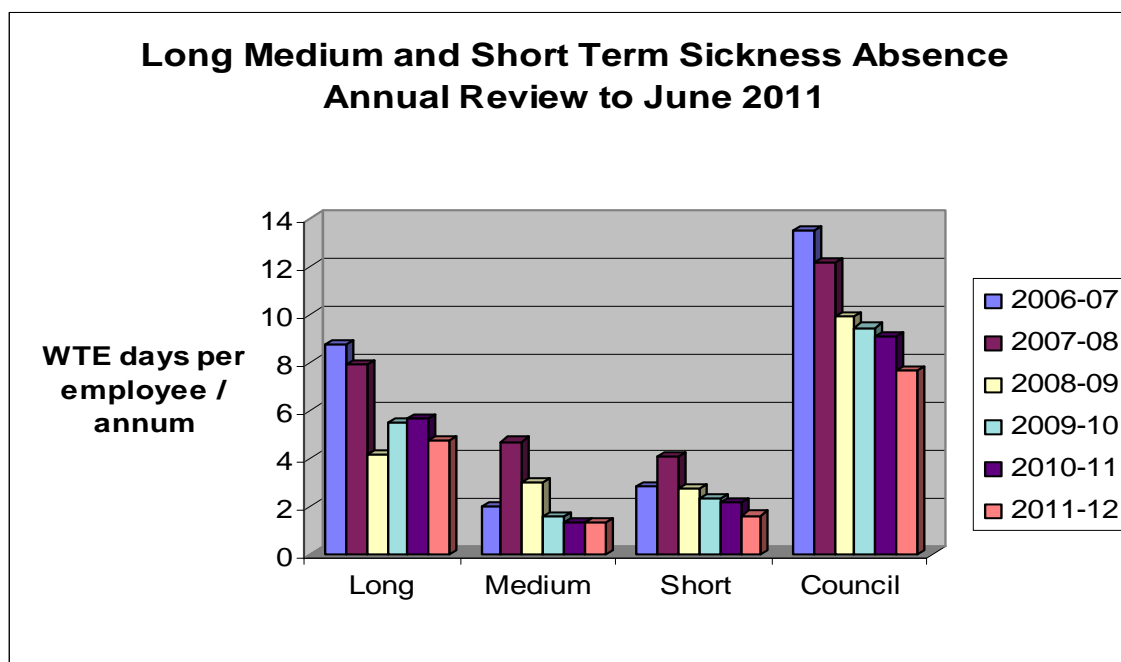
Overall this shows a year on year improvement in the management of sickness absence for the Council to date.

**Figure 4** Council Long Medium and Short Terms Sickness Annual Analysis 20011/12

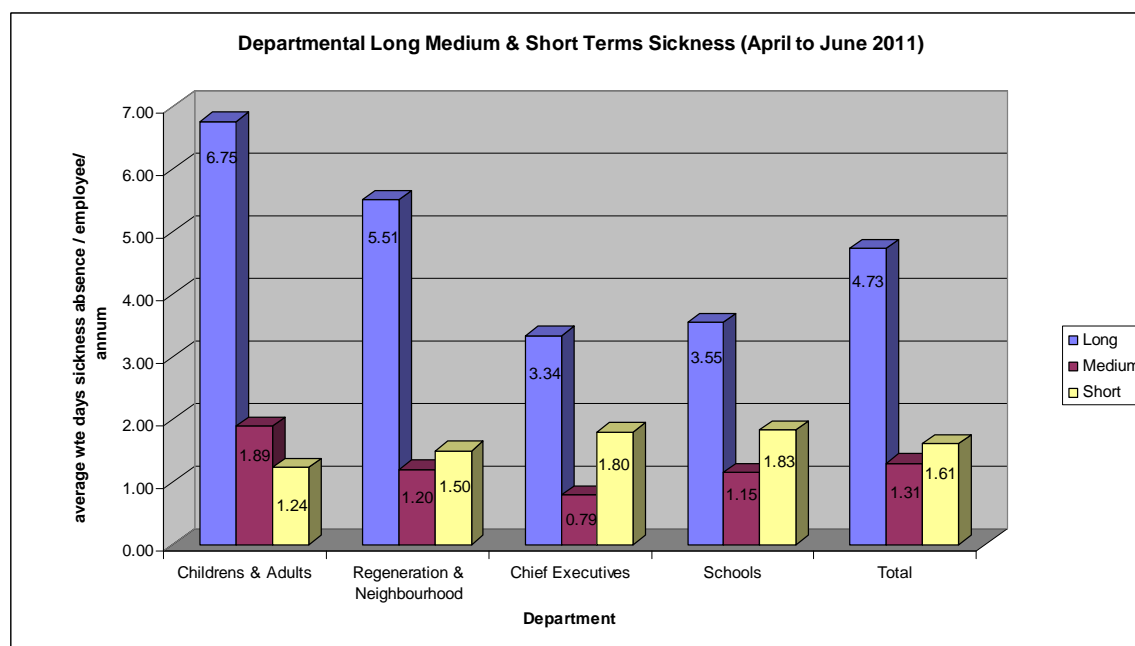
Long term = 20 days plus

Medium term = 5 to 20 days

Short term = under 5 days



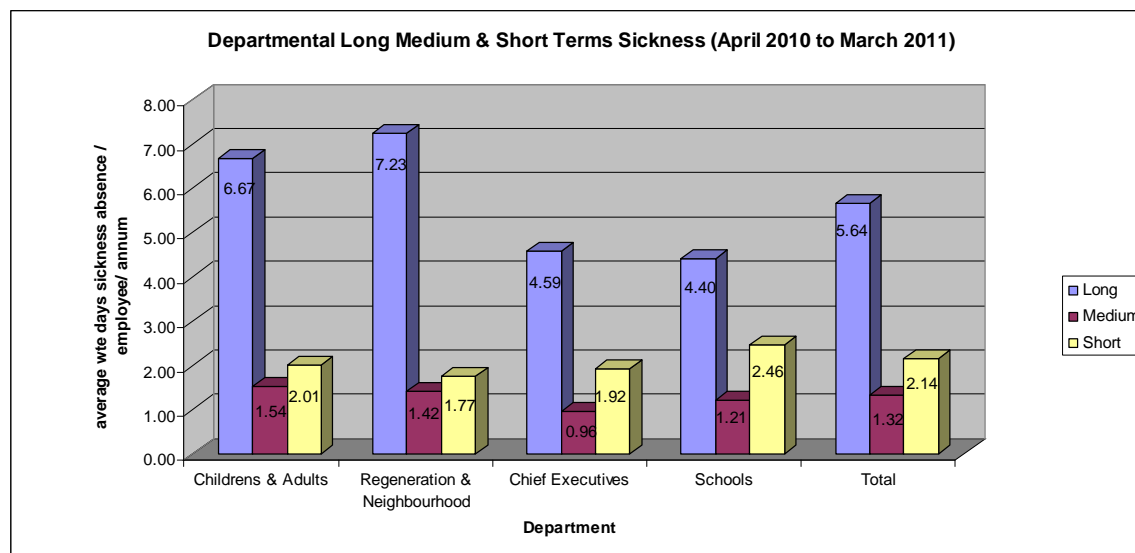
**Figure 5:** Departmental Long, Medium and Short Term Sickness 2011/12 (April to June 2011 figures)





As we can see from the information in Figure 5, long term sickness absence continues to account for the majority of the Council's sickness absence. A comparative analysis with 2010/11 figures is shown below.

Figure 6: Departmental Long, Medium and Short Term Sickness 2010/11



If we compare the two charts (Figures 5 and 6), we can see that long term cases have decreased by 0.91 wte in 2011/12 to the previous year. Short term sickness has also improved in 2011/12 by 0.53 wte. Medium term cases remain static. The Council overall reduction in 2011/12 is mainly due to the improvement in the long term sickness rates which have the greatest impact on the Council's overall figures.

#### 4. Support for Sickness Absence Management

In addition to the annual report for 2010/11, the Portfolio holder requested revised corporate actions and departmental actions were identified and reported back at the next meeting in September 2011. The corporate actions have been reviewed with an additional action added in relation to using annual pay increments to assist in the management of sickness absence. The departmental management teams have confirmed additional actions which have been listed below.

##### 4.1 Corporate Actions Planned for 2011/12

A number of actions are ongoing for 2011/12 and they are expected to help in achieving sickness targets in the future. These are set out below.

- Embedding the Council's Wellbeing Strategy to promote the health, safety and general wellbeing of the Council's

employees. The Council has been very active for the healthy workforce from fast track physiotherapy, wellbeing sessions, weight management groups, non-smoking groups, health checks, and the introduction of the cycle salary sacrifice scheme

- Explore withholding or deducting an employee's annual pay spine increments for poor sickness absence records
- Update the Council's sickness absence policy and management arrangements
- Ongoing development of the Council's commitment to managing stress at work as part of a wider Mental Health strategy across the Council
- Review of statistics and monitoring information as a result of the plans for the implementation of a computerised Human Resources Information System
- Maintain the close partnership with trade unions to work together to manage sickness absence in the Council
- Continue to proactively promote and market Occupational Health Services and employee support initiatives to positively increase the options for employees who fall ill and in turn, impact on the sickness absence rates
- Continue to promote flexible working measures, including home working, may impact on the rates in the future

#### 4.2 Departmental Actions for Chief Executives

- HR Business Officer will attend a CEMT meeting once a month to discuss sickness cases
- Managers to ensure sickness absence management procedure is followed for short terms sickness at the 4<sup>th</sup> occurrence trigger
- CEMT agreed to be copied into emails from HR informing managers if an employee has hit a trigger
- HR Business Partner to identify services areas and teams that require action
- HR Business Partner to attend CEMT every 8 weeks to update on sickness absence management within CEX

#### 4.3 Departmental Actions for Child & Adult Services

- Continuation of Senior/HR Business Officer attending divisional management team meetings to discuss sickness cases
- Assistant Directors to reinforce to managers that sickness absence management procedures must be followed in all cases
- Assistant Directors to reinforce to managers the importance of early referral to Occupational Health services and informing HR of new cases of ill health
- Assistant Directors to attend the meeting where the employee has hit the absence trigger to confirm the high priority sickness absence management has within the Council

- Sickness is a standing agenda item on all divisional / senior management team meetings in addition to the departmental management team agenda

#### 4.4 Departmental Actions for Regeneration & Neighbourhoods

- HR Business Partner attends Departmental Management Team every two weeks
- HR Business Partner attends monthly one to one meetings with Assistant Directors
- HR Representative attends monthly Senior Management Team meetings
- Toolkit supplied for the management of short-term sickness absence
- Managers supplied with sickness triggers
- Early intervention i.e. Occupational Health
- Actions relating to sickness reported back to Human Resources
- Where no action is taken by managers then this is reported back to the Assistant Director

### 5. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

That employee absence in the first quarter of 2011/12 and proposed corporate and departmental actions for 2011/12 are noted.

### 6. **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

None

### 7. **CONTACT OFFICER**

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Human Resources Adviser  
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Email: [rachel.clark@hartlepool.gov.uk](mailto:rachel.clark@hartlepool.gov.uk)