

ECONOMIC GROWTH AND REGENERATION COMMITTEE

MINUTES AND DECISION RECORD

22 JULY 2025

The meeting commenced at 9.30 am in the Civic Centre, Hartlepool

Present:

Councillor Hargreaves (In the Chair)

Councillors: Councillors Matthew Dodds, Jim Lindridge, John Nelson, Owen Riddle
and Martin Scarborough

Parish Council representatives:

Stephen Smith, Parish Council Representative (Greatham)

Also in attendance:

Paul Bell and Charlotte Linton, Better
Stephanie Rose and Joseph Demetriou, Tees Valley Combined
Authority

Officers:

Denise McGuckin, Managing Director
Sylvia Pinkney Assistant Director, Regulatory Services
Israr Hussain, Economic Growth and Regeneration Manager
Connor Kerr, Head of Communications and Marketing
Steve Hilton, Senior Communications and Marketing Officer
Angela Armstrong, Principal Democratic Services and Legal Support
Officer

6. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Mike Young and
Elizabeth Hurst, Parish Council Representative (Wynyard)

7. Declarations of Interest

None.

8. Minutes of the meeting held on 17 June 2025

Received.

9. New HBC Website and Corporate Brand Identity (Managing Director)

Type of decision

Non key

Purpose of report

To present to Members an update on two key strategic communications projects that had been progressed over the last 12 months.

Issue(s) for consideration by the Committee

The Chair introduced representatives from Better, the branding agency who had been working with the Council to refresh the Council's brand identity.

A presentation was provided to Members that outlined the initial findings which had led to the development of a refreshed corporate brand identity across the areas of People; Place; Corporate; and Potential - which aligns with the new Council Plan.

A refreshed logo was presented which focused on maintaining the civic elements of the Council identity but with a modern twist. The new branding could be utilised in various ways including advertising, presentations, business and identity cards. It was highlighted that across the 300 services provided by Hartlepool Borough Council for the residents of Hartlepool, there had been over 30 logos developed for council services over the years for different initiatives and projects. As part of this project, it was highlighted that these would be significantly reduced.

The Chair commented that the branding would be across all services provided by the Council and this would provide residents with the recognition of the variety and number of services provided by the Council. It was noted Anchored in Progress had been developed as part of the branding strapline and this retained links with the maritime history of Hartlepool.

The Managing Director added that a number of consultation exercises had been undertaken as part of the development of the logo including taking on feedback received as part of the Big Conversation, held last year and this had all been utilised to shape the rebranding exercise.

In addition to the refresh of the Council branding, a project had been undertaken to replace the Council's current website which would also provide improved accessibility.

The updated website would enable online tasks to be undertaken as easily and efficiently as possible. The Head of Communications and Marketing presented to Members a short demonstration of the new website and functions that will be available on the new website. It was noted that thorough testing of the website and its functions would be undertaken over the next couple of months prior to a soft launch.

The Head of Communications and Marketing responded to a number of questions raised during the meeting. It was anticipated that the current trend of increasing online traffic via the Council's website will continue. However, Members were reassured that access to services would remain available to residents who did not wish to access online services.

Decision

- (i) Members approved the adoption of the new Hartlepool Borough Council logo and associated brand identity and the proposed implementation plan.
- (ii) The progress made to date on both projects and the upcoming launches were noted.

10. Inclusive Growth Strategy - Update *(Assistant Director, Regulatory Services)*

Type of decision

Non key

Purpose of report

To inform Members of the progress made on the current Inclusive Growth Strategy 2022/25.

To inform Members of the activities the Economic Growth Team were undertaking to implement the current Inclusive Growth Strategy, support local businesses and grow the Hartlepool economy.

To seek approval from Members to engage consultants to support the development of a new 3-5 year Inclusive Growth Strategy for Hartlepool.

Issue(s) for consideration by the Committee

The Assistant Director, Regulatory Services presented a comprehensive update on the activity undertaken as part of the Inclusive Growth Strategy for Hartlepool. A number of tables within the report identified the economic

related statistics for Hartlepool for the period 2020-2024. The proposal was to develop a 3-5 year Inclusive Growth Strategy once the Tees Valley Economic Growth Plan had been completed.

In response to a number of comments the Economic Growth and Regeneration Manager indicated that failure rates for businesses across 1-5 years was relatively high and this was one of the challenges faced by the Economic Growth Team. The Managing Director commented that creating a strategy to cover 5-10 years with a plan to sustain investment with regular reviews would be an effective way forward. Members were of the view that waiting until the Tees Valley Economic Growth Plan had been implemented would enable Hartlepool to develop their goals in line with that Plan. A discussion ensued on the lack of public transport links across the Tees Valley area and that this may be a barrier to residents of Hartlepool accessing job opportunities across the region. The Economic Growth and Regeneration Manager informed Members that a lot of businesses had failed that were small start-up retail/lifestyle businesses which were very competitive sectors of business.

The Chair concluded that the statistics provided in the report were not as positive as Members had anticipated and welcomed opportunities to secure more investment and support via the Tees Valley Combined Authority for the residents of Hartlepool. Members expressed dissatisfaction with the lack of progress across the action plan of the Inclusive Growth Strategy noting that the actions were consistently not achieved. The Chair added that the next 12 months be utilised to interrogate the Inclusive Growth Strategy alongside the Tees Valley Combined Authority Local Growth Strategy and question whether the actions identified were appropriate to facilitate the delivery of the targets and outcomes required by the Strategy.

Decision

- i) Members were asked to note the report on the economic priorities in the current Inclusive Growth Strategy 2022-25.
- ii) That Officers examine the Tees Valley Combined Authority Local Growth Plan alongside the local Inclusive Growth Strategy to identify the most effective way to develop and implement the local Strategy.
- iii) That over the next 12 months the actions contained within the Economic Growth Strategy be interrogated to ascertain if they were appropriate to facilitate the delivery of the targets and outcomes of the Inclusive Growth Strategy.

11. Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation Order) 2006

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

Minute 12 – Presentation – Local Growth Plan (*Tees Valley Combined Authority*) – This item contains exempt information under Schedule 12A Local Government Act 1972 as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006 namely (para 3)

12. Presentation – Local Growth Plan (*Tees Valley Combined Authority*) This item contains exempt information under Schedule 12A Local Government Act 1972 as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006 namely information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information) (para3)

Representatives from the Tees Valley Combined Authority provided a detailed and comprehensive presentation that examined the Local Growth Plan and Get Tees Valley Working Plan by way of an update on progress and to inform discussions. It was noted that the aim was for local growth strategies to work alongside and complement the Tees Valley strategy. The presentation and identified high level local growth priorities as well as shared priorities that had been agreed with Government. The next steps in the development of the Local Growth Plan were outlined in the presentation.

The representatives from the Tees Valley Combined Authority responded to a number of questions and requests for clarification. The Chair indicated that it was important for Tees Valley Combined Authority to effectively engage with Members in order that the most effective use of resources and the developing infrastructure was implemented to meet the needs of Hartlepool residents. The Chair requested that Members of the Economic Growth and Regeneration Committee be formally involved in the development of the Local Growth Plan in order to add value from a Hartlepool perspective.

Decision

- i) That Members note the progress to date of the development of a Local Growth Plan and Get Tees Valley Working Plan.
- ii) That the Tees Valley Combined Authority formally involve Members of the Economic Growth and Regeneration Committee in the

engagement plan for the development of the Local Growth Plan in order to add value from a Hartlepool perspective.

The meeting concluded at 12.10pm

H MARTIN

DIRECTOR OF LEGAL, GOVERNANCE AND HUMAN RESOURCES

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