



Hartlepool
Borough Council

Adult Services and Public Health Committee

Agenda

22 January 2026

Time: 10am

Location: Council Chamber

Members: Adult Services and Public Health Committee

Councillors Allen (C), Boddy, Cook, Doyle, Hall, Little, Roy (VCh)

Parish Councillor Representative (s):

S Gaiety (Headland Parish Council)

1. Apologies for absence

2. To receive any declarations of interest by members

3. Minutes

- 3.1 To receive the Minutes and Decision Record in respect of the meeting held on 4th December 2025 (previously published and circulated).

4. Budget And Policy Framework Items

- 4.1 None.

5. Key Decisions

- 5.1 None.

CIVIC CENTRE EVACUATION AND ASSEMBLY PROCEDURE

In the event of a fire alarm or a bomb alarm, please leave by the nearest emergency exit as directed by Council Officers. A Fire Alarm is a continuous ringing. A Bomb Alarm is a continuous tone. The Assembly Point for everyone is Victory Square by the Cenotaph. If the meeting has been evacuated, please proceed to the Assembly Point so that you can be safely accounted for.



6. Other Items Requiring Decision

6.1 Carers Strategy 2026-2031 – *Executive Director of Adult Services and Public Health*

6.2 Dementia Strategy 2026-2031 - *Executive Director of Adult Services and Public Health*

7. Items for information

7.1 Hartlepool Sexual Health Services Update – *Director of Public Health*

7.2 Drug and Alcohol Strategy Update – *Director of Public Health*

8. Any other business which the chair considers urgent

For Information

Date of next meeting – 5th March at 5pm in the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Hartlepool.



Adult Services and Public Health Committee

22 January 2026

Report of: Executive Director of Adult Services & Public Health

Subject: CARERS STRATEGY 2026-2031

Decision Type: Non-Key

1. Council Plan Priority

Hartlepool will be a place:
- where people live healthier, safe and independent lives. (People)

2. Purpose of Report

- 2.1 To present the Carers Strategy 2026-2031 and to seek approval from the Committee for the Adult Social Care Carers Plan that has been developed to support implementation.

3. Background

- 3.1 Carers make a significant contribution to society and yet many still feel invisible, face significant inequalities, and lack adequate support ([Carers Week Report 2025](#)).
- 3.2 It was agreed by partners via the Health & Wellbeing Board in June 2025 that a refreshed Carers Strategy for Hartlepool would ensure that carers living in the borough are recognised, valued and supported in their roles, which are often physically and emotionally demanding.

- 3.3 The Carers Strategy 2026-2031 was approved at the Health and Wellbeing Board in December 2025 where it was also agreed that all partner organisations needed to agree specific actions for which they were accountable, with an annual progress report presented to the Health and Wellbeing Board.

4. Proposals

- 4.1 The Carers Strategy 2026-2031 is attached as **Appendix 1** and has been developed by the Carers Strategy Group with membership from statutory organisations, the voluntary and community sector and representation from carers via Hartlepool Carers. The group is underpinned by Carer Focus Groups facilitated by Hartlepool Carers involving carers, ex-carers and young carers. The Carer Focus Groups will also play a key role in monitoring delivery of the strategy.
- 4.2 The Carers Strategy has been shaped by the priorities and lived experiences of carers themselves. This approach ensures the strategy is both ambitious and meaningful, reflecting what matters most to those it is designed for. The strategy focuses on eight priority areas:
- Helping carers to be recognised and supported early
 - Carers having a family life and being part of their community
 - Giving carers the right information, advice and support
 - Helping carers stay healthy and well
 - Helping carers have a life outside caring
 - Supporting ex-carers after their caring role ends
 - Making sure carers' voices are heard in decisions
 - Giving carers time away from caring responsibilities
- 4.3 An Adult Social Care Carers Plan has been developed to support implementation and is attached as **Appendix 2**. This focuses on the specific actions that impact on adult social care and will ensure that there is a focus on continuous improvement in relation to how carers are supported.

5. Other Considerations/Implications

RISK IMPLICATIONS	There are no risks associated with this report.
FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS	There are no financial considerations associated with this report.

SUBSIDY CONTROL	Not Applicable.
LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS	As set out in the report, there are requirements within the Care Act 2014 in relation to support for carers, and the Carers Strategy and Adult Social Care Carers Plan will ensure that the Council meet these requirements.
SINGLE IMPACT ASSESSMENT	<p>There are no equality and diversity implications specifically associated with this report. Carers with protected characteristics can be disproportionately impacted by issues such as social isolation but the services that are provided and commissioned by the Council address equality and diversity considerations so that there is equity of access for all.</p> <p>The 'Caring About Equality' report identifies that all unpaid carers share a common need for equality of opportunity: better recognition, improved identification and support across all aspects of their lives. This includes greater financial assistance, more frequent and accessible breaks, reliable and affordable social care services, time to look after their own health, more workplace flexibility and support, and recognition and support from the NHS. It is our ambition that the Carers Strategy for Hartlepool helps deliver on that vision.</p>
STAFF CONSIDERATIONS	There are no staffing considerations associated with this report.
ASSET MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS	There are no staffing considerations associated with this report.
ENVIRONMENT, SUSTAINABILITY AND CLIMATE CHANGE CONSIDERATIONS	There are no environment, sustainability and climate change considerations associated with this report.
CONSULTATION	As outlined in the report the Carers Strategy has been shaped by the priorities and lived experiences of carers themselves and focus groups have

	enabled people with lived experience to be part of its development. There will be ongoing engagement with focus groups during implementation.
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6. Recommendations

- 6.1 It is recommended that the Committee notes and endorses the Carers Strategy 2026-2031 and the Adult Social Care Carers Plan.

7. Reasons for Recommendations

- 7.1 Carers make a significant contribution to society and yet many still feel invisible, face significant inequalities, and lack adequate support. The Carers Strategy 2026-2031 and the associated Adult Social Care Carers Plan will help to address these issues within the borough.

8. Contact Officers

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Sign Off:-

Managing Director	Date: 22.12.2025
Director of Finance, IT and Digital	Date: 18.12.2025
Director of Legal, Governance and HR	Date: 18.12.2025



HARTLEPOOLCARERS STRATEGY

2026 - 2031



Introduction from Chair of Health and Wellbeing Board

TBC

Introduction

Unpaid carers in Hartlepool play a vital role in supporting family members, friends, and neighbours who could not manage without their help. Carers provide care out of love and commitment, but this often comes at a personal cost to their own health, wellbeing, finances and opportunities.

Hartlepool recognises the importance of supporting carers of all ages - young carers, parent carers, working-age carers, ex-carers and older carers, so they can continue to live full and meaningful lives alongside their caring responsibilities.

Whilst not downplaying the impact of caring on all ages, there is no doubt that there are some specific challenges for young carers and it is important that these are considered in the strategy.

Young carers have unique needs that must be recognised, supported and addressed in a coordinated and sustainable way. Young carers often take on significant responsibilities at home, which can impact their education, social development and emotional wellbeing. A clear strategy helps to raise awareness across services, improve access to tailored support and promote early identification and intervention. It also empowers young carers by giving them a voice in shaping the services that affect them, fostering resilience and helping them thrive both now and in the future.

This strategy has been shaped by the voices of carers in Hartlepool. It sets out our shared vision, values and priorities to ensure carers are recognised, valued and supported. Our aim is to ensure carers are not left isolated, unsupported or invisible. Instead, carers should feel recognised, connected and able to balance caring with other aspects of their lives. This strategy applies to carers of all ages and backgrounds and will be delivered through partnership working across health, social care, education, voluntary organisations and local communities.

Background

Carers play an essential role in Hartlepool, supporting family members, friends and neighbours who could not manage without their help. Their contribution underpins the health, wellbeing and independence of many local people. Recognising this, Hartlepool Borough Council and Hartlepool Carers has worked closely with carers to develop this Carers Strategy.

The strategy has been shaped by the experiences and priorities of carers themselves. Over recent months, a programme of engagement and co-production activities has been carried out to ensure that carers' voices are at the heart of local planning. This included:

- Carer surveys circulated through local networks, and community organisations to capture a wide range of views
- Focus groups and listening events where carers shared their day-to-day experiences, challenges and ideas for change
- Targeted conversations with young carers, working carers and carers from diverse backgrounds to ensure inclusion of seldom-heard voices
- Community workshops involving professionals from health, education and social care, enabling carers and practitioners to explore shared priorities and opportunities for joint working

Feedback from these activities highlighted several consistent messages. Carers told us they want:

- To be recognised and valued for the vital contribution they make
- Clear, accessible information and advice at the right time
- Support for their own wellbeing, including opportunities for respite and social connection
- Greater flexibility and understanding from employers, schools and services and:
- To be involved as equal partners in care planning and service development

This strategy reflects what carers in Hartlepool have told us matters most to them. It builds on the strengths of our local community and sets out a shared commitment to ensure that carers are supported, respected and empowered in their caring roles.

How this Strategy was developed

The Hartlepool Carers Strategy has been developed through a partnership approach led by Hartlepool Borough Council and Hartlepool Carers, with support from other local organisations. The process has been evidence-based, using local data, national policy guidance and carers lived experiences to shape shared priorities.

A Carers Strategy Working Group brought together representatives from across health, social care, education and the voluntary sector to review feedback and identify key themes. The result is a strategy that reflects both the unique needs of Hartlepool's carers and our collective ambition to make the borough a carer-friendly community.

Hartlepool Carers - Local Context

According to data, there are approximately 10,000 people in Hartlepool providing care to a family member, friend, or neighbour. Around:

- 1 in 10 residents identifies as an unpaid carer
- Over 1,600 carers provide 50 or more hours of care per week; and:
- A growing number of carers are also in employment, balancing work and caring responsibilities.

These figures highlight the scale and significance of caring within our community, and the need for coordinated support that recognises carers as equal partners in care. The Carers Strategy sets out how local organisations will work together to achieve this.

Vision

That carers in Hartlepool are recognised, respected and supported to live well, stay healthy and achieve their own goals, while continuing in their caring role if they choose.

Values

Our work will be guided by the following values:

- Recognition - valuing carers as experts by experience.
- Respect - listening to carers' voices and treating them with dignity.
- Inclusion - ensuring carers are part of their community and have equal opportunities.
- Support - providing timely, accessible and practical help.
- Partnership - working with carers, families, communities, employers and services.
- Compassion - responding with kindness and understanding.

This Carers Strategy has been co-produced with carers and organisations in Hartlepool. It sets out eight key priorities, each with underpinning ambitions that aim to achieve meaningful change.

Our aim is to ensure carers are not left isolated, unsupported, or invisible. Instead, carers should feel recognised, connected and able to balance caring with other aspects of their lives. This strategy applied to carers of all ages and backgrounds and will be delivered through partnership working across health, social care, education, voluntary organisations and local communities.

Priority 1

Helping carers to be recognised and supported early

We want carers to be seen, heard and supported as soon as possible.

We will do this by:

- Raising awareness of what being a carer means.
- Delivering training in schools, communities, health settings and with emergency services so carers can be spotted and signposted to support.
- Encourage that every school to have a designated Young Carer Lead whose contact details are shared and who fully understands the support mechanisms available for young carers. This individual plays a key role and should be well-known within the school community.
- Including carers in care planning and support them throughout the caring journey, including at end-of-life.
- Supporting carers in employment through awareness of the Carers Leave Act.
- Partnering with charities and community groups to identify and support carers of all ages.

Priority 2

Carers having a family life and being part of their community

We want carers to be able to look after their family, enjoy time with friends and family, be part of their local community and do the things they like doing.

We will help carers do this by:

- Providing activities and support in community locations.
- Supporting young carers in maintaining a balanced life where they can care of their family while also enjoying friendships, participating in community activities, and pursuing their own interests and aspirations.
- Supporting carers to start their own groups.
- Improving access to transport so families can access activities.
- Promote “Carer Friendly Hartlepool.”
- Create more social opportunities for carers to connect.

Priority 3

Giving carers the right information, advice and support

We want carers to be able to easily find information, advice and support at the time they need it in a format that is accessible for them.

We will help carers do this by:

- Making sure that any organisations who come into contact with carers know where to direct carers to for information, advice and support.
- Ensuring young carers can easily access the right information, advice and support when they need it, in ways that are clear, age-appropriate and tailored to their individual circumstances.
- Providing information that is easy to access both online and in person, tailored to individual needs and preferences - including through social media and other adaptable formats.
- Sharing real-life experiences from carers.
- Offering in-person support to reduce isolation.
- Creating peer networks for learning and support.

Priority 4

Helping carers stay healthy and well

We want carers to live healthy lives and to reduce their levels of stress, anxiety and depression.

We will help carers do this by:

- Working with health services and charities to promote self-care.
- Providing wellbeing support, therapies and workshops.
- Recognising the impact caring has on health.
- Ensuring GPs know who their carers are.
- Supporting young carers in maintaining their physical and emotional wellbeing by reducing stress and promoting healthy lifestyles, ensuring they have access to the right support at the right time.
- Ensuring all health professionals are aware of who their young carers are and encourage professionals to make appropriate adjustments to meet their health and wellbeing needs, providing compassionate, accessible and responsive care.
- Offering community health checks and wellbeing sessions.

Priority 5

Helping carers have a life outside caring (work, education, volunteering)

We want carers to have a good life outside of their caring role. Carers should be recognised and supported. They should be able to work, study, or volunteer if they want to - without harming their own wellbeing or the care they give.

We will help carers do this by:

- Ensuring employers understand their responsibilities under the Carers Leave Act.
- Encouraging flexible working and hybrid options.
- Creating varied volunteering opportunities.
- Making sure schools and colleges have Carer Leads.
- Training job coaches to understand carers' needs.
- Supporting young carers to pursue education, training, volunteering and personal interests - ensuring their caring role does not limit their opportunities or wellbeing and that they are recognised and supported to achieve their goals.

Priority 6

Supporting ex-carers after their caring role ends

We want to make sure that people who used to care for someone get the help they need when their caring role ends.

We will help carers do this by:

- Providing local groups and peer support for ex-carers.
- Promoting services that support life after caring.
- Encouraging ex-carers to use their skills to support others.
- Working with community and faith groups to provide support.
- Ensuring young carers are supported when their caring role ends, helping them adjust, rebuild their confidence and access opportunities for personal growth, education and wellbeing.

Priority 7

Making sure carers' voices are heard in decisions

We want carers to be recognised as experts in their own lives and be involved in planning and decision making.

We will help carers do this by:

- Encouraging carers to become Carer Champions and join focus groups.
- Seeking carers opinions by offering surveys and flexible feedback methods.
- Taking focus groups into local venues.
- Ensuring groups are supportive, friendly and inclusive.
- Ensuring young carers are recognised as experts in their own lives and are actively involved in shaping the support, services and decisions that affect them.
- Providing clear information for carers leading groups.

Priority 8

Giving carers time away from caring responsibilities

We want to make sure that carers can take time away from their caring responsibilities whilst knowing that their cared for is being well looked after.

We will support carers to do this by:

- Helping carers maintain social networks, hobbies and interests.
- Coordinating services to give carers breaks.
- Providing peer groups, retreats and flexible respite opportunities.
- Offering subsidised activities to make breaks affordable.
- Providing activities in varied community settings.
- Ensuring young carers have regular opportunities to take time away from their caring responsibilities, knowing that the person they care for is safe and supported - so they can rest, recharge, and enjoy activities that matter to them.

How will we deliver our vision for Carers?

This strategy sets out our vision for carers living in Hartlepool. An action plan for the delivery of this strategy will be developed. A set of measures will be included in the plan to monitor progress and success, and these will be reported annually to the Health and Wellbeing Board. These measures will not just be numbers and outputs, they will also be measures of impact, so we know that we are making a difference and supporting carers, their families and cared for.

Carers Strategy: Adult Social Care Actions

Priority 1 – Helping carers be recognised and supported early

- Promote Carers Rights Day and Carers Week on Hartlepool Now and via HBC Communications.
- Listen to carers and respect their opinions/knowledge in discussions and decisions about individuals care and support needs.
- Remind all frontline staff to ask “Do you provide care for someone?” during all contacts.
- Signpost any identified carers to Hartlepool Carers.

Priority 2 – Carers have a family life and are part of their community

- Commission Hartlepool Carers to complete Carers Assessments on behalf of the Council to ensure that the carer is supported to be part of their community.

Priority 3 – Giving carers the right information, advice and support

- Maintain accurate information, advice and support on Hartlepool Now.
- Review and update links to Hartlepool Carers website across Hartlepool Now and HBC website to ensure easy signposting.
- Promote the Digital Assistant on Hartlepool Now as a resource for carers and Hartlepool Carers to find information on care and support in Hartlepool.
- Work to ensure that information, advice and support provided by the Council is accessible and available in a range of formats.

Priority 4 – Helping carers stay healthy and well

- Work with Public Health and NHS partners to promote consideration of carers needs when any community health checks or wellbeing activities are planned.
- Signpost carers experiencing stress to Hartlepool Carers / Togetherall / The Bridge for peer support.

Priority 5 – Helping carers have a life outside caring (work, education, volunteering)

- Commission Hartlepool Carers to complete Carers Assessments on behalf of the Council to ensure that the carer is supported to have a life outside caring.

Priority 6 – Supporting ex-carers after their caring role ends

- Promote opportunities for ex-carers to be involved in service delivery via coproduction groups.

Priority 7 – Making sure carers voices are heard in decisions

- Actively promote the bi-annual national Carers Survey.
- Share feedback from the Carers Survey.
- Attend carers focus groups to listen to the issues that matter to them and feed these back into internal decision-making processes.

Priority 8 – Giving carers time away from caring responsibilities

- Ensuring there is sufficient and appropriate respite care for people needing care and support to provide carers with a break from their caring role.



DEMENTIA STRATEGY 2026-2031

22 January 2026

Report of: Executive Director of Adult Services & Public Health
Subject: DEMENTIA STRATEGY 2026-2031
Decision Type: Non key

1. Council Plan Priority

Hartlepool will be a place:
- Where people live healthier, safe and independent lives. (People)

2. Purpose of Report

2.1 To present the Dementia Strategy 2026-2031 and to provide an update to Committee regarding actions being taken within adult social care to support implementation.

3. Background

3.1 The development of a Dementia Strategy was identified by the Dementia Friendly Hartlepool Partnership as being crucial for several reasons:

- **Rising Prevalence:** Dementia is a growing global challenge, with an increasing number of people affected as populations age. A strategy helps manage and plan for this rise

- **Improved Diagnosis and Care:** A well-structured strategy can enhance the diagnosis, treatment, and care for individuals with dementia. This includes developing guidelines for better management and ensuring access to necessary services
- **Support for Carers:** Carers often face significant challenges. A dementia strategy can provide them with the support and resources they need, such as respite care and training
- **Public Awareness and Stigma Reduction:** Raising awareness about dementia and reducing the stigma associated with it is essential. A strategy can promote education and understanding, fostering a more inclusive society
- **Reduce Isolation:** Supporting people living with dementia to have greater access to community, social and leisure opportunities and reduce isolation.

3.2 It was agreed by partners via the Health & Wellbeing Board in June 2025 that a Dementia Strategy was essential for addressing the multifaceted challenges posed by dementia and improving the quality of life for those affected.

3.3 The Dementia Strategy 2026-2031 was approved at the Health and Wellbeing Board in December 2025 where it was also agreed that all partner organisations needed to work collaboratively to ensure effective delivery, with an annual progress report to the Health and Wellbeing Board.

4. Proposals

4.1 The Dementia Strategy 2026-2031 is attached as **Appendix 1** and has been developed in collaboration with people with lived experience, their carers and families, the Greatham Foundation, Adult Social Care representatives, public health, care providers, representatives from the North East & North Cumbria Integrated Care Board, Healthwatch volunteers, representatives from VCS organisations such as Citizens Advice Bureau and Hartlepool Carers.

4.2 The Dementia Strategy has five priority areas:

- Living Better
- Supporting Carers and Families
- Diagnosis and Access to Support
- Person Centred Care and Support
- Young Onset Dementia

4.3 A summary of actions being taken within adult social care to support the implementation of the Dementia Strategy is attached as **Appendix 2**. This sets

out actions for each of the priority areas and will ensure that there is a focus on continuous improvement in relation to how people living with dementia and their families / carers are supported.

5. Other Considerations/Implications

RISK IMPLICATIONS	There are no risks associated with this report.
FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS	There are no financial considerations associated with this report.
SUBSIDY CONTROL	Not applicable.
LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS	The Dementia Strategy will support the Council to meet the requirements of the Care Act 2014.
SINGLE IMPACT ASSESSMENT	There are no equality and diversity implications specifically associated with this report. The Dementia Strategy aims to reduce social exclusion and challenge negative stereotypes, prejudice and social isolation often experienced by people living with dementia and their families/carers.
STAFF CONSIDERATIONS	There are no staffing considerations associated with this report.
ASSET MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS	There are no asset management considerations associated with this report.
ENVIRONMENT, SUSTAINABILITY AND CLIMATE CHANGE CONSIDERATIONS	There are no environment, sustainability and climate change considerations associated with this report.
CONSULTATION	As outlined in the report the Dementia Strategy has been developed in collaboration with people with lived experience, their carers and families.

6. Recommendations

- 6.1 It is recommended that the Committee notes and endorses the Dementia Strategy 2026-2031 and the actions being taken to support implementation.

7. Reasons for Recommendations

- 7.1 The number of people living with dementia is expected to grow rapidly over the coming five to ten years and a Dementia Strategy supports increased awareness, helps to tackle stigma and drives improved outcomes for people living with dementia and their families / carers.

8. Contact Officers

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Sign Off:-

Managing Director	Date: 22.12.2025
Director of Finance, IT and Digital	Date: 18.12.2025
Director of Legal, Governance and HR	Date: 22.12.2025

Hartlepool

Dementia Strategy

Draft 2026 - 2031

Forward by Michael Booth

Dementia is not a single condition but a group of progressive neurological disorders affecting memory, thinking, communication, and behaviour. While Alzheimer's and vascular dementia are more common, rarer types like Lewy body, frontotemporal dementia, and posterior cortical atrophy present distinct symptoms hallucinations, personality changes, or visual-spatial difficulties. Though ageing is a major risk factor, dementia is not a normal part of ageing and can affect people of all ages, including those with young onset dementia. Its impact extends beyond the individual, affecting families, carers, and communities.

Hartlepool needs a community dementia strategy that reflects its values: resilience, compassion, and solidarity. A clear, localised strategy ensures people aren't left to navigate alone. It enables early recognition, smooth service transitions, and timely, person-centred support. It also helps dismantle stigma and fosters understanding from care homes to corner shops.

Early symptom recognition is vital. These may include memory loss, confusion, language or decision-making difficulties, and mood or behaviour changes. In rarer types, symptoms may include hallucinations, loss of empathy, or visual processing issues. An early GP visit can make a real difference. If dementia is in the mild cognitive impairment (MCI) stage, some types may be delayed, and in rare cases, progression halted or reversed. With diagnosis, early support becomes available helping people and carers reflect on the past, plan for the future, and live in the present with dignity.

Diagnosis typically begins with a GP referral to a memory clinic. Assessments may include cognitive tests, blood work, scans, and family input. This process must be trauma-informed, inclusive of rare presentations, and sensitive to cultural, emotional, and neurodiverse needs. Diagnosis is not the end it's the beginning of a new way of living, met with clarity, compassion, and support.

Once diagnosed, people need immediate, tailored support. This includes emotional guidance, practical help, occupational therapy, peer groups, and home adaptations. Information on rights, benefits, and planning must be clear and accessible. Support should be proactive not reactive. We must not wait for crisis to act.

Training is transformative. Every staff member from receptionists to care workers must be equipped to respond with empathy. Training challenges stigma, bias, and myths, building a community where people are supported to live well. People can then care well, support well, and be cared for with dignity.

Living with dementia should not mean losing your voice. People deserve to choose their care home, shape their support, and be seen as whole individuals not just diagnoses. Ethical and legal rights, including advance planning and protection from discrimination, must be embedded in every stage of the strategy.

Carers are lifelines. Their wellbeing must be prioritised. Emotional support, respite, training, and peer connection are essential. Carer burnout is real we must act before crisis hits. Supporting carers is not a luxury it's a necessity.

This strategy is more than a document it's a promise. A promise that Hartlepool will stand beside every person affected by dementia with dignity, clarity, and care.

Introduction

Dementia is one of the UK's most urgent health and social care challenges.

A dementia strategy is needed because:

- **Rising numbers:** As populations age, more people are affected. A strategy helps plan and manage this increase.
- **Better diagnosis and care:** Clear guidelines improve how dementia is identified, treated, and supported.
- **Support for carers:** Carers face major challenges. A strategy ensures access to respite, training, and resources.
- **Awareness and stigma:** Education reduces stigma and builds a more inclusive, understanding society.
- **Reducing isolation:** A strategy connects people with dementia to community, social, and leisure opportunities.

Health and social care services alone can't meet the needs of people with Dementia, and most don't want to live solely within services. Dementia needs a community-wide response.

National Context

The number of people living with Dementia in the UK is expected to grow rapidly over the coming decades. Age is the biggest risk factor for dementia, the increase in life expectancy is thought to be driving the projected rise.

- There are an estimated 1,000,000 living with dementia in 2025, and 1.6 million by 2040.
- Currently there are just over 15,000 people under the age of 65 living with dementia in England.
- It is predicted that 1 in 3 people will develop dementia in their lifetime.
- 69% of people in care homes have a dementia or memory loss.

There continues to be evolving national dementia guidance, research, and best practice, much of which is co-produced with people affected by dementia.

In 2009, the then UK government introduced the National Dementia Strategy, titled Living Well with Dementia. This landmark initiative aimed to transform dementia care across England, focusing on three core objectives:

1. **Raising Awareness and Reducing Stigma:** Enhancing public and professional understanding of dementia to encourage early help-seeking and diminish associated stigma.
2. **Early Diagnosis and Intervention:** Ensuring timely and high-quality assessments, diagnoses, and treatments for individuals with dementia and their carers.
3. **Improving Quality of Care:** Developing services that adapt to the evolving needs of people with dementia, ensuring they receive appropriate support throughout their journey.

The strategy outlined 17 specific objectives, including enhancing community support, improving hospital and care home standards, and investing in research and workforce training. It emphasized a holistic approach, integrating health and social care services to provide comprehensive support for those affected by dementia.

Local Context

Hartlepool in 2025 has roughly 1300 residents living with Dementia, by 2040 this is predicted to increase to 1867 residents.

Local dementia care costs are expected to rise from 70million to 85million by 2030. This rise follows a pattern, with the 2019 estimated costs being 55m. The rise from 2019 to 2030 is 64.7%

Hartlepool has a Dementia diagnosis rate of 78.5 per 100 people ages 65+. This is the second highest in England, with the national average being 64.8. A high diagnosis rate reflects positively but also means that Hartlepool needs robust services, both clinically and community-based to meet demand.

Developing Our Strategy

This Dementia Strategy has been co-produced with health and care providers including Hartlepool Borough Council and North East and Cumbria NHS Integrated Care Board (ICB), Healthwatch Hartlepool, representatives from the Voluntary and Community Sector, and most importantly, people with lived experience of dementia, their families and carers.

Working together over a number of sessions, we developed our vision and priorities that we believe will put people living with dementia and their carers at the centre of everything we do.

This means recognising and valuing their voices, experiences, and choices in shaping the support they receive. Our strategy is built on the principle that care should not be something done *to* people, but *with* them — empowering individuals to lead decisions about their lives, ensuring services are responsive, respectful, and truly person-centred.

Values

Our approach will be shaped by the following values:

- **Compassion** – responding with warmth, patience and empathy to the unique experiences of people living with dementia and their carers.
- **Respect** – recognising the dignity, preferences and voices of individuals and families affected by dementia.
- **Dignity** – upholding the inherent worth of every person, ensuring care and support preserves identity, autonomy and self-respect.
- **Inclusion** – promoting belonging and participation, ensuring people with dementia and their carers are valued members of their communities.
- **Support** – offering timely, accessible and person-centred help that adapts to changing needs.
- **Partnership** – working collaboratively with people living with dementia, carers, families, communities, employers and services to create meaningful change.

What does the ‘NHS 10 Year Plan’ say about Dementia?

There has been national policy which has improved awareness of dementia and the ‘10 year health plan for England – fit for the future’ (Department of Health and Social Care, July 2025) covers a wide range of areas impacting on people living with dementia. Three key ambitions stand out:

1. Shifting healthcare out of hospitals and into communities by creating a Neighbourhood Health Service.

By bringing care into local communities, people affected by dementia could receive more consistent ongoing care.

2. Introducing a Modern Service Framework for dementia

The Government has committed to publishing a Modern Service Framework for frailty and dementia by Spring 2026. This will set standards for care and identify the best types of support that health professionals should provide. If delivered well, this could be an opportunity for real progress in dementia care, drawing on resources such as the Admiral Nurses and the Community Dementia Liaison Service.

3. Introducing a single patient record on the NHS app

Improving data sharing between services will make it easier for people with dementia and their carers to access health information and manage appointments.

OUR VISION

Our vision is to make sure that people with dementia, their families and carers are supported to live life to their full potential. We want the people of Hartlepool to be able to say:

- I can live my best and happiest life (whatever that means to me)
- My voice is heard, listened to, and is considered in relation to my own health and wellbeing
- I live in an informed, supportive community that understands dementia
- I know who/where to turn to for information, support and advice
- I have access to timely and accurate diagnosis, delivered in an appropriate way by well trained staff
- My family and carers are involved in decisions about my care and are supported to live their best possible life
- I have access to the right support that enables me to live well at home for as long as possible
- I know that when the time comes, I can die with dignity in the place of my choice.

Developing the Priorities

The strategy was developed through a series of meetings and events which included health and care providers, Hartlepool Borough Council, representatives from the Community and Voluntary Sector and most importantly, people with lived experience of dementia and their families and carers.

Priority 1 – Living Better

People living with dementia, with the right support, can lead full and active lives. Supporting healthy lifestyles can reduce the risk of developing dementia and slow its progression. In Hartlepool, it's vital that individuals are supported to live well—on their own terms.

Our Aims

- To help people living with dementia maintain their identity, independence, and physical, emotional, and mental wellbeing.
- To enable each individual to live their best and happiest life, recognising that “living better” looks different for everyone.
- To strengthen and expand the current support offer medical, social, emotional, and financial by identifying gaps and improving awareness of available services.
- To work with businesses, leisure providers, and service sectors to raise awareness and ensure services are inclusive and accessible.
- To improve partnership working across health, care, and voluntary sectors, ensuring lived experience and co-production shape future services.
- To ensure individuals receive compassionate, personalised, and safe care in hospital settings, aligned with NHS England, NICE guidance, and John's Campaign.
- To support care homes and care providers in delivering high quality, person centred care, grounded in compassion, dignity, and national standards.
- To develop consistent, cross-sector training that equips staff with the skills and understanding needed to deliver personalised, high-quality dementia support.
- To encourage and support opportunities for inclusive participation in local sporting activities, contributing to a more dementia-friendly community.

We Will

- Establish a partnership approach involving stakeholder organisations and people affected by dementia to lead and implement this strategy.
- Review current services and support offers, including commissioned and non-commissioned activities, training, and information provision. This will help identify good practice, gaps, and opportunities to improve access to social, physical, and wellbeing support.
- Strengthen relationships with businesses, leisure, transport, and service sectors, including representative bodies like the Chamber of Commerce and Business Forum, to promote dementia-friendly practices and increase staff training uptake.
- Encourage NHS and local authority partners to develop dementia-friendly action plans, including prevention messaging and post-diagnosis support.
- Explore digital and AI solutions that can enhance social, emotional, and physical wellbeing for people affected by dementia.
- Support organisations across Hartlepool to take dementia friendly actions that make activities, premises, and services more inclusive and accessible.
- Work with Active Hartlepool, Hartlepool Sport and other partners to enable people living with dementia and their carers to access inclusive, supportive sporting opportunities, and promote dementia-friendly practices across local organisations

Priority 2 – Supporting Carers and Families

Carers and family members play a vital part in supporting a person living with dementia. Providing care for a loved one can be challenging as well as physically and emotionally draining. It is vital that carers receive the right support to enable them to maintain their own physical and emotional wellbeing. Support needs will vary from person to person and at different times, but access to the right support at the right time is vital.

Our Aims

- To ensure all carers supporting a loved one with dementia have access to high-quality, responsive support, information, advice services, and being reminded of the option of an annual carer health check.
- To consistently offer carers assessments to all those caring for someone with dementia, ensuring their needs are recognised and supported.
- To include carers routinely in diagnosis and treatment pathway discussions, recognising their role and insight in the care journey.
- To investigate technology to support the person living with dementia and their care network.
- To work closely with carers so their lived experience informs the ongoing development of dementia services across statutory, voluntary, and independent sectors.
- To provide carers with clear information and support to help them understand the changes they may see as dementia progresses.
- To fully implement the Carers Charter, ensuring carers' wellbeing and support needs are met in all aspects of service delivery.
- To ensure appropriate local counselling support is available for carers of people affected by all types of dementia.
- To develop a short break/respite offer that gives carers time away from their caring role, supporting their health and wellbeing.

We Will

- Aim to ensure that delivery of Hartlepool's Carer Strategy incorporates and reflects the needs those caring for a person living with dementia.
- Ensure that statutory service providers are fully aware and promote the support offer for care providers which are available through Hartlepool Carers and other voluntary community sector organisations such as The Bridge.
- Work with commissioners to engage with care providers to support people with Dementia appropriately, through training, support and updated guidance.
- Work with commissioners and partners from across the health, social care and voluntary sectors to develop and promote carer annual health checks and emergency plans.
- Work with commissioners and partners from across the health, social care and voluntary sectors to ensure that accessible practical information and training is available for carers of people affected by dementia from diagnosis onwards.
- Work with commissioners, social care providers and carers to co-produce a short break/respite offer for carers of people living with dementia.

Priority 3 - Diagnosis and Access to Support

Like many conditions, timely diagnosis and post diagnostic support and treatment can have a significant impact on way in which the dementia progresses and the wellbeing of the individual. Timely diagnosis not only ensures that a package of care and support can be developed which enables the person to live well, but it also allows individuals, families, and carers to become more aware of what is happening, and to plan for the future.

Our Aims

- To ensure everyone with dementia receives a timely and compassionate diagnosis, supported by clear, accessible information in appropriate formats.
- To work with Hartlepool and Stockton Health and local GP practices to develop a consistent, inclusive diagnostic process that meets the ongoing needs and wellbeing of individuals
- To ensure that following diagnosis, a personalised health plan is co-developed by the individual, their family, carers, and healthcare providers, ensuring respectful and effective support throughout their journey.
- To ensure regular medication reviews are carried out by GP practices, keeping treatment safe, effective, and appropriate as dementia progresses.
- To maintain access to essential primary care services including dentistry, chiropody, sight, and hearing tests which support wellbeing and help reduce isolation.
- To ensure all care providers and organisations are skilled in recognising dementia symptoms, and understand the steps needed to support timely diagnosis.
- To strengthen referral pathways from both primary and hospital settings, ensuring they are robust, consistent, and timely.
- To ensure people diagnosed with dementia, along with their families and carers, are fully informed about available ongoing support, including opportunities for lived experience participation.
- To continue to utilise important local services, such as the Community Dementia Liaison Service to support those accessing support.

We Will

- Develop monitoring and reporting processes to track the time taken from referral to diagnosis.
- Set clear objectives around how diagnoses are delivered and what can be expected in terms of ongoing support and care planning and monitor accordingly.
- Through the effective use of care planning, ensure consistent person centred support tailored to individual needs, collaborative decision making advanced care planning in order to enable the individual to express their wishes while they have capacity to do so, in order to guide future decision making at later stages and end of life.
- Develop and deliver training programmes for health and social care workforce, to ensure skills in identifying dementia, knowledge of its impact on physical health as well as cognition and understanding of next steps following diagnosis. Training should be co-produced, taking on board and reflecting lived experience of people living with dementia, their families and carers.
- Support GP practices to ensure people with dementia are identified and recorded correctly to support other interventions and potential involvement with other agencies.
- Ensure that people with dementia and their carers are as far as possible fully involved in the planning and design of ongoing support.
- Ensure that everyone with a dementia diagnosis has a named health or social care professional to assist and support with care co-ordination.
- Ensure that people who have a dementia diagnosis and who live alone receive appropriate support, information and assistance to ensure they can continue to live safely at home and do not become isolated.

- Improve pre-diagnosis support, to reduce crisis from arising, and safeguard the most vulnerable.
- Ensure that diagnostic pathways and associated communication and information processes are clear, accessible and responsive to individual needs and culture.
- We will ensure that support is tailored to meet the needs of individuals, at each stage of their dementia journey.

Priority 4 - Person Centred Care and Support

We need to make sure that people who have a dementia diagnosis continue to have fair access to health, care and other services to ensure they have the best possible life experience. This will undoubtedly differ from person to person and be dependent on many factors. However, in all cases, the individual, family and carers should be fully involved and engaged in future care planning.

Our Aims

- To ensure everyone with a dementia diagnosis has a health plan they or their carer/family understand, can contribute to, and that is reviewed as needed.
- To ensure individuals eligible for adult social care receive a person-centred Care Act assessment and support plan, reviewed annually or as circumstances change.
- To ensure people living with dementia have full access to health and care services, including home care, community health, residential care, and dentistry.
- To ensure people with dementia who also need mental health support continue to receive appropriate care.
- To ensure people with dementia receive high-quality end-of-life care and are supported to die with dignity in a place of their choosing.
- To support those who have other needs alongside dementia, in a person centred way.
- To ensure people living with dementia have access to social and community-based activities and services of their choosing.
- To ensure workforce training equips staff with the skills and understanding to deliver meaningful, personalised care and support.
- To improve understanding of service uptake and experiences among minority communities, including ethnic minorities, LGBTQ+ individuals, and people with learning disabilities.
- To ensure public buildings, spaces, and care facilities are, as far as practicably possible, dementia friendly in layout and design.
- To explore creative solutions that best support people with dementia in their communities.

We Will

- Work with Hartlepool and Stockton Health and GP practices in Hartlepool to develop a consistent process through which all individuals with a dementia diagnosis have a health plan which they have had the opportunity to input to, and which is reviewed annually.
- Work with primary and social care providers to gain greater understanding of current assessment and diagnostic rates in minority communities and consult with communities and organisations that support people from minority communities in order to develop more open and accessible processes.
- Co-produce training inputs which will provide staff with skills, awareness and understanding to provide meaningful, person centred care and support to people living with dementia.
- Constantly assess physical environments, particularly those in health and care settings to ensure they are “dementia compliant”.

- Continue to investigate the potential of assistive technology and artificial intelligence to contribute to health, wellbeing, safety and social inclusion of people living with a dementia.
- Work with GP's and other health and care providers to ensure a seamless transition from diagnosis to service and support provision.
- Examine the potential to support a person living with dementia to access Direct Payments to personalise their support.
- Work with acute care providers, GP's and families to ensure end-of-life care is appropriate and communication is dementia friendly.

Priority 5 – Young Onset Dementia

Young Onset Dementia (YOD) refers to individuals diagnosed under the age of 65. This diagnosis can have a profound impact on emotional wellbeing, family life, employment, and financial stability meaning that support needs to be tailored differently than for older adults. Support must be age appropriate and include ongoing access to information, guidance, and peer support that addresses the specific challenges faced by younger people. Lower awareness and diagnostic difficulties in those under 65 often mean that the true number of people affected is underrepresented.

Our Aims

- To better understand the support needs for people with Young Onset Dementia, including, diagnostic and post diagnostic support, access to health and care services, carer support and practical help with housing, employment and financial planning.
- To improve our data on Young Onset Dementia, to enable more appropriate planning and delivery of health and care services.
- To reduce the time taken for individuals to receive a diagnosis of Young Onset dementia.
- To improve family orientated support, including respite and sitting services, support for young carers and children affected by dementia and carers are supported to remain in employment.
- To raise awareness amongst health, care and other service providers in Hartlepool of Young Onset Dementia and of its impact on individuals and families.

We Will

- Encourage the Integrated Care Board, and health partners involved in the diagnosis of Young Onset Dementia to review current diagnostic processes with a view to improving patient experience and reducing time taken to arrive at a diagnosis.
- Review and improve our data (community information, health care systems and social care systems) in order to develop a clearer picture of people living with the condition in Hartlepool and of associated health, care and support requirements.
- Ensure commissioning pathways consider the housing and support service requirements, including mental health and age appropriate residential care for people with Young Onset Dementia.
- Ensure Young Onset Dementia is appropriately and adequately covered in future training provision, particularly with front line staff/services such as GP practices and care providers, and plans developed to raise awareness and understanding with local businesses and service providers.
- Develop a communication strategy to ensure latest research and developments in diagnosis, care and support of people living with Young Onset Dementia are widely shared.
- Work with commissioners, social care providers and carers to co-produce a short break/respite offer for carers of people living with Young Onset Dementia.

Develop an action plan coming from H&WB

Statement from the Chair of the H&WB

Monitoring period needs agreeing (Annual H&WB)

Summary of strands?

Implementation group?

DEMENTIA STRATEGY: ADULT SOCIAL CARE ACTIONS

Priority 1 – Living better

- Review commissioned services to help identify good practice to improve social, physical and wellbeing support.
- Explore digital and AI solutions that can enhance social, emotional and physical wellbeing for people affected by dementia.

Priority 2 - Supporting carers and families

- Promote and signpost carers to the support available through Hartlepool Carers and other voluntary and community organisations such as The Bridge.
- Work with care providers to support people with dementia appropriately, signposting to training and providing support and updated guidance.
- Promote with providers carer annual health checks and emergency plans.
- Explore short break/respite offer for carers of people living with dementia.

Priority 3 – Diagnosis and access to support

- Ensure that people with dementia and their carers are as far as possible fully involved in the planning and design of ongoing support.
- Maintain accurate information, advice and guidance on support available for people living with dementia and their carers.

Priority 4 – Person centred care and support

- When people living with dementia need social care support, we will ensure that their assessment and support planning is person centred and based on their individual needs.
- Ensure that adult social care services are accessible to all communities and that information is provided to meet different communication needs.
- Continue to explore the potential of assistive technology and AI to contribute to the individual wellbeing, safety and social inclusion of people living with a dementia.
- When support planning with a person living with dementia, direct payments will be offered as an alternative to commissioned service to ensure that their support is personalised and meets their needs.

Priority 5 – Young onset dementia

- Explore short break/respite offer for carers of people living with young onset dementia.



Adult Services and Public Health Committee

22 January 2026

Report of: Director of Public Health

Subject: HARTLEPOOL SEXUAL HEALTH SERVICES UPDATE

Decision Type: For information

1. Council Plan Priority

Hartlepool will be a place:
- where people live healthier, safe and independent lives. (People)

2. Purpose of Report

- 2.1 The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the implementation of the new integrated sexual health service.

3. Background

- 3.1 In Hartlepool, aligned with our Tees partner authorities, all residents have the right and opportunity to live a healthy sexual and reproductive life, free from discrimination, regret, coercion, and violence.

Collectively, the goal is to improve the sexual and reproductive health of all our residents through a sexual health system which supports people to make informed choices and when necessary, enables access to appropriate, timely and effective high-quality services that meet their needs.

Across Tees data shows highlights:

- High sexually transmitted infection (STI) rates.
- Low prevalence rates of HIV.
- Inequalities in sexual health outcomes and access to services.
- Higher rates of STIs amongst residents in the most deprived areas.
- Lack of access to and provision of contraception.
- Low rates of Long-acting reversible contraception (LARC) use.
- High rates of unintended pregnancy.
- High rates of abortion and repeat abortion.
- High use of Emergency Hormonal Contraception.

STI diagnosis rates in Hartlepool are around the England rates however the rates are well above the England rate especially in Syphilis in 2023/2024.

Conceptions of those under 18 years old in Hartlepool have generally fallen from the 2005 peak of 76.9 per 1,000, to 19.9 per 1,000 in 2021, with the Hartlepool rate almost identical to the North East regional rate of 19.8 per 1,000. However, both Hartlepool and the North East region continue to have higher rates than the England average, with Hartlepool rate still over 50% higher than the England average.

3.2 Sexual health commissioning across Tees is delivered through a collaborative commissioning partnership made up of five commissioning partners:

- Hartlepool Borough Council
- Middlesbrough Borough Council
- Redcar and Cleveland Borough Council
- Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council
- NHS North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board.

4. Proposals

4.1 Following consultations and findings from service reviews and a sexual health needs assessment (2023) a new provider was commissioned in August 2025 to deliver sexual health services across all four Tees local authorities.

The new Tees Integrated Sexual Health Service 'Teesside Together' is led by North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust alongside Hartlepool and Stockton Health (H&SH) and Elm Alliance. The service provides two elements.

1. Specialist sexual and reproductive healthcare provision including a confidential, open-access, genito-urinary medicine (GUM) and Family and Sexual Health (FSH) services in each local authority area in Teesside. This service also includes the NHS commissioned

psychosexual counselling and vasectomy services. This is delivered from new premises situated at Park Towers, Park Road, Hartlepool TS24 7PT.

2. The Community Contraception Service provides comprehensive contraception advice and support with a focus on the delivery of Long-Acting Reversible Contraception (LARC) and Emergency Hormonal Contraception (EHC). This is provided by primary care and the clinical specialist service in a range of settings across Hartlepool.
3. The service is still in the mobilisation stage until January and meets weekly with commissioners however all four clinics across Tees are now established and operational delivering the full range of services, outreach services will commence in the new year.

5. REVIEWS OF SEXUAL HEALTH PREVENTION SERVICES

- 5.1 The Tees sexual health collaborative is reviewing the current sexual health prevention contracts that sit outside of the clinical provision. The aim of these services is to:

- Ensure an equitable approach across Tees.
- Improve the sexual health and wellbeing of young people and young adults at risk poor sexual health outcomes and to reduce inequalities in sexual health.
- Provide a more comprehensive sexual health prevention offer including access to a high quality and free, at the point of access, condom distribution scheme, not currently available.
- Provide free and easily accessible primary and secondary prevention interventions with groups most at risk of poor sexual health outcomes e.g. men who have sex with men (MSM).
- Provide training and support to schools and other professions

6. Other Considerations/Implications

RISK IMPLICATIONS	There are no risk implications.
FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS	Sexual health services are funded through the public health ring fenced grant.
SUBSIDY CONTROL	There are no subsidy control implications.
LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS	There is a statutory duty incumbent on Local Authorities, Integrated Care Boards and NHS

	England to commission or provide sexual and reproductive health services.
SINGLE IMPACT ASSESSMENT	A single impact assessment has been as part of the tender exercise. This identifies a positive impact for people with protected characteristics as poor sexual health affects everyone and the new service will ensure services are accessible for all.
STAFF CONSIDERATIONS	There are no staffing considerations.
ASSET MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS	There are no asset management considerations.
ENVIRONMENT, SUSTAINABILITY AND CLIMATE CHANGE CONSIDERATIONS	There are no environment, sustainability and climate change considerations.
CONSULTATION	Consultation was completed as part of the procurement exercise.

7. Recommendations

- 7.1 It is recommended that the Committee notes progress in relation to implementation of the new integrated sexual health service and work to review the sexual health prevention offer across Hartlepool.

8. Reasons for Recommendations

- 8.1 There is a statutory duty incumbent on Local Authorities, Integrated Care Boards and NHS England to commission or provide sexual and reproductive health services.

9. Contact Officers

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Sign Off:-

Chief Executive	Date: 22.12.2025
Director of Finance, IT and Digital	Date: 18.12.2025
Director of Legal, Governance and HR	Date: 18.12.2025



Adult Services and Public Health Committee

22 January 2026

Report of: Director of Public Health
Subject: DRUG AND ALCOHOL STRATEGY UPDATE
Decision Type: For information

1. Council Plan Priority

Hartlepool will be a place:
- where people live healthier, safe and independent lives. (People)

2. Purpose of Report

- 2.1 The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the implementation of the Drug and Alcohol strategy.

3. Background

- 3.1 Substance misuse is one of the most challenging health issues in Hartlepool. The personal, social and economic impacts of substance misuse are great, and it is a key driver of health inequalities in the borough. The Health Needs Assessment for substance misuse has outlined that Hartlepool is experiencing more significant issues and higher numbers of people using substances than the England average. It also demonstrates the increasing harms caused by substances with high numbers of drug and alcohol related deaths.

- 3.2 In 2023, the public health team undertook a needs assessment which led onto the refresh of the drug and alcohol strategy, and priorities outlined below.

The drug and alcohol strategy focuses on four priorities:

- Priority 1: Prevention and early intervention
- Priority 2: Reducing drug and alcohol related harms
- Priority 3: Supporting wider health needs
- Priority 4: Reducing drug and alcohol related crime and disorder

4. Proposals

- 4.1 Progress against each of the four priorities is set out below:

Priority 1: Prevention and early intervention

- Drug testing in partnership with Teesside University is in place across Tees.
- A formal pathway has been developed between Start and the NHS Foundation Trust for the referral of children and young people into the service.
- Hartlepool is now part of the DAPO (Domestic Abuse Protection Orders) pilot, The Drive Partnership, commissioned by the Home Office. This supports perpetrators of domestic abuse to access substance use and mental health support.
- Recruitment of a dedicated communications lead who can support with campaigns and social media regarding Start.
- Start workers are now co-located within Early Help, Harm Outside the Home (HOTH)/Edge of Care and the Child Protection Team.
- The commissioned service, Recovery Connections, now have their own premises, focusing on recovery in the community, which is open to everyone, not just those accessing Start. Recovery Connections is a Lived Experience Recovery Organisation, with most staff having lived experience of addiction.
- Recovery Connections continue to deliver employment support for those using substances and have recently celebrated 100 job starts.
- A new drug and alcohol related death (DARD) coordinator is now in post following the post being vacant.
- Work is underway with Teesside University to evaluate local services with a focus on improving access and service provision.

Priority 2: Reducing drug and alcohol related harms

- Suspected drug and alcohol related deaths have reduced between Jan-June 2025 (n=9) compared to Jan-June 2024 (n=14).
- Start are now using SystmOne to improve the GP referral process and sharing of information.

- Hartlepool Borough Council has worked with Stockton Borough Council to jointly commission substance misuse practitioners working alongside the alcohol care team in North Tees & Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust.
- Drop-in sessions are taking place within Family Hubs to encourage women to access Start.
- The new Start building is currently in development, with the opening planned in the new year.
- Recovery Month saw a significant uplift in both engagement and reach, with strong public interest. The events held throughout National Recovery Month and the communication around recovery and addiction resulted in 111,853 views (a 193.3% increase compared to August), 218 shares and 105 new followers.

Priority 3: Supporting wider health needs

- Tees Esk & Wear Valleys NHS Foundation Trust and Alliance continue to co-locate workers within Start.
- Start provides drug and alcohol awareness training including Naloxone training provided town wide and training on parental substance use.
- Alcohol Working Group with Primary Care Networks continues, with increased use of brief alcohol interventions and Audit C with patients. One of the main aims of this work is to increase referrals from GPs, to reduce unmet need associated with alcohol use across Hartlepool.
- Family worker working closely with Start and children's social care.
- CRUSE are commissioned to support those effected by drug and alcohol related deaths. A new pathway has been put in place with police, whereby someone from CRUSE will contact the person and they can choose to opt in or out.
- Weekly spirometry clinics are held at Start.

Priority 4: Reducing drug and alcohol related crime and disorder

- Intensive Supervision Courts are fully embedded into Start pathways.
- Monthly continuity of care meetings with North East HMPS continue.
- Ongoing work with the police re: drug testing and intelligence gathering.
- The Combatting Drugs Partnership across Tees is currently being reviewed.

5. Other Considerations/Implications

RISK IMPLICATIONS	The current funding that supports the implementation of the strategy runs till March 2026. This grant is being reviewed nationally, and grant allocations are expected to be announced in January 2026.
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FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS	Hartlepool Borough Council receives additional national grant funding which supports the implementation of the Drug and Alcohol Strategy and action plan this is currently being reviewed nationally. The public health ring fenced grant provides funding for the core Drug and Alcohol Service Start.
SUBSIDY CONTROL	No Subsidy Control.
LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS	No legal considerations.
SINGLE IMPACT ASSESSMENT	This was completed as part of the development of the Drug and Alcohol Strategy.
STAFF CONSIDERATIONS	No staff considerations.
ASSET MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS	No asset management considerations.
ENVIRONMENT, SUSTAINABILITY AND CLIMATE CHANGE CONSIDERATIONS	No Environment, sustainability and climate change considerations.
CONSULTATION	A consultation process was completed as part of strategy development.

6. Recommendations

- 6.1 It is recommended that the committee notes progress in relation to implementation of the Drug and Alcohol Strategy.

7. Reasons for Recommendations

- 7.1 Substance misuse is one of the most challenging health issues in Hartlepool which drives health inequalities and has wider social and economic impacts.

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 8.1 Hartlepool Drug and Alcohol Strategy 2023-2028
- 8.2 Hartlepool Drug and Alcohol Needs Assessment 2023

9. CONTACT OFFICERS

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Chief Executive	Date: 22.12.2025
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