

REGENERATION AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND SKILLS PORTFOLIO DECISION SCHEDULE



Friday 14th October 2011

at 9.00am

in Committee Room B, Civic Centre, Hartlepool

Councillor P Jackson, Cabinet Member responsible for Regeneration, Economic Development and Skills, will consider the following items.

1. KEY DECISIONS

- 1.1 Delivery of the Church Square Masterplan – *Assistant Director (Regeneration and Planning)*

2. OTHER ITEMS REQUIRING DECISION

- 2.1 Response to the Government Paper: New Challenges – New Chances – *Director of Child and Adult Services*

3. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

No items

REGENERATION AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND SKILLS PORTFOLIO

Report to Portfolio Holder

October 2011



Report of: Assistant Director (Regeneration and Planning)

Subject: DELIVERY OF THE CHURCH SQUARE
MASTERPLAN

SUMMARY

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of the report is to inform the Portfolio Holder of the results of the public consultation exercise for the Church Square Masterplan and to seek approval from the Portfolio Holder to commence the first phase of works subject to approval of the funding arrangements by Council.

2. SUMMARY OF CONTENTS

The report outlines the background of the Church Square Masterplan, describes the public consultation exercise and provides details of the feedback and results from the consultation.

3. RELEVANCE TO PORTFOLIO MEMBER

The Regeneration of the Central Area of Hartlepool falls within the remit of the Portfolio Holder.

4. TYPE OF DECISION

Key Decision test (i) applies, Forward Plan reference Number RN 85/11

5. DECISION MAKING ROUTE

The Regeneration and Economic Development Portfolio Holder will consider the decision to approve the funding and delivery

arrangements of the first phase of the Church Square Masterplan, following the results of the public consultation exercise.

Council will consider Cabinets request to vire the £390,000 uncommitted balance of the Capital Major Regeneration Projects Budget for the project.

6. DECISION(S) REQUIRED

The Regeneration and Economic Development Portfolio Holder is requested to:

- Note the feedback from the public consultation on the first phase of the Church Square Masterplan.
- Approve the delivery of the first phase of the Church Square Masterplan subject to Council approving Cabinets request to vire the £390,000 uncommitted balance of the Capital Major Regeneration Projects Budget for the project.

Report of: Assistant Director (Regeneration and Planning)

Subject: DELIVERY OF THE CHURCH SQUARE
MASTERPLAN

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to inform the Portfolio Holder of the results of the public consultation exercise for the Church Square Masterplan and to seek approval to commence the first phase of works subject to approval of the funding arrangements by Council.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 A detailed report outlining the background and context the Church Square Masterplan was considered by the Regeneration and Economic Development Portfolio Holder on the 22nd July 2011. The report described the proposed first phase of works including funding and delivery arrangements.
- 2.2 The Portfolio Holder approved the draft plans for public consultation and provisionally approved the delivery of the first phase of works subject to feedback from the consultation process.
- 2.3 Funding of £520,000 has been identified for the delivery of the first phase of the scheme at this stage. This includes a contribution of £30,000 from the 2011/12 Major Regeneration Revenue budget and £100,000 from reserves earmarked for Major Regeneration Projects.
- 2.4 A proposal to vire the £390,000 uncommitted balance of the Capital Major Regeneration Budget for the scheme is due to be considered by Council in October 2011. On the 15th September 2011 Council resolved to defer the decision to vire the uncommitted balance of the Capital Major Regeneration Projects Budget until the results of the public consultation are available.

3. PUBLIC CONSULTATION EXERCISE

- 3.1 The public consultation on the draft plans commenced on the 17th August 2011 and closed on the 14th September 2011. A wide range of publicity was undertaken. The Hartlepool Mail featured the plans on the 19th August 2011 and provided details of how people could comment on the proposals. BBC Radio Tees advertised the

consultation on the 23rd August 2011. A press release was also circulated.

- 3.2 Letters were sent to all businesses in the East Central Area including Church Street, Church Square, Tower Street, Scarborough Street and Whitby Street. Leaflets were also placed in a number of prominent locations including the Bryan Hanson House reception, Church Square News and a number of cafés throughout the area. Leaflets were also distributed to the surrounding residential neighbourhood.
- 3.3 A variety of methods were used during the consultation including exhibitions, drop-in sessions, presentations and an online questionnaire.
- 3.4 Exhibitions were set up in a number of locations including Christ Church Art Gallery, Hartlepool College of Further Education and the Central Library on York Road. The exhibitions displayed the plans and provided questionnaires to enable people to comment on the proposals. A series of drop-in sessions were also held at these locations where staff were available to answer any questions about the scheme. A number of additional drop-in sessions were also held in the central square of Middleton Grange Shopping Centre, the Burbank Café and at the Burbank Fun day.
- 3.5 A number of local forums were consulted on the plans including the Burbank Residents Meeting, the Central Forum Members Meeting and the Town Centre Communities Forum.
- 3.6 An online questionnaire was available which could be accessed through a dedicated web page on the Councils website at www.hartlepool.gov.uk/churchsquare. The webpage displayed the plans and explained the rationale for the scheme.
- 3.7 A number of local groups and stakeholders including the Access Group, Shop Mobility, the Civic Society, Conservation Advisory Committee, Passport Group, Hotels Group, Hartlepool Partnership's Economic Forum Hartlepool College of Further Education, Cleveland College of Art and Design and Unison were also consulted about the draft plans.

4. CONSULTATION RESULTS

- 4.1 The consultation generated a total of 232 responses with 70% of respondents who answered the question whether they supported the proposal to invest in improvements to Church Square (162) supporting the scheme. A breakdown of the results can be found in **Appendix 1** together with a full list of written responses. A copy of the questionnaire used during the consultation can be found in **Appendix 2**.

- 4.2 Letters of support were received from a number of local businesses within the area who are supportive of the proposed investment within the area. A couple of requests were also made to extend the boundary of the scheme so that it can include Church Street in order to help rejuvenate the area.
- 4.3 A series of questions were asked during the consultation about the different elements of the scheme. A full breakdown of results is shown in Appendix 1. Overall the responses to all of the questions were positive and supportive of the scheme.
- 4.4 Public safety and reducing the impact of vehicles within the Church Square were key considerations when designing the scheme. With this in mind when asked if people thought the scheme would create a safe and attractive environment 72% of people “agreed” or “strongly agreed” with the statement. 70% of respondents also “strongly agreed” or “agreed” that the changes to the layout of the square will make it safer for people who are walking through the square.
- 4.5 Increasing the use of the square and attracting people into the area with the associated economic benefits that this will bring to local businesses was another key aim. There was a strong view that the changes to the square will increase its use with 67% of people either “strongly agreeing” or “agreeing” compared to 23% of the responses that either “disagreed” or “strongly disagreed” with the statement.
- 4.6 The use of high quality natural stone materials was strongly supported with 70% of people agreeing with its use compared to 19% of responses that “disagreed” or “strongly disagreed”. The reason for high quality natural stone materials is to reduce maintenance costs over the life of the project and to help to create a positive, quality impression of the area.
- 4.7 Increasing the amount of green space outside of Christ Church was strongly supported as an enhancement to the square. 75% of responses “strongly supported” or “supported” this element of the proposals which are designed to soften the area, provide an informal sitting area in the summer and to create memorial garden through the relocation of the existing memorial within the square (Discussions on this latter element of the scheme have been held with Unison).
- 4.8 When asked about the amount of seating within the area and the location of the seating there were again high levels of support with 68% of respondents “strongly supporting” or “supporting” the proposals to increase the amount of seating as well as 62% of people agreeing or strongly agreeing with the locations, compared to 18% of people who “disagree” and strongly disagree” with the amount of seating.

- 4.9 One of the aims of the scheme was to complement the investment within Hartlepool College of Further Education and Cleveland College of Art and Design by enhancing the quality of environment and creating a “campus” environment. It was considered by the Colleges’ that this would help to attract and retain students to the town. 74% of respondents agreed that the project will achieve this aim compared with 19% of people who either “strongly disagreed” or “disagreed”.
- 4.10 A number of general comments were received in response to the consultation including a list of features that people would like to see included within the scheme. A complete list of responses can be found in Appendix 2.
- 4.11 In summary the responses that agreed with project stated that the ongoing investment is important for the area and will help to support the economic well being and the visitor economy of the town, which was a key aim of the project.
- 4.12 A number of responses also stated that the proposals will create a focal point for the area and attract people into the area once again with the benefits that this brings.
- 4.13 A number of concerns were raised about the impact of the night-time economy on the scheme and the potential for people to misuse the area on an evening and at night. Proposals are therefore being developed for additional CCTV coverage within Church Square. Consultation is also ongoing with the Community Safety Team and representatives from the Night Time Economy Group in order to ensure that problems do not occur. There were also a number of responses requesting additional CCTV within the area.
- 4.14 A number of responses including a reply from the Economic Forum raised the issue about a lack of connectivity within the area and that the Stockton Street Pedestrian crossing between Church Square and the Town centre is inadequate and needs to be improved in order to link the area together. It is planned to include improvements to the Stockton Street crossing as part of a second phase of works.
- 4.15 A number of responses were also received about the detailed design of the scheme and the features that people would like to see included. One of the most numerous requests was for additional disabled parking within the area especially outside of the Christ Church Art Gallery as many people believed that there were insufficient spaces shown within the draft designs. It is therefore proposed to increase the number of disabled spaces within the scheme. The provision of short stay (30 minute maximum stay) car parking for the Tourist Information Centre (TIC) was also requested so that people can collect tickets for events which are distributed by the TIC.

- 4.16 Comments requesting additional lighting and feature lighting in order to improve the ambience of the square were raised. Due to the funding availability it is proposed to include improved lighting and feature lighting within a later phase of works. The ducting for this additional lighting will be included within the first phase of works in order to reduce costs and disruption during later phases of works.
- 4.17 The provision of public art was requested utilising links with Cleveland College of Art and Design. Again a project examining art work within the square will be developed during a later phase of works.
- 4.18 A number of responses were also received from people who do not support the proposed investment within Church Square. Overall, however only 26% of people who responded to the question do you support the proposal to invest in improvements to Church Square did not support the project.
- 4.19 There were a variety of reasons why people did not support the proposals for Church Square. Written responses were received stating that funds should be spent on supporting services at a time when the Council is facing cuts especially the bus service, libraries and youth services.
- 4.20 There were also a number of responses stating that the improvements to Church Square are not required as they considered that there are no issues within the square that need addressing or only smaller scale improvements should be made, or that the money should be spent elsewhere in the town.
- 4.21 A number of responses also questioned the value for money of spending £650k on an improvement scheme in a relatively small area of the town.
- 4.22 The Hartlepool Mail has also received a number of letters regarding the proposed improvements to Church Square. The comments received were similar to the ones raised during the consultation. From experience during the consultation some people were initially sceptical about the plans, however once the rationale and the reasons behind the scheme were explained many people became supportive.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 5.1 The Regeneration and Economic Development Portfolio Holder is requested to:
- Note the feedback from the public consultation on the first phase of the Church Square Masterplan.

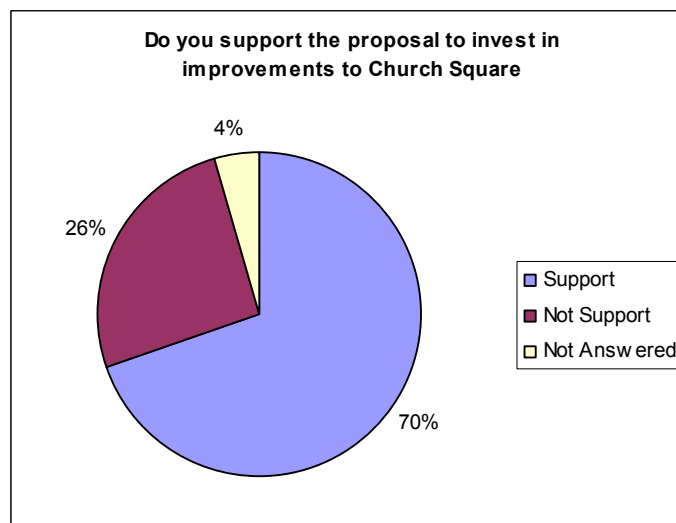
- Approve the delivery of the first phase of the Church Square Masterplan subject to Council approving Cabinets request to vire the £390,000 uncommitted balance of the Capital Major Regeneration Projects Budget for the project.

8. CONTACT OFFICER

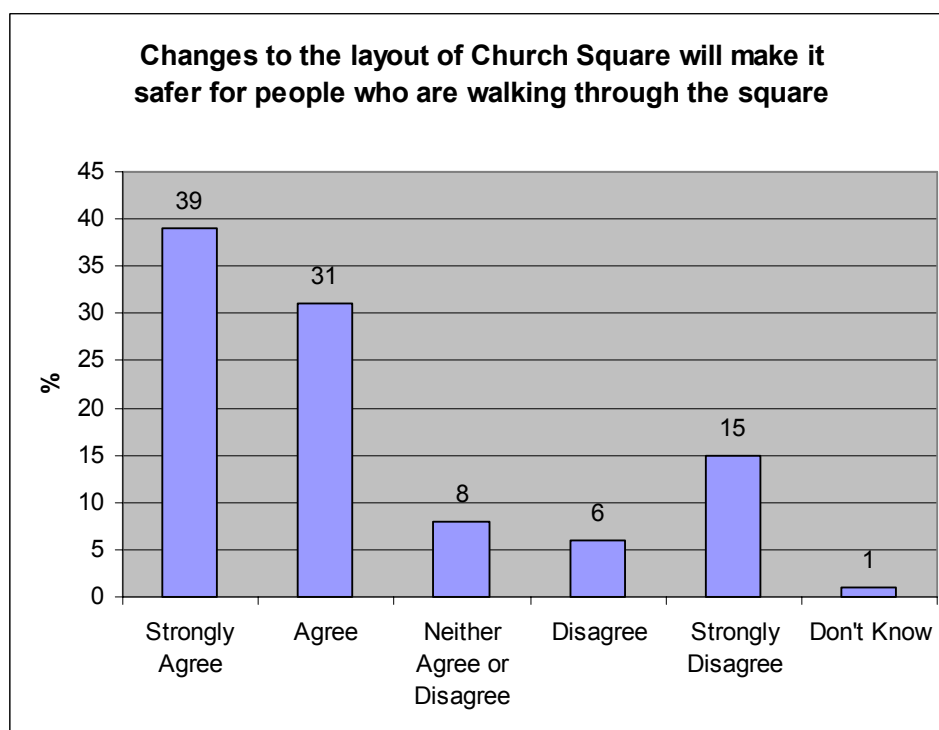
Rob Smith
Senior Regeneration Officer
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Bryan Hanson House
Hanson Square
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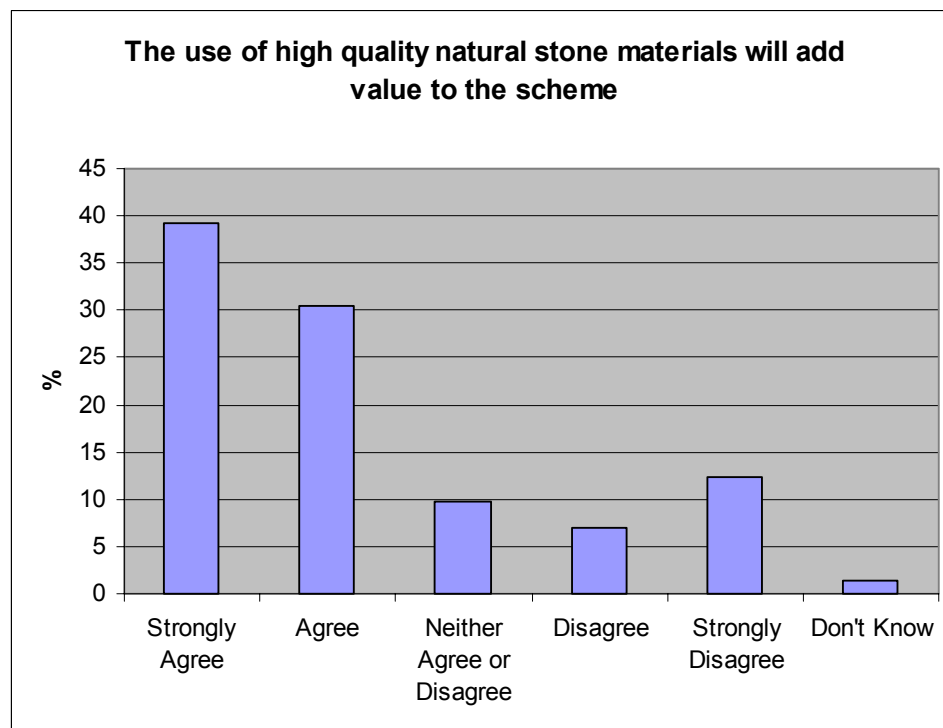
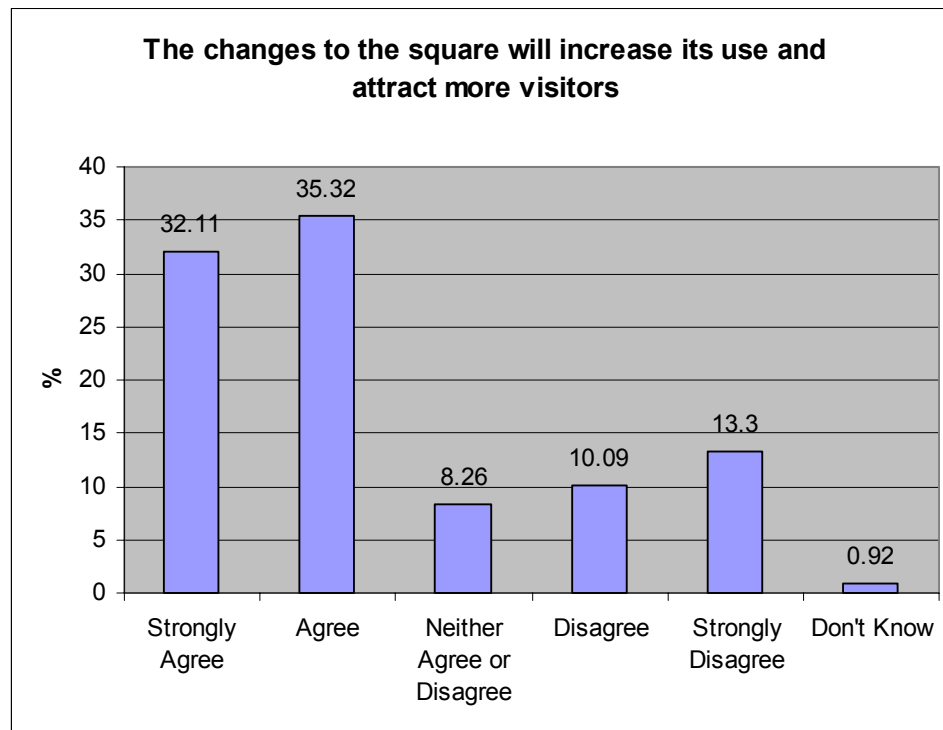
E mail: rob.smith@hartlepool.gov.uk
Telephone 523531

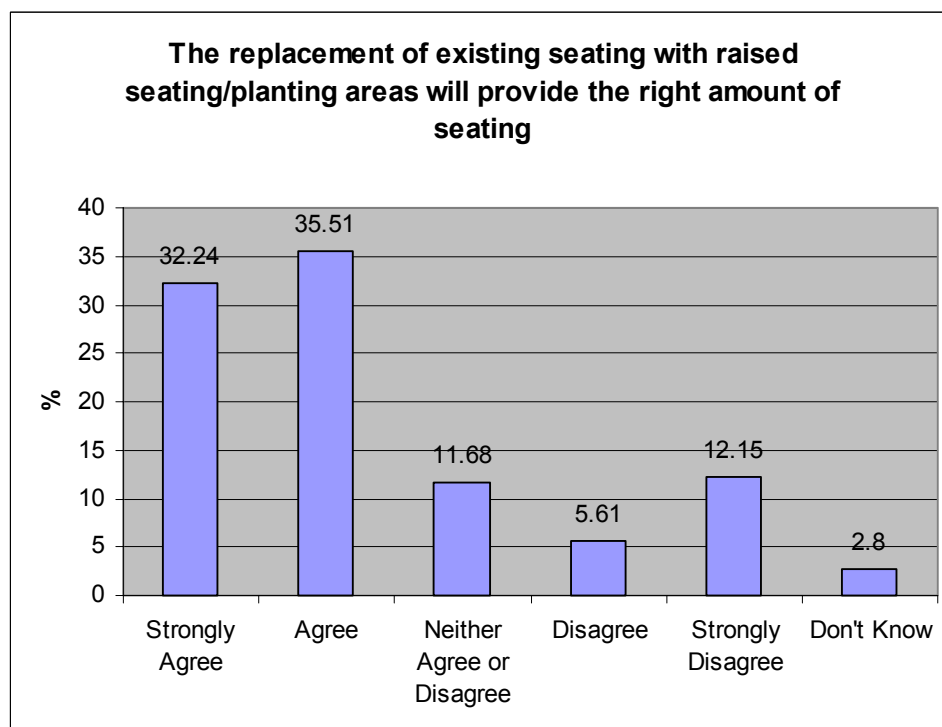
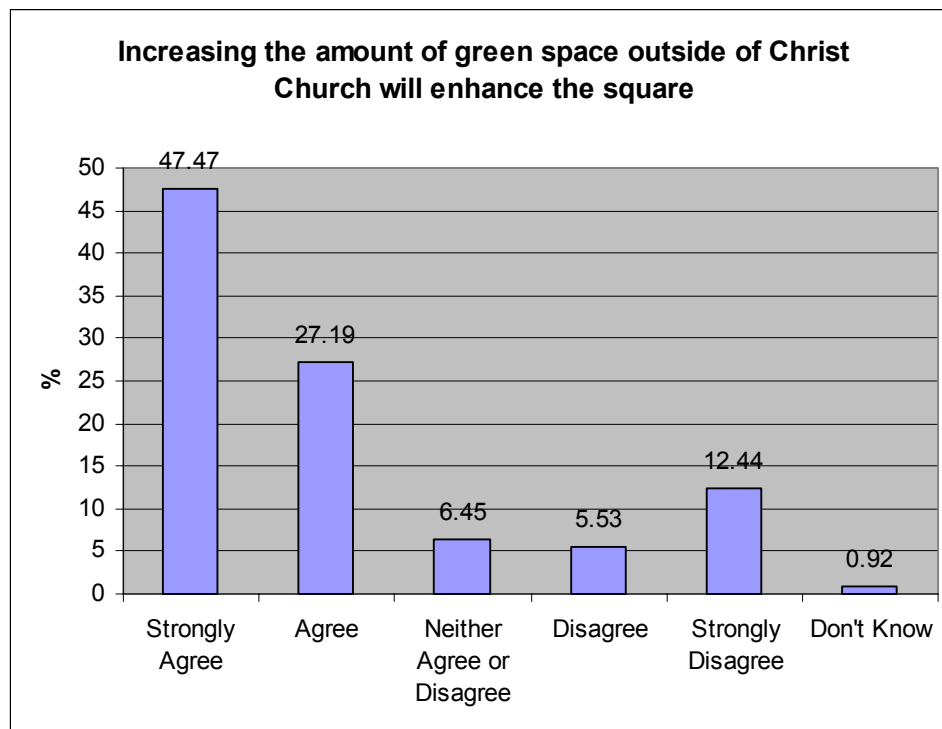
Appendix 1
Results from the Public Consultation on the Church Square Masterplan

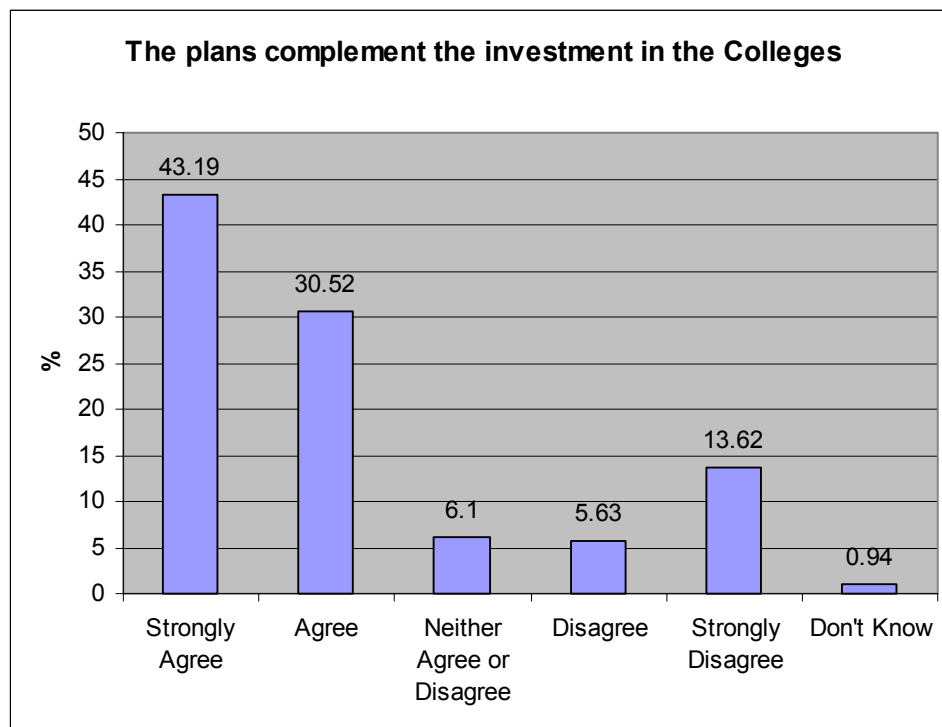
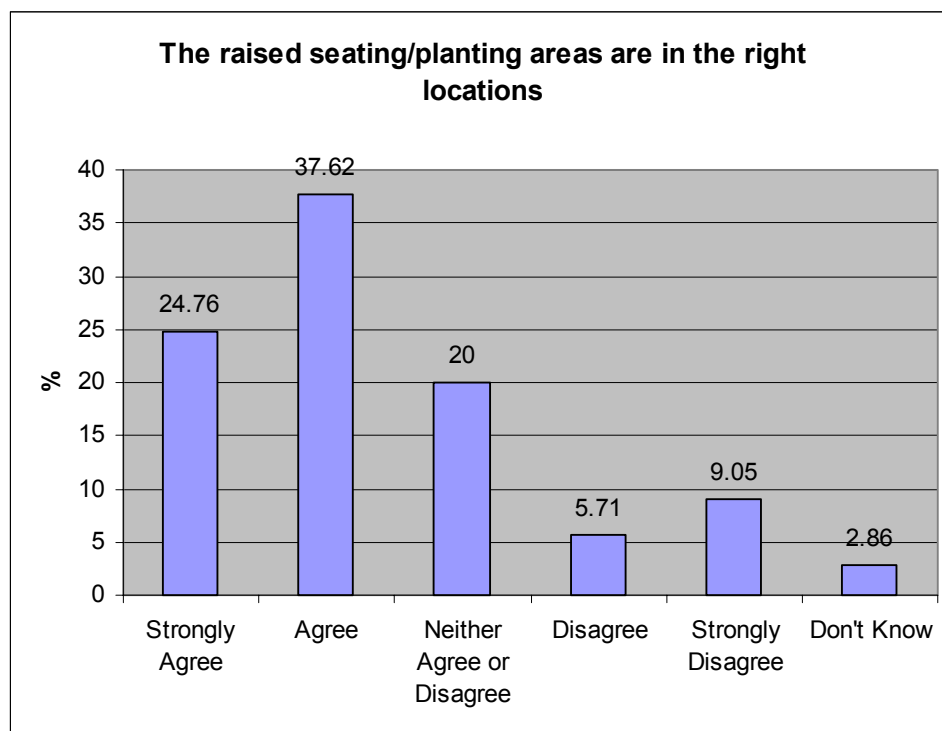


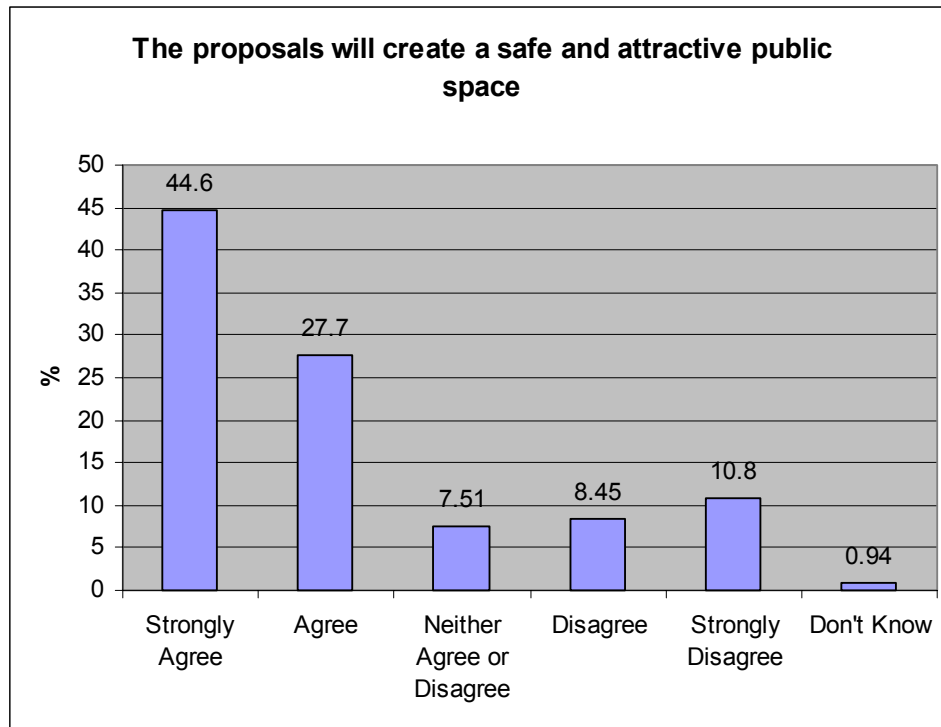
Q4. So you support the proposal to invest in improvements to Church Square	Number of responses
Support	162
Not Support	60
Not Answered	10











Do you have any additional comments relating to the Church Square Improvement Scheme?
Whilst supporting the investment and development I consider it vital that the cost of on-going maintenance is included in plans-litter and dog dirt could quickly undo all the work. As a new person to Hartlepool, I have been very impressed by the flower arrangements on so many railings. Thank you.
It looks a fantastic project that will enhance the visitor appeal in Hartlepool
You will realise from this letter that our office is opposite all of the improvements which are proposed to the square. Over the years we have seen many improvements to Church Square and the surrounding buildings, all of them for the better. I am thus writing to express approval for the current scheme which will enhance the area further. There are still 1 or 2 areas, however, which I believe have not been addressed. Despite the system of traffic lights and pedestrian crossing it is still not an easy task to cross Stockton Street or Victoria Road to access the shopping centre simply because of the weight of traffic. The comment is frequently made about the lack of parking on the east side of the shopping centre, particularly for the businesses further down Church Street itself. The new parking adjacent to the transport interchange is very welcome for businesses in Church Square. However, again, it has been commented to me that the parking machine is unclear how to deal with a stay over 10 hours which would typically happen if someone is using Grand Central trains to go down to London.
An effective investment in Hartlepool Renovation
Very good to see ongoing improvements well done.
I think the makeover should be carried out down Church Street also and it would look lovely.
I read in the Hartlepool Mail that the Council plans to spend more than £600,000 on the work. I cannot see how they think £600,000 is good value for money, considering the actual scope of work. If £600,000 is available for landscaping and environmental improvements, it should be spent on something of more general value. For example repair the paths, relaying the crazy paving, repair the retaining walls etc. in the Burn Valley.
This will enhance and promote the aspect and environment of the Art College
No changes, too much money wasted on needless projects. Community items i.e. busses, family projects needed.
More private exhibitions in Christ Church from local artists
Make all parking restricted to 30 mins
This will enhance the town
Move William Gray statue onto the North side gardens. Statue obstructs clear view down towards Christ Church doors.
It looks much better, just what Hartlepool needs. It might attract more visitors.
I think Church Square looks fine as it is now and I do not agree with spending over half a million pounds improving it. It already looks quite nice and attractive particularly as the council has cut many services within the town to save money- such as bus service funding, libraries etc. It is an awful lot of money and isn't a good use of public money.
Not really, I just think Church Square is ok as it is and ideal for the purpose. It will not attract visitors. I have not experienced or heard of any safety problems in the area.
In this day and age where cuts are the name of the game why spend money on this scheme when we are seeing cuts in all our services so lets have some common sense.
Why spend this kind of money on this small area of our town? Do you know the old saying "if it aint broke don't fix it" The money would be better spent on improving our estates.
Good idea to use students for design and labour. Would like to see maritime theme.
I wholly agree with everything as people coming to town by train will be greatly impressed. I think it will do wonders.
Concerns in relation to the additional seating becoming a place for people to congregate on an evening, who would spoil and damage the environment. The impact of the night time economy is the main concern in the overall scheme. Notice board for Christ Church to be included in the scheme to advertise the exhibitions.
Consideration should be given to future extension of this proposal to improve Church Street

Do you have any additional comments relating to the Church Square Improvement Scheme?
itself by drawing people into it on a daily basis.
I think it would enhance the square, Hartlepool needs a focal point.
Money better spent in this time of austerity
In an ideal world with no financial restrictions I would agree, however when the Council has to cut its budget dramatically with staff being made redundant it is neither the time to consider such a large outlay of finances when more pressing things require attention throughout the town.
I think it is totally wrong of the Council to be contemplating this scheme at a time of great financial stringency. The Council has been forced to cut essential services over the last few months, with more to come no doubt. This proposed work is totally unnecessary- Please reconsider!
I do not feel the proposals would have in anyway significant positive impact. The area is without need of dramatic improvement. Money needs to be spent on areas for young people.
I feel very strongly that no improvements to Church Square will improve visitors or safety to the area. It is a waste of time and money that could be spent elsewhere in town.
It should not go ahead. This is an inappropriate use of funding at a time when major cutbacks have been introduced. It is completely ridiculous that the tourist information building is not open on Sundays. The money should be used for other purposes.
There is nothing wrong with the space that a good tidy up would not put right. Grass in flag stones etc. There are already 16 or more trees in place. Just put some more seats and keep the place tidy. We do not need to spend a lot of money to do that. We visit this area a lot it's a safe place. There is nothing wrong with the parking. Spend the money on opening it on a Sunday.
Does not need spending money. Better to fund a better bus service around the town i.e. top of the Rift House Estate.
More important issues need addressing before spending £650k on this project. Nurseries, libraries, facilities for the younger generation.
This is not needed more things need doing, better spent on sea defences on the Headland.
With the Council cut backs the money should be spent on what we want not what people think we need.
This is a double edged sword. Improvements to the area will attract people to visit Hartlepool. But services within Hartlepool should be improved for the residents and children/young people to enhance education, employment, sex ed., teenage pregnancy etc.
It is ok as it is
I think the whole improvement scheme is unnecessary. Church Square is quite in keeping with the Church and area around. Why put green spaces when we do not have the man power to keep more places cut and attended to. I thought we were trying to reduce costs not make more for the Council. The Interchange for example on Saturday afternoon 7 cars and no people about. Only few busses use it what a waste.
I am not a civil engineer so I can only comment on what the improvement scheme looks like. Yes it looks very nice but in these austere times is there any need to do it now? I have been told funding is available but what happens when the scheme goes above budget (as all of these schemes do-Tall Ships and all that), save it for a rainy day! The existing layout can be improved at little cost compared to £650k (and the rest) e.g. extra seat here, a lick of paint there. Are peoples comments/ideas listened to? Basically the proposed new improvements scheme is the same as existing i.e. traffic still allowed onto square. (Newspaper cutting attached).
Hope it does not take as long as Durham City or Bishop Auckland. They have gone on for ever.
Something to do with Tall Ships of Hartlepool Headland.
Make available short term free parking for those using the Tourist Information Centre. Threat of parking fines at present deters customers.

Do you have any additional comments relating to the Church Square Improvement Scheme?
When discussing the proposals with your representative in the Art Gallery I learnt that the improvements were to be made to the Trade Unions Memorial Area. As you may be aware, there are memorial plaques around the base of the tower at Jacksons Landing recording the names of townspeople who lost their lives by drowning, whether at sea or locally. For the past ? years or so this area has been completely neglected and is now in a very poor state and an insult to the people whose names are recorder there. Could I suggest that these black marble plaques could be re-sited within the proposed re-development of Church Square? In light of Hartlepool's close relationships with the sea and all things maritime, I feel that it is very sad that things after such a short time, seem to be forgotten, indeed I wonder how many people are aware of their existence. I feel sure that they would be a worthy addition to the square.
Have occasional outdoor performers in the square or events.
High quality materials will make scheme look good.
Ensure improved access and path finding in design for disabled/elderly people. What about a designated play area for children? Could planting be insect/bird friendly-nature trees and wildflowers as opposed to the usual bushes? For example and "aromatic plant route" good for visually impaired users.
Needs more parking so people can visit art gallery. Would increase visitors to the area more than 2 garden areas or change parking in surrounding area.
Not to lose the Heritage of the area.
Consider opportunity to enhance College branding/identity as it is a very positive enhancement to the town.
Church Square is fine as it is. Any planting or fake stone paving will be a waste of money which would be better spent improving pedestrian access between shopping centre and HCFE. Sorry to be so negative but Stockton Street is an unwelcoming and horrible environment. Need to humanise the road. The pedestrian underpass is disgraceful to Hartlepool.
If this council has money to waste, there are far more schemes that want doing- bus service for all town centre for old age pensioners.
Although it might- I think money spent now by council would have been better spent on Transport so we can actually get to Church Square?
Use money somewhere useful. This is not necessary.
I would like to voice my opinion on the alteration of the land outside Christchurch, (Church Square). I think £650,000 is a lot of money to spend on new flagstones, a road and flowerboxes. All departments of the council are cutting costs, I believe that people wanting to relax in Hartlepool would rather relax around the memorial area. The town centre is struggling to attract shops, the rates and rents are high, the council should be trying to attract shoppers to the town centre, not trying to take them away. I hope you take my comments into account.
In terms of improvements to the environment and connection to Middleton Grange, we would welcome these aspects. We are undertaking extensive internal refurbishments of the properties at 6,7 and 8 Upper Church Street and once these are complete hope to refurbish their exteriors.
It is safe already. Nobody wants to visit Hartlepool. It is unlikely that any value will be added to Hartlepool ever. There is more than enough seating already as there's a grand total of 5 already and 2 visitors. I do not agree with this question. Hartlepool is comparable with the Bronx.
The Civic Society has carefully studied the proposals for Church Square. We feel that this is already a safe and pleasant space, there are quite a number of trees, an area of grass and quality well-loved buildings and statues. It can be accessed from all sides. There have already been 2 episodes of work done on the square in recent years and no doubt a considerable expense. We notice from the plans that the disabled parking for visitors to the Art Gallery have been removed. This will in some cases prevent potential visitors to the Art Gallery. The society feels strongly that, particularly at a time of severe financial constraint these proposals are unnecessary. £650,000 for even Phase 1 is a huge sum of money. If this amount is available, then there are other conservation areas which need money being spent

Do you have any additional comments relating to the Church Square Improvement Scheme?
on them.
It's a good idea.
Keep is neutral and with plenty of greenery to break up the structure.
Complete waste of money. Could be used for Jacksons Landing making use for youngsters ie Ice Rink.
Local artists given the chance to display metal and other works.
Don't spend much
With reservations. Money needed-out of funds or borrowed- if borrowed at what interest rate?
There should be guides at the bus and train station as destroying the trees that were made by effort would like to see more of them.
Where is the money coming from
Waste of money just add a few seats and flower pots.
Opening the toilets at the so called "Integrated Transport Unit" would be of more benefit at weekends or keeping the Church/Information office/Toilets open at weekends would be a useful benefit to Hartlepool Tax payers, students, visitors/tourists. Simple planters with plants would suffice. A toilet facility would be of benefit at weekends, not to mention Church Street at all times. Unnecessary waste of money that Council does not have. Unnecessary absolute waste of public money. Place is already safe.
I believe there should be more of a balance to the genre of age range that this venture will affect. To only attract young students to the area, may exclude older generation from enjoying the area. The £650,000 funding from HBC is unacceptable, due to much needed help elsewhere.
I think I have said it already - the visuals and perspective need to be considered more closely than you seem to, along with the already impressive buildings. The little sketch explains nothing about the wider vision, as far as I can see - far too little detail.
Improve the image of the town centre to attract businesses.
It's a nice idea but it won't save the town from going down the economic plughole
it is not the town centre and as such is an area full of wine bars - that part of the town was lost when the dual carriageway was built
It is a waste of money
At first glance Church Square did not stand out as being a priority for investment as it is relatively new in the context of the town as a whole. However this work would nicely complement the CCAD and FE college developments, and would improve the appearance of the area as this has become disjointed. The provision of additional CCTV is welcome, especially in view of the night time economy in the area. Is there scope to consider different floodlighting schemes for Christ Church itself? Perhaps using different colours, images - this may add something to the ambience of the town centre on a night time (for example, using some of the ideas from the Lumiere festival in Durham, on a scaled down but permanent basis). Whilst recognising the funding constraints and the phased approach to the work, blocking up the Stockton Street underpass, and improvements to the crossing area should be seen as a priority in general terms for the town centre. One plan shows a 'potential pedestrian crossing' at the top of the drawing - I think this has already been picked up by the transport interchange improvements? Also, one of the pictures described a scene as 'unsightly and dilapidated paving' when the actual photo shows a public art installation! But the comment is accurate for much of the rest of the square.
I think that the reputed £600,000 probably overspending to £1 million as is usual with Council projects, could be used to reduce the taxes on residents rather than what is proposed.
Trees and greenery will enhance the area immensely
I like the idea of using natural materials - it will bring prestige to the area, making it a space that Hartlepool can be proud of.
Will it be cleaned regularly?

Do you have any additional comments relating to the Church Square Improvement Scheme?
My only comment refers to the traffic system nearby which I appreciate is not part of this consultation. When leaving the Marina development and needing to turn left into Church Square and onwards there is absolutely no need for a traffic light system on the left hand turn. A simple filter lane would reduce the queue back onto the Martina/Asda roundabout and make matters much safer.
It is a good idea to give Hartlepool a face lift because it seems we get a bad press at the moment.
The square used to be a very busy area but having built the new shopping centre away from the bottom of the town, you have virtually isolated it from the town - it's out on a limb and doesn't need all this money spending on it.
High quality materials will pay dividends in the long run. The use of cheap materials will lead to the kind of problems currently experienced at the square.
This will improve the area as it is a mess at the moment and no one uses it. The current road layout means it is a car park rather than a public space. This is an important space as it is in a Conservation Area.
More car parking spaces are required, as the current disabled bays are used by visitors to Christ Church who then often go into town resulting in the space being occupied for a substantial length of time. If additional parking can not be included in the scheme, over and above what is proposed, is it possible to stipulate stricter control measures – perhaps 30 minute stays?
Move the statue proposed from the front of Christ Church onto one of the green spaces adjacent to the Church to improve the view of the Church from the town centre.
The materials that are taken up should be recycled.
The dual carriageway adjacent to the Church is a barrier.
The materials used should be robust and fit for purpose.
The area should be for all residents of the town and be a useable space for all ages.

Are there any additional features that you would like to see included within the design?
To make it worth doing you need to make it very much easier for pedestrians to walk from Victoria Road to Church Square. The present arrangement of traffic lights is organised to suit the convenience of people in cars; not pedestrians.
Disabled Parking
Water feature
student parking (underground perhaps)
Lighting and security cameras
Lighting at night time, outside seating areas for café bars, bistro, public bars and restaurants.
Lighting
Aesthetic litter bins
Must consider creating as much available parking as possible for general public. As Art Gallery, Town Hall ticket office and Tourist Information Centre needs adequate spaces. A limited waiting area- 30 minutes (free) maximum. (can park longer in existing public parking areas- and pay) Minimum of 2 disabled spaces.
Perhaps more seating
If there are steps- a ramp would be helpful for disabled.
A water feature with a world on and a compass design with the town being a Maritime town.
Boats as flower beds
It would be good to see ambient lighting in the square to give it a homely feeling.
Additional short stay parking bay for picking up and dropping off outside of Christ Church for taxis etc.
More signage to tourist information centre. Although it is recognised that it can not be considered as part of the improvement scheme for Church Square, the question was raised as to whether it is possible to install a lift in Christ Church to provide access to the viewing tower for the elderly and disabled.
Parking spaces for Art Gallery visitors.
Not sure about fencing around memorial garden.
Parking that is cheap and bring people into the area at weekends.
Some kind of water feature. Small playground to attract families (students children)
Incorporate as much tree planting as possible.
Students should design art work
More disabled places closer to the entrance of Christ Church
If this project is to go ahead then public toilets should be re-introduced to the square. There was a public toilet facility years ago.
Must ensure relocation of workers memorial is handled sensitively and with full consultation with all stakeholders.
Some sort of water feature may enhance.
Some disabled parking
Granite paving, resin bonded gravel round trees like the Headland round there trees.
Increase CCTV with talking speakers like in Middlesbrough to stop drug addicts and parents using dark corners to inject drugs and toilet their children. Community wardens or a "park keeper" type person to permanently overlook the site would ensure public safety.
Feels a good design with the right specification.
Parking for the disabled
Maybe some CCTV to be included.
More public art. Maybe CCTV.
More CCTV in Church Square
Provide better environmental link with Bus Interchange
Public toilet facilities

Are there any additional features that you would like to see included within the design?
Cycle routes through scheme.
No.8 steps- will there be a ramp too? Possible consideration to us a mini-concert venue in good weather/or design something to protect against bad weather). Area for outdoor eating attached to Christ Church Café.
Consider disabled parking needs.
Remove the statue directly in front of Art Gallery and re-locate in New extended garden to the North of the Gallery so that it can be seen from new transport interchange. If retained in present location it will block view of new planted area from Stockton Road to Gallery. Need more disabled parking/limited waiting car spaces, suggest min of two each in new location. Limited to 20min for visit to TIC/ticket office located in gallery. No provision for pedal cycles in plans. What about litter bins! New fencing around Art Gallery to be at least 1.5m high- possibly exact copy of original railings! (Photo's available). Suitable lighting for evenings to enhance area. What about event information boards in area informing visitors.
Explicit parking for disabled.
Suggest removing dual carriageway (A689) between Hartlepool College of Further Education and Middleton Grange Shopping Centre (i.e. Stockton Street). This road is a barrier. Divert the cars elsewhere- e.g. Mainsforth Terrace. Allow human beings to cross the road. If can't move the cars away, at least remove the metal barriers and create several pedestrian crossings in addition to those at park Road end and Church Square end.
The whole scheme is a waste of public money. Repairs to the roundabout near to Timlins opticians at the Stockton Street end requires some new tiles. The broken flag stones require replacing not with tarmac as has happened before but with purpose made flagstones. The above mentioned tarmac patches to be replaced with correct flagstones. As there is very little traffic the flagstones should be laid by a professional tiler with an adequate bedding and will not crack when run over by traffic.
Apart from some minor repair work to the pedestrian area near to Church Square/Stockton Street pedestrian crossing, no further work is required. Any alterations to seating/planting areas will attract vandalism.
Why spend money changing something which does not need changing? Minor repairs only are required in some areas (pedestrian areas). The proposed scheme will only attract vandals- not investors.
The concerns with the scheme are regards the vehicular access to the front of our practice particularly for drivers with "blue badge" disability permits. We have a significant elderly patient base who use these premises to access our practice. It was reassuring to know that the scheme would not affect our patient visitor parking permits which we rent in bays 1-7 to the rear of the practice in what was Albert Street car park. These are essential to ensure the viability of our business but do involve several trips to and from cars to collect, display and return permits. Perhaps there could be space for a couple of disabled parking bays just North of where existing bays 1-7 are? We would hope that the existing double yellow lines to the rear of the practice remain in the same position as there is enough room for a staff car park to park between these and our building. Also we have planning permission to reinstate the garage entrance to the rear corner of the practice and the small ramp to this within double yellow lines.
I don't know the costs involved for natural stone material.
Litter bins
Theme Park
A shop/café
games/sport something to do to pass the time
Some nice effective lighting so that the buildings are flood lit at night. What about parking provision for the College Campus.
Money could be better spent.
Improved lighting display to highlight main features in area.
I would hope space will be available for outdoor displays, workshops which are suitable for outdoor work. Dancing, gymnastics etc. Those would attract more people to use the area and

Are there any additional features that you would like to see included within the design?
enjoy it.
Maybe a water feature
Bulbs in grass around the Church
Water feature
Basketball court/café
Bigger green postures, café
Ambient lighting, scheduled outside events, music, performing arts.
Church Street will need a good facelift and the night clubs should be more safer add a little more flowers and art and galleries
vague statement! (amount of seats?)
The College should plant up the vast paved area on the North West corner.
The design does not need to be so elaborate. Attention to other areas of the town comes first.
Raised seating not necessary. Plant links as at Stokesley High Street or Newcastle Rail Station.
I am not opposed to improving the area but find your plans seem to be unnecessary (and also incomprehensible, with too little detail. for interest, what, if anything will be knocked down? the area is full of handsome and interesting buildings, from W Hartlepool's heyday. Are you taking care of that? The routing round the old municipal buildings is visually insensitive at the moment, and more care needs to be taken of aesthetics.
Improve the crossing to the Shopping centre to link the two areas.
RESTORATION OF THE GEOLOGICAL MAP feature at west end of the square by the pedestrian crossing
none - everything will be destroyed by the drinkers who frequent church street at a weekend
I would like to see the money spent more wisely on the vulnerable people in Hartlepool
Consider whether the location of some of the permanent features would prevent future use of the area as an events space. It is important to keep a suitable number of disabled parking bays in the area under review. Consider using low maintenance planting rather than annual bedding.
The central parts of the raised seating areas should feature some art from the Art College, which could maybe change over a period of time. Having a more modern feel would also compliment the art college more than the existing traditional design
leave it as it is and stop spending money on schemes which are not necessary
flags and bunting clear tourist signage
Information board about the locale
I think that CCTV cameras are a must too cover the areas of church square and the colleges and businesses.
Whose memorial garden are we paying for now? We have our Memorial Square with the Cenotaph and don't require another. How many people do you honestly think are going to sit on all these extra seats you are planning to bring in? Why are you restricting traffic in yet another area of our town? We will eventually be left with a few main roads and everything will be using them. How many more trees do we need in Church Street area - you have already planted them down the left-hand side. I consider it absolutely diabolical that you are proposing to spend £650.00 on Phase 1 when you are closing various amenities, can't even provide transport on the less profitable routes and seem to be able to get money to buy up derelict property. You are not acting on behalf of this town.
The design looks really positive and should compliment the improvements to the college really well.
Feature Lighting, led's etc.
No. This should not go ahead on the current climate. Children's day care centres and other front line services are much more important to fund. Please come to your economic senses!!
The old saying "If it's not broken leave it alone" is very appropriate. We are short of car

Are there any additional features that you would like to see included within the design?

parking in the centre of town and to have hardly any parking for Museum visitors and the offices in the Old Municipal buildings. We are supposed to be short of money, so it is not a good time to make unnecessary changes.

Appendix 2**SURVEY: CHURCH SQUARE IMPROVEMENT SCHEME**

Complete this short survey and return it by 9th September 2011 for the chance to win a £25 shopping voucher of your choice

The proposed improvements to Church Square have been designed to:

- Create a high quality, safe environment for residents, students and visitors to Hartlepool
- Minimise vehicle movement within Church Square
- Complement investment in Cleveland College of Art and Design and Hartlepool College of Further Education
- Help to attract visitors by creating a positive and vibrant impression of the town
- Attract investment into surrounding vacant and derelict buildings
- Provide a high quality environment, which is important for the image of Hartlepool

The scheme will be completed over two phases. A later second phase of work will improve lighting, provide public art showcasing the work of students and enhance the Stockton Street pedestrian crossing.

Q1. Please tell us how you feel about the following statements

Please tick (✓) one box only for each question

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't Know
Changes to the layout of Church Square will make it safer for people who are walking through the square.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 6
The changes to the square will increase its use and attract more visitors.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 6
The use of high quality natural stone materials will add value to the scheme.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 6
Increasing the amount of green space outside of Christ Church will enhance the square.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 6

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't Know
The replacement of existing seating with raised seating/planting areas will provide the right amount of seating.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 6
The raised seating/planting areas are in the right locations.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 6
The plans complement the investment in the Colleges.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 6
The proposals will create a safe and attractive public space.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 6

Q2. Are there any additional features that you would like to see included within the design?
Please write in the space below.

Q3. Do you have any additional comments relating to the Church Square Improvement Scheme?

Please consider design, materials, the use of the square or any other issues that you think are important.

**Please use the back if you require extra space.*

Q4. We feel that the proposed improvements to Church Square will bring wider regeneration benefits to the area as noted at the front of the survey. It is however important for us to know if you support the scheme in principle.

Please tick (✓) one box only

I support the proposal to invest in improvements to Church Square

☐ 1

I do not support the proposal to invest in improvements to Church Square

☐ 2

If you wish to be entered into the free prize draw please provide us with your contact details below.

NAME:

ADDRESS:

TELEPHONE NUMBER:

EMAIL:

If you would like to be kept informed of the Church Square Improvement Scheme please tick (✓) ☐

For further information

If you have any questions about this survey or would like further information about the Church Square Masterplan please contact Rob Smith on (01429) 523531 or email: rob.smith@hartlepool.gov.uk.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME

**PLEASE PUT YOUR COMPLETED SURVEY IN THE COLLECTION BOX OR
RETURN TO:**

***URBAN AND PLANNING POLICY
BRYAN HANSON HOUSE
HANSON SQUARE
HARTLEPOOL, TS24 7BT***

**THE SURVEY MUST BE RECEIVED BY 9th SEPTEMBER 2011 TO BE INCLUDED
IN THE PRIZE DRAW**

**REGENERATION AND ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT AND SKILLS PORTFOLIO**
Report To Portfolio Holder
14th October 2011



Report of: Director of Child and Adult Services

Subject: RESPONSE TO THE GOVERNMENT PAPER: NEW
CHALLENGES - NEW CHANCES

SUMMARY

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To consider the response to the Government paper New Challenges - New Chances.

2. SUMMARY OF CONTENTS

The report and the appendices set out the challenges and questions raised in the paper and proposes a response to these consultation questions.

3. RELEVANCE TO PORTFOLIO MEMBER

The report relates directly to the Portfolio as the purpose of the report is to respond to the Government questions on a range of issues relating to Learning and Skills with particular reference to Adult and Community Learning. The consultation period will close on the 21st October 2011.

4. TYPE OF DECISION

This decision is a non key decision.

5. DECISION MAKING ROUTE

The decision will be made by the Portfolio Holder 14th October 2011.

6. DECISION(S) REQUIRED

It is recommended that the portfolio holder approve the response to the consultation questions to the New Challenges - New Chances paper as detailed in **Appendix 2**.

Report of: Director of Child and Adult Services

Subject: RESPONSE TO THE GOVERNMENT PAPER: NEW CHALLENGES - NEW CHANCES

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To consider the response to the Government paper New Challenges - New chances.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The focus of this paper builds upon the Governments two strategy documents, 'Skills for Sustainable Growth' and 'Investing in Skills for Sustainable growth' published in November 2010. The Government paper New Challenges – New Chances was published by the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) in August 2011. The paper looks at the next steps in implementing Further Education reform and responses are requested from all interested parties and funded organisations.

3. CONSIDERATION OF THE ISSUES

- 3.1 The aim of the consultation is to advance the strategies proposed to promote the government's overall aims for Adult Skills. Attached at **Appendix 1** is the Learning & Skills Improvement Service (LSIS) quick summary of the BIS consultation paper on next steps in implementing the further education reform programme and to take these strategies a stage further by making proposals designed to promote the government's main overall aims for adult skills
- 3.2 These main aims are to:-
- Promote high Quality Teaching and Learning at all levels of the Adult Education system
 - Free colleges and other providers from as many bureaucratic restrictions as possible in order to allow them to respond more efficiently to the needs of their local communities
 - Secure a fairer balance in investment in skills
- 3.3 The paper makes proposals in 9 key areas namely:-
- Vision for the FE landscape and shape of the sector
 - Introducing level 3/4 loans
 - FE college and training provider freedoms and flexibilities
 - Simplifying the funding system
 - Teaching Learning and qualifications
 - Review of Informal Adult and Community Learning

- Review of literacy and numeracy provision for adults
 - Delivering higher education and skills
 - Deregulation and devolution
- 3.4 Within each of these themes a number of consultation questions are posed. The full list of consultation questions is shown in **Appendix 2**.
- 3.5 Within the paper there are separate and more wide ranging consultation questions relating to the introduction of FE loans and the Review of IACL. The responses to these areas are also included in **Appendix 2 i** and **Appendix 2 ii**.
- 3.6 The proposals are important to consider in the context of the provision by Hartlepool Borough Council of its Adult Education Service, this is a fully funded service by the Skills Funding Agency (SFA) which is constantly being reviewed on an annual basis in respect of the annual funding contract and the importance of achieving its stated targets. In 2010/11 there were over 3,400 participants on the Adult Education programmes held in over 40 community venues and achieving a success rate of 82%. The future pathway for Adult education is an ever changing one and this consultation paper is important in ensuring we have the opportunity to respond to the outlined proposals in the hope that future changes will be positive rather than having a detrimental effect on access to good adult and community learning experiences with positive outcomes.
- 3.7 The proposed responses have been incorporated within **Appendix 2** attached to enable the response to be read in conjunction with the challenge and question posed in each area. It should be noted that whilst there are 9 key proposal areas, the response paper gives the opportunity for two of these, namely the proposal for; *extending financial loans to level 3 and 4 courses* and *the review of informal Adult and community learning (IACL)* to be commented upon in more depth, i.e. **Appendices 2i** and **2ii**.
- 3.8 The portfolio holder is requested to consider the proposed responses and consider approval. The consultation has been widely distributed by BIS and will close on the 21st October.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The review of IACL will directly affect the Hartlepool Adult Education Service. Depending on the outcome of the consultation there may be financial implications for the service in future. As yet these are difficult to predict.

5. CONCLUSIONS

- 5.1 The paper proposes a number of strategies for improving adult skills. They are wide ranging and cover all aspects including Further Education Higher Education and IACL.
- 5.2 The review of IACL is particularly relevant to the Adult Education Service as it will be affected by any large scale changes in funding or delivery models.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.1 It is recommended that the portfolio holder approve the response to the consultation questions to the New Challenges - New Chances paper as detailed in **Appendix 2**.

7. CONTACT OFFICER

- 7.1 Maggie Heaps, Adult Education Coordinator, Tower Street, Hartlepool, Tel: 01429 868616

New Challenges, New Chances – BIS consultation on next steps in implementing the further education reform programme – a quick summary

16th August 2011



Introduction

On 16 November 2010 the government published two strategy documents, *Skills for Sustainable Growth* and *Investing in Skills for Sustainable Growth*, which mapped out the future direction of the reform of further education for adults aged 19 and over. BIS has published *New Challenges, New Chances*¹ a consultation paper which aims to take these strategies a stage further by making proposals designed to promote the government's main overall aims for adult skills to:

- promote high-quality teaching and learning at all levels of the adult education system;
- free colleges and other skills providers from as many bureaucratic restrictions as possible in order to allow them to respond more effectively to the needs of their local communities; and
- secure a fairer balance of investment in skills between the taxpayer, individual learners and employers.

The consultation will close on 21st October 2011.

Overview

The plan for the next stage of reform makes proposals in the following areas:

Vision for the FE landscape and shape of the sector	2
Introducing Level 3/4 loans and sharing responsibility for investing in skills	2
FE college and training provider freedoms and flexibilities	3
Simplifying the funding system.....	4
Teaching, learning and qualifications	5
Review of Informal Adult and Community Learning.....	5
Review of literacy and numeracy provision for adults.....	6
Delivering higher education and skills	6
Deregulation and devolution.....	7

¹ <http://www.bis.gov.uk/newchallenges>

Vision for the FE landscape and shape of the sector

Policy intent: *'Our vision is of an FE and skills sector which is more responsive to changing social and economic needs with a more diverse set of high-quality providers that are constantly reviewing their delivery models to ensure that they are fit for purpose'.*

Progress to date:

- Many colleges and training providers are now considering alternative business and collaborative models to meet the diverse needs of their learners and to achieve further efficiencies.
- The Learning and Skills Improvement Service (LSIS) has run a series of policy seminars with sector leaders to explore the contribution of the sector in the Big Society and commissioned independent research from the RSA's 2020 Public Services Hub to look at the longer-term potential role of the sector. *"The LSIS report The FE and Skills Sector in 2020: A Social Productivity Approach' illustrates that the sector is already developing on-the-ground best practice and innovation that is pointing the way to a future where the sector, society and the state can collaboratively create the right conditions to improve social and economic outcomes.'*
- The Efficiency and Innovation Project jointly steered by the Association of Colleges, 157 Group and the Skills Funding Agency funding 40 collaborative that explore new delivery models.
- The National Apprenticeship Service (NAS) has contracted with 12 projects to set up new Apprenticeship Training Associations (ATAs) and Group Training Associations (GTAs). *'These new models will help a range of organisations, especially small businesses, to make more Apprenticeship places available.'*

Next steps:

- BIS will issue a new policy framework for the FE landscape during 2011/12, replacing the current framework *Further Education Colleges – Models for Success*². This will contain advice and information on the wide range of possible organisational and business models that are available for colleges and training organisations to consider.
- They might include new partnerships with employers or specialist providers to deliver specific training opportunities: Different organisational and business models could also be considered, such as forms of employee mutualisation that directly involve the staff in college management, or acquiring a company or setting up a trust in order to meet a specific need or deliver specific services. Participating in collaborative partnerships such as federations or joint venture models, might also provide opportunities to develop innovative ways to meet the needs of learners and employers in local communities.

Introducing Level 3/4 loans and sharing responsibility for investing in skills

Policy intent: *'The introduction of loans is in line with the need to rebalance investment in skills by government, individuals and employers to reflect the benefits that each receives.'*

Progress to date:

- Loans for further education will be introduced in 2013/14.
- The planned change to the statutory entitlement to Level 3 will be delayed until 2013/14 so that they align with the introduction of loans.
- Changes to Level 2 arrangements will apply from 2012/13 as planned.

² <http://www.bis.gov.uk/policies/further-education-skills/fe-improvement/models-for-success>

- BIS has developed the model on which the loans system will be based, *'building on the current system for higher education with adaptations to reflect the characteristics of FE'*.
- The loans model is described in a consultation document on further education loans³. The consultation document seeks views on the implementation of the proposed model and how to communicate the availability of loans to cover course costs.

Next steps:

- Following the consultation, BIS will publish implementation details in the autumn alongside the skills investment statement. The intention is that from March 2013 learners will be able to apply for loans for courses starting in the 2013/14 academic year.

FE college and training provider freedoms and flexibilities

Policy intent: *'The government is committed to freeing colleges and training organisations from central control and regulation so they are better able to respond to the needs of their learners, employers and communities.'*

Progress to date:

- Reduced bureaucracy and increased institutional freedoms.
- The Education Bill designed to *'remove burdensome duties on colleges and strip away inappropriate powers held by the Skills Funding Agency, and intermediary bodies, over colleges'*.
- In return, BIS expects the FE and skills sector to *'demonstrate its maturity and capacity for increased autonomy, by taking greater responsibility for its own performance and reputation, and by engaging with stakeholders about its plans and record on delivery. We expect the sector to enhance the choice and experience of learners and employers by being more responsive to their needs and ambitions'*.

Next steps include:

- Streamlining the approval process for vocational qualifications. Finding simpler ways of ensuring vocational qualifications meet the needs of employers
- Introducing proportionate external scrutiny and/or reviews, including reviewing operation of the current reform which removes the inspection requirements on colleges and training organisations judged 'outstanding' (unless their performance drops) with a view to considering whether this approach should be extended to 'good' providers. Ofsted will also consult during the Autumn on proposals to improve and streamline the Common Inspection Framework for further education and skills.
- Removing the contractual requirement for providers to submit an annual self-assessment report to the Skills Funding Agency and Ofsted, in favour of this becoming a sector-led approach to performance scrutiny.
- Changing the methodology for setting provider performance standards, by introducing a *'more transparent and less bureaucratic approach that is flexible and responsive and uses learner choice as the key determinant of what provision is funded'*.
- Moving from the requirement to report performance through Framework for Excellence in favour of using the sector's own process for improved public information; also removing all requirements for employers training only their own staff to report publicly their performance.
- Clarifying the point at which intervention will occur, so that providers understand how and when their performance will be judged; and the consequences of any underperformance. BIS has set out a proposed

³ <http://www.bis.gov.uk/assets/biscore/further-education-skills/docs/N/11-1219-new-challenges-further-education-loans>

approach to intervention⁴ which suggests an enhanced role for LSIS with respect to providers in performance categories ‘*coasting/failing*’ and ‘*failed*’.

- Continuing to work with HM Treasury on the implications of the Office for National Statistics’ (ONS) decision, in October 2010, to classify FE colleges as central government bodies. The ONS has recently reviewed its decision in light of the proposed legislative changes to free colleges from ‘*unnecessary burden and bureaucracy*’ but remains minded to keep the existing classification for FE colleges. BIS is reviewing these and considering the possibility of introducing further legislative changes to free colleges from central control wherever this is practicable.
- In the meantime, the ONS has advised BIS that the National Accounts will not be changed to reflect the classification of FE colleges until summer 2012, which means that government accounting rules will not apply to FE colleges in 2011-12. *‘In the longer term, should FE colleges continue to remain classified as central government bodies it is likely that this will affect our ability to simplify/rationalise certain areas of activity, although we will make every effort to minimise the impact on colleges’.*

Simplifying the funding system

Policy intent: *“Investing in Skills for Sustainable Growth” set out plans to simplify the FE funding system and methodology. This was in response to key criticisms about the complexity of the funding system.’*

Progress to date:

- Reduced the number of separate budget lines with the introduction of a single Adult Skills Budget with earmarked delivery for Apprenticeships.
- Reduced the number of direct contracts between the Skills Funding Agency and FE colleges and training providers with the introduction of the Minimum Contract Level.
- Introduced a trial of the first Outcome Incentive Payment – Job Outcome Payments.
- Commitment to pilot outcome-only payments to large employers directly contracting with the Skills Funding Agency to deliver Apprenticeships.

Next steps:

BIS will:

- work with sector representatives in the development of a simplified rates matrix including publishing a shadow rates matrix in the 2011/12 academic year. DfE is also preparing to consult on the 16-18 funding methodology;
- pilot the first Outcome Incentive Payment during 2011/12;
- work with sector representatives to rationalise Learner Support and Additional Learning Support;
- evaluate the introduction of the Minimum Contract Level;
- review Minimum Levels of Performance; and
- review the introduction and operation of ACTOR.

⁴ <http://www.bis.gov.uk/assets/biscore/further-education-skills/docs/N/new-challenges-proposals-for-intervention>

Teaching, learning and qualifications

Policy intent: *'The government is committed to raising the status of vocational education and training. To achieve this, the quality of teaching and learning, content and relevance of the curriculum and credibility of qualifications are all vital.'*

Progress to date:

- *'Expertise to deliver inspiring learning, and capability for innovative curriculum design, exists within the sector and with outstanding practitioners. We believe that the main improvement drive needs to come from the sector harnessing its own expertise, working with sector organisations such as LSIS, the Institute for Learning, and the wider National Improvement Partnership.'*
- *'LSIS is currently developing a strategy in which further development in these areas will be key platforms for progress. We recognise that it will be essential to engage with the research and academic community to strengthen the evidence base and underpin the development of practice.'*
- *'Additionally, expertise in vocational subjects needs constant interaction between the sector and industry, for curricula to be up to date; and relevant to employers and, for teachers and lecturers to maintain "dual professionalism". The FE and skills sector needs to harness the expertise of business to bring currency and knowledge of the practical application of skills in the work place into classrooms and to encourage learners to register with professional bodies on completion of their courses and develop their skills through their working lives. A challenge for the sector will therefore be to build more effective links with professional, craft and learned bodies, across the industrial sectors served.'*
- For the reform of qualifications development, the UK Commission for Employment and Skills (UKCES) has successfully trialled *'quicker, less complicated'* processes among awarding bodies. Later this year, the government will consult on how in future employers should be involved in the design of vocational qualifications,

Next steps:

- LSIS will publish its Business Plan for 2011/12 this summer. These plans will include investment in both teaching and learning and curriculum development. For STEM subjects lead national subject experts, drawn from relevant expert organisations, will be appointed.
- The Technician Council will publish a map of those apprentice frameworks that lead rapidly to Technician Registration.
- The FE Data Project will extend what is currently known about the scale and nature of STEM provision and develop a greater understanding of progression and the potential individual and social returns associated with particular qualifications.
- BIS and DfE will discuss with the Institute for Learning and LSIS a proposal to establish an independent commission on vocational pedagogy.
- DfE will change the law to enable QTLS to be recognised in schools.
- The government will consult further on the involvement of employers in the design of vocational qualifications.

Review of Informal Adult and Community Learning

Policy intent: *'The Spending Review settlement, while protecting the government's investment, challenged us to ensure that IACL contributes to wider policy objectives and delivers value for money by: enabling progression, including to further learning, training and employment; and focusing public funding on people who would not otherwise have access to learning and maximising income from learners who can afford to pay.'*

Progress to date:

- Since the publication of *Skills for Sustainable Growth*, BIS has been working with a range of partners to review its investment in this kind of learning.
- BIS has also met with policy officials across government in order to identify linkages with other initiatives, including the Big Society, Lifelong Learning Accounts, digital inclusion, wellbeing measurement, open public services, the role of social enterprises, charitable bodies and voluntary sector organisations, the forthcoming Rural Statement and the cross-government drive to measure social return on investment.
- BIS is also working with a partnership comprising The Open University, the BBC, UK Online and the British Library to support further development of free online IACL resources and raise awareness of these resources among staff and learners and intends to explore the development of a network of e-reading rooms.
- Through a series of policy roundtables with practitioners and meetings with major stakeholders, BIS has identified six key challenges and associated policy options. These are set out in detail at <https://iacl.bis.gov.uk/> together with a range of questions on which BIS is seeking views.

Next steps:

- Following the consultation BIS will publish details of key implementation milestones in the skills investment statement for 2012/13. This is planned for publication autumn 2011. *‘There will be ongoing communication and implementation activity that we will develop jointly with stakeholders up to the planned start date.’*

Review of literacy and numeracy provision for adults

Policy intent: *‘Millions of adults in England lack basic reading, writing and mathematical skills. We believe this is the result of an unacceptable failure of the education system and that it is therefore only right to give them a second chance to acquire those skills.’*

Progress to date:

- BIS’s review of literacy and numeracy provision is under way.
- In addition, a review of research and evaluation literature has been undertaken which brings together what is currently known about improving adults’ literacy and numeracy skills, including international evidence, and identifies where evidence-gaps exist which will be considered as part of the review.

Next steps:

- BIS will report the outcomes of its review in autumn 2011.
- *‘Although there are excellent providers delivering high-quality literacy and numeracy provision, evidence indicates that the quality of provision across the sector is mixed. This must be addressed. In doing so we need to identify how to accelerate the rate at which effective practice spreads.’*
- BIS will seek to ensure that wherever teaching is delivered, every learner gets the best quality teaching *‘that is adapted to their needs, from qualified professionals’*.
- BIS would like to explore how technological advances could play a greater role in supporting literacy and numeracy learning.

Delivering higher education and skills

Policy intent: *‘a higher education system that is more responsive to students’ choice, that provides a better teaching and learning experience and so fuels social mobility.’*

In achieving these aims BIS recognises key obstacles that FE providers can face in improving their capacity to offer higher education including:

- difficulty in accessing direct HEFCE funding and reliance upon franchising through HE institutions to access student numbers and funds;
- complex funding and regulatory arrangements that inhibit flexible delivery and add to costs;
- the lengthy application process for Taught Degree Awarding Powers and Foundation Degree Awarding Powers; and
- the need for learners to have access to a transferable credit and qualifications transfer system across FE and higher education.

'It is expected that the higher education landscape will evolve as a result of funding changes that we will be implementing over the next few years. Our aim is to open up the higher education market to greater competition. This presents an opportunity for the growth of a more diverse range of delivery models, and an opportunity for colleges and training providers that can deliver high-quality teaching at good value.'

Progress to date:

- FE colleges will have greater choice in their validation arrangements. As well as existing universities, there are specialist services such as the Open University Validation Service, or external degrees from the University of London's International Programme.
- The Higher Education White Paper announced the intention to de-couple degree-awarding powers from teaching in order to facilitate externally-assessed degrees by awarding bodies.
- FE colleges are able to apply for degree-awarding powers, including Foundation Degree-awarding powers.
- Many of the Higher Education White Paper proposals will require legislative change and it is intended to bring a Higher Education Bill before Parliament in 2012.

Next steps:

- The deadline for responses to the Higher Education White Paper is 20 September 2011.
- The White Paper also sets out proposals for a small number of more specific consultations on some areas of reform where proposals will lead to changes in primary legislation or changes to how funding is distributed.
- In the context of *New Challenges, New Chances* and the overall FE reform agenda BIS would welcome feedback around a number of key areas including awareness and identity, progression and innovative business models.

Deregulation and devolution

Policy intent: *'We believe that by providing better access to and use of FE data, we will improve student progression and choice, overall sector efficiency and enable creative solutions. This includes enhancing the ability of all providers to meet the needs of their customers, and through better access to a better range of information, empowering those customers to become the driving force for improvements across the sector.'*

Progress to date:

- Over the last 18 months, BIS has *'overturned the historical approach of collecting information for performance management purposes'*.

- BIS has asked the sector to lead on developing a new public information system; and to ensure that future arrangements *'provide a robust approach that is consistent and comparable'*. Alongside this BIS has released national and local level data to enable the taxpayer to assess progress against its strategy and priorities.

Next steps:

- Over the next one-to-two years, BIS will work in partnership with the sector (through the FE National Improvement Partnership Board) to develop and embed a new, sector-led FE Public Information Framework.
- BIS will provide greater access to material that is collected in order to improve accountability and identify and eliminate duplication in data requests and collection methods so that the burdens on colleges, training providers, learners and employers are reduced.

Key questions include:

- What barriers currently constrain flexibility and responsiveness, in terms of structural development, and how might the government address these to help the sector to reorganise for the benefit of learners?
- Are there particular structural delivery models or case studies that you think it would be helpful to share, via the framework?
- We propose that the existing college merger criteria should be broadened to cover the need for effective leadership and management and the promotion of competition and diversity in the local area. Do you agree that these changes are sufficient to support the government's ambitions? Are there any others you would propose?
- How have you used the freedoms already made available to make a difference in your communities – what lessons can you share?
- Do you agree with the categories and descriptions for a 'trigger point' for intervention? If not, what suggestions do you have for changes/improvements?
- How could a commission on vocational teaching and learning best help the sector improve?
- How can we best engage the knowledge of learned societies and professional bodies to empower improvement in the FE sector?
- What else needs to be done to stimulate and spread innovation, including embracing the potential of new learning technologies?
- Have you any experience of developing new qualifications to meet a new/emerging need – how did this work?
- What more is needed to accelerate the rate at which the most successful teaching practices/models of delivery spread across the sector?
- What conditions are needed to accelerate the pace of innovation throughout the sector and what is the potential?
- Are the current incentives in the system driving the required provider behaviour and what else can be done to improve this?
- What can we do to improve awareness and identity of what further education can offer?
- What more can we do to improve transparency in data collection and use?

Contact the LSIS policy team

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02.1 Appendix 2

NEW CHALLENGES - NEW CHANCES

CONSULTATION QUESTIONS

1. Vision for the FE landscape and shape of the sector

1. To what extent should the Government influence the range of structural models for FE and skills delivery?
2. What barriers currently constrain flexibility and responsiveness, in terms of structural development, and how might the Government address these to help the sector to reorganise for the benefit of learners?
3. How helpful is our proposed approach to the new policy framework to replace 'Models for Success': are there other areas which should be included?
4. Are there particular structural delivery models or case studies that you think it would be helpful to share, via the framework?
5. We propose that the existing college merger criteria should be broadened to cover the need for effective leadership and management and the promotion of competition and diversity in the local area. Do you agree that these changes are sufficient to support the Government's ambitions? Are there any others you would propose?

HBC proposed response:

There are many providers now who are considering different business models in order to meet the diverse needs of the learners. This is seen to be required in order to achieve higher efficiency with in the sector. This will continue to be needed however any new policy framework needs to be able to take account of local need so that provision is not commissioned by large out of area institutions.

2. Introducing Level 3/4 loans and sharing responsibility for investing in skills

See Appendix 2i

HBC proposed response:

See Appendix 2i

3. FE college and training provider freedoms and flexibilities

6. How have you used the freedoms already made available to make a difference in your communities – what lessons can you share?

7. What else can be done to streamline the assurance system, whilst still safeguarding public funding and ensuring quality?
8. Can you identify additional systems and/or processes ripe for removal/streamlining? Please be specific about what could be removed and why.
9. Are there steps that the Skills Funding agency should be taking to reduce the data and information it requires for operational purposes? If so, what are they?
10. Do you agree with the categories and descriptions for a 'trigger point' for intervention (see Proposals for intervention¹)? If not, what suggestions do you have for changes/improvements?

HBC proposed response:

The new provider freedoms and flexibilities have assisted in allowing the development of more responsive provision. It has also removed the administrative burden of preparing activity statements thus allowing quicker responses to demand. The single budget has again allowed greater flexibility. Future revision for the Inspection process will remove further administrative burden.

4. Simplifying the funding system

11. What benefits have been experienced from the introduction of ACTOR and what further action could be taken to make future contracting arrangements more straightforward?
12. What has been the impact of the introduction of Minimum Contract Levels? Has the approach to exemptions been effective?
13. What benefits do you envisage from the introduction of a simplified rates matrix?

HBC proposed response:

The introduction of ACTOR has not been without difficulties. The system needs to be more open and transparent in the questions posted. Clearer guidance for providers would assist in its use.

The introduction of the minimum contract level has in some cases had a detrimental affect. Some smaller effective providers will be subsumed by larger institutions who may not be as responsive to local need and learner demand

¹ <http://www.bis.gov.uk/assets/biscore/further-education-skills/docs/N/new-challenges-proposals-for-intervention>

5. Teaching, learning and qualifications

14. How could a commission on vocational teaching and learning best help the sector improve?
15. How can we best engage the knowledge of learned societies and professional bodies to empower improvement in the FE sector?
16. What else needs to be done to stimulate and spread innovation, including embracing the potential of new learning technologies?
17. How do you currently assess the employability skills needed by your local employers – how could this be improved?
18. Have you any experience of developing new qualifications to meet a new/emerging need – how did this work?

HBC proposed response:

The improvement in Teaching and Learning is key to the provision of learning. Organisations such as LSIS are key providers of support for the sector to improve. Increasing this support would be a good way to spread innovation.

6. Review of Informal Adult and Community Learning

See Appendix 2 ii

HBC proposed response:

See Appendix 2 ii

7. Review of literacy and numeracy provision for adults

19. What more is needed to accelerate the rate at which the most successful teaching practices/models of delivery spread across the sector?
20. What more is needed to maximise the quality of the literacy and numeracy teaching workforce?
21. What conditions are needed to accelerate the pace of innovation throughout the sector and what is the potential?
22. Are the current incentives in the system driving the required provider behaviour and what else can be done to improve this?

23. What more can be done to stimulate greater learner demand for numeracy courses?
24. What more can be done to encourage employers to increase the take-up of literacy and numeracy provision by their employees?

HBC proposed response:

The delivery of Literacy and Numeracy teaching has improved greatly in the last few years. The introduction of specialised teaching qualifications in Skills for Life has assisted this and support for this needs to be maintained.

Greater support for sharing good practice will also help to increase innovation.

Learners on Literacy and Numeracy courses are a difficult group to engage. A greater emphasis on Literacy and Numeracy qualifications from employers could assist in stimulating demand.

8. Delivery higher education and skills

25. What can we do to improve awareness and identity of what further education can offer?
26. What are the opportunities to promote alternative progression routes into higher education?
27. What innovative delivery and business models might be explored and secured to meet the needs of learners and employers in the local community?

HBC proposed response:

In order to raise awareness of Higher Education clear information on progression routes need to be available locally. This would assist in giving advice to prospective learners.

9. Deregulation and devolution

28. What more can we do to remove data requirements?
29. What more can we do to improve transparency in data collection and use?
30. How can the data already collected be shared more effectively across the sector for the benefit of learners and employers?

HBC proposed response:

In order to lessen the burden of bureaucracy the collection of data should be kept to a minimum. To assist the use of data to inform planning data needs to be more effectively shared within shorter timescales.

2.1 Appendix 2 i

NEW CHALLENGES – NEW CHANCES

Introducing Level 3/4 Loans

INTRODUCING FURTHER EDUCATION LOANS

Consultation Questions

Consultation issue 1 - communications

1. What information do learners, employers, colleges training organisations and careers advisers need about FE loans to cover learner contributions?
2. How can we engage individuals and employers be engaged so that they make use of loans to support skills and training?
3. How can we support learners who are progression from FE to HE using loan support?
4. Will the introduction of FE loans to cover learner contributions for Level 3/4 for those aged over 24 create any particular barrier(s) to access provision bases on (i) race, religion or belief; (ii) disability; (iii) gender; or (iv) age?

HBC proposed response:

The introduction of student loans for those studying level 3/4 Qualifications will have a marked change in the way any provision is delivered.

Many learners access this level of learning as a way of improving job prospects. The full costs of the provision could be seen as a great barrier for many learners.

All prospective learners and employers will need to have very clear information on the application and payment process.

Training providers will need clear guidelines as to flexibilities and eligibility requirements.

The introduction of FE loans could create particular barriers for a number of groups e.g. women/men returners, unemployed. For many of these the prospect of having to repay a substantial loan in the future is very daunting.

Consultation issue 2 - model for FE Level 3/4 loans system

5. How can we minimise (additional) bureaucracy as we implement the FE loans model?
6. What safeguards should be in place to ensure that learners make the best use of the loans available to them?

7. Do respondents believe that payment of FE loans to colleges/training organisations should be made (i) 3 times a year (in line with HE); (ii) quarterly or (iii) monthly?
8. Do respondents believe that allocations should be reassessed (i) annually but not in-year, (ii) once during the year and at the end of the year or (iii) more regularly during the year?
9. In a demand-led system, what would be the most effective way of ensuring that our spend and commitments stay within the available loan budget?

HBC proposed response:

Any system developed for FE loans needs to be flexible to cover the demands for learners.

Often learners enrol late and their start on the programme should not be delayed whilst waiting for a decision on funding.

The process needs to be as simple as possible to ensure learners can make the best use of them

Planning the demand for loans will be very difficult for many providers. The process of reviewing the allocation should be as flexible as possible.

2.1 Appendix 2 ii

NEW CHALLENGES – NEW CHANCES

Review of Informal Adult Learning

Review of Informal Adult Learning

CHALLENGES

1. The need to clarify Government objectives for spend on IACL and its role in supporting wider Government policy objectives, including the Big Society, localism, wellbeing, social inclusion and digital inclusion.

HBC proposed response:

Informal Adult and Community Learning (IACL) already contributes to the development of the Big Society. It complements existing policies of Regeneration and is key to developing social integration. It is difficult to define how this contribution can be measured as it is very diverse.

IACL contributes to several different forms of progression not just into employment and further training. It is important to maintain a broad range of progression opportunities and not to focus too strongly on further training and employment.

Progression can be in a range of forms. For some learners it can be progression to higher personal and social development skills. It can also be relevant to increasing skills to social integration.

It is important when planning IACL to take account of local need. Whilst it is accepted that there needs to be a clear set of parameters provided by BIS, it is also important for these parameters to be flexible enough to match local need. It is accepted that a wider provider base could develop provision which engages the harder to reach learners. However, it is important to ensure that the overall provision is planned strategically across the local area.

In the case of national providers such as the WEA any provision would need to be planned as part of the local strategic planning process.

2. The need to ensure that Government funding is sufficiently focused on the most disadvantaged. Comfortably-off, educated learners are currently over-represented. However, they pay fees which can cross-subsidise those who cannot afford to pay.

HBC proposed response:

It is important to continue to focus funding on those who had least access to learning and have the fewest resources. However, IACL should be maintained as a Universal service. This leads to better social integration and enriches the lives of all adults.

The collection of fees for IACL remains a challenge. There are already a number of approaches to ensuring income generation is maintained in order to cross subsidise those who cannot pay.

It is accepted that the use of public funds should be managed in an accountable way. Any funds distributed locally would need to be done by a strategic accountable body such as local authorities who are subject to regulated audits.

3. The need to provide robust evidence for IACL. Social and economic impact measures for BIS-funded IACL are under-developed and Government does not collect data on non-government funded IACL.

HBC proposed response:

The collection of data from BIS funded IACL is well established. It is important to have both local and national data available for planning. Option C (a national learner survey in addition to provider monitoring) would be the appropriate approach as this would give local information as well as national comparators.

The amount of information collected needs to be kept to a minimum in order not to place too great an admin burden on learners and providers.

Mapping fee income remains a challenge as there are many inconsistencies across the national scene which could make the comparative analysis invalid.

4. The need to address funding anomalies and make funding fairer. Funding is currently based on an historical, and in many cases inequitable, distribution.

HBC proposed response:

Funding for IACL has been based on historical data. This has led to anomalies within areas.

If IACL is to be seen as a universal service then funding needs to be distributed evenly.

Allocation based on local demographic and other factors such as deprivation would be the best method. This would then leave the priorities to be determined locally.

The best option for funding local provision would be to have a single local commissioning body such as a local authority.

They would then be best placed to commission provision for the locality.

5. The need to create the conditions that will enable a much wider range of informal learning to thrive, whether this is supported by Government, self-organised in local communities, delivered in the private sector or enabled through harnessing the power of the internet.

HBC proposed response:

It is accepted that a wider range of IACL needs to be developed. There are many ways of accomplishing this. At present many strategies are used locally to reach a wider audience, these include the use of Community Learning Champions. There is also a range of funding strategies used to build capacity in local areas. It is important to continue to be able to fund local initiatives for both capacity building and innovation. This is preferable to the development of national on-line packages.

6. The need to ensure that workforce training and quality assurance arrangements support the new vision for BIS-funded IACL

HBC proposed response:

Quality assurance is an important aspect of the delivery of IACL. Any new arrangement to the delivery of IACL needs to ensure it is Quality assured as with other provision.

There has been much progress in the recent past to upskill all staff involved in delivering IACL. It is important to maintain the skills of the workforce in order to ensure learners receive a valuable experience.

CONSULTATION QUESTIONS

1. Do you agree that BIS-funded IACL contributes to the development of the Big Society and complements the delivery of other Government policies, and if yes which policies and how might IACL's contribution be measured?
2. Should BIS funded IACL be aimed solely at supporting specific outcomes such as progression to training and employment, or enable progression in a broader sense?
3. If the latter, what other types of progression are relevant and how could they be measured?
4. What should be the respective national and local roles in relation to IACL?
5. What (if any) steps could facilitate the changing role of central Government in IACL?
6. What are the implications of seeking a wider local provider base?
7. What would a localised IACL offer mean for providers, such as the Workers' Educational Association, delivering learning across localities?
8. Should BIS-funded IACL be targeted or universal, and why?
9. What are the key challenges to generating fee income and what associated solutions would encourage more sophisticated approaches to income generation?
10. In a localised model, what are the key challenges and associated solutions that would secure accountability for tax payers' investment.
11. Which, if any, of options a) b) and c) of page 13 present a proportionate approach to measuring impact? Are there any alternatives?
12. What core information should recipients of BIS investment have to provide in relation to learner characteristics and learning activity?
13. How can administrative data be used effectively to map fee income and learner disadvantage?
14. What factors should be taken into account in the distribution of BIS funding for IACL?

15. Which, if any, of options a), b) and c) on page 15 would best secure more localised delivery and are there alternatives that could be considered.
16. Should BIS IACL funding be used to fund capacity building and innovation?
17. If yes, how should funding be balanced and what type of activity should be funded?
18. Is there a need for quality assurance arrangements to be changed in light of the potential changes to BIS funded IACL? If yes, in what way?
19. What adjustments to current workforce development arrangements in England would best support the new vision for IACL?