



Hartlepool
Borough Council

Council

5 February 2026



Hartlepool
Borough Council

Civic Centre Hartlepool

28 January 2025

Councillors Allen, Bailey-Fleet, Boddy, Buchan, Clayton, Cook, Cranney, Creevy, Darby, Dodds, Doyle, Dunbar, Feeney, Hall, Hargreaves, Harrison, Holbrook, Jorgeson, Leedham, Lindridge, Little, Male, Martin-Wells, Moore, Morley, Napper, Nelson, Oliver, Reeve, Riddle, Roy, Scarborough, Smith, Thompson, Wallace and Young

Madam or Sir,

You are hereby summoned to attend the COUNCIL meeting to be held on THURSDAY, 5 February 2026 at 6.30 pm in the Civic Centre, Hartlepool to consider the subjects set out in the attached agenda.

Yours faithfully

Denise McGuckin
Chief Executive

Enc

Council Agenda

Thursday 5 February 2026 at 6.30pm

**in the Council Chamber,
Civic Centre, Hartlepool**

- (1) To receive apologies from absent Members;
- (2) To receive any declarations of interest from Members;
- (3) To deal with any business required by statute to be done before any other business;
- (4) To approve the minutes of the last meeting of the Council held on date as the correct record;
- (5) To answer questions from Members of the Council on the minutes of the last meeting of Council;
- (6) To deal with any business required by statute to be done;
 - (i) Appointment of Chief Executive (Head of Paid Service) – *Report of Director of Legal, Governance and HR*
- (7) To receive any announcements from the Chair, or the Head of Paid Service;
- (8) To dispose of business (if any) remaining from the last meeting and to receive the report of any Committee to which such business was referred for consideration;
- (9) To consider reports from the Council's Committees and to receive questions and answers on any of those reports;
- (10) To consider any other business specified in the summons to the meeting, and to receive questions and answers on any of those items;
- (11) To consider reports from the Policy Committees:
 - (a) proposals in relation to the Council's approved budget and policy framework

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 to be evacuated, please proceed to the Assembly Point so that you can be safely accounted for.



- (b) proposals for departures from the approved budget and policy framework
- (12) To consider motions in the order in which notice has been received;
 - i) Motion to Hartlepool Borough Council to Review of Winter Priority Gritting Routes

Council to note that the current Winter Maintenance Plan (Section C) establishes a network of First and Second Priority gritting routes across the borough, based on historic traffic flows, strategic routes, and available resources.

Council to further note that the current priority network need to consider broader housing patterns as part of the route, including the development of new residential estates, often located on higher ground, as well as changes in traffic behaviour associated with schools, healthcare, and community facilities.

Council expresses particular concern that some steep or elevated roads serving high levels of daily traffic, including school-related traffic, do not currently form part of the priority gritting network. By way of example only, this includes the upper section of Consiccliffe Road, which serves West Park Primary School and new housing development(s), and which experiences increased risk during adverse winter conditions due to gradient, congestion, and vehicle manoeuvring.

Council should also recognise that some streets currently included within the priority gritting routes may no longer represent the highest-risk or best-value use of limited winter service resources, particularly where traffic volumes, gradients, or strategic importance are low.

Accordingly, Council resolves:

1. To request that officers undertake a full review of the Winter Priority Gritting Routes and locations of grit bins – and their replenishment – to be reported to the Neighbourhoods and Regulatory Services Committee
2. That the review shall:
 - 2.1 Assess all streets currently included within First and Second priority gritting routes, providing clear, evidence-based reasoning for their continued inclusion
 - 2.2 Assess streets not currently include within the priority network, with particular regard to
 - 2.2.1 Road gradient and elevation
 - 2.2.2 Proximity to schools and other high-footfall facilities
 - 2.2.3 Traffic volumes, including peak-time congestion
 - 2.2.4 New housing developments and changes in residential density
 - 2.3 Identify streets that may merit addition to the priority network and streets that may reasonably be removed or downgraded
 - 2.4 Locations and replenishment plans for grit bins and an assessment of if more are required

3. That officers ensure that cost/neutrality/saving is not prioritised over the need for safer footpaths and highways in the borough
4. That the review includes a clear rationale for all recommendations, ensuring transparency, fairness and best value for residents, road users and the Council
5. That the finding of the Neighbourhoods & Regulatory Services Committee be presented to Council

Signed by: Councillors Darby, Doyle, Moore, Napper and Young

ii) Motion to Hartlepool Borough Council regarding the Proposed Cancellation of the Wynyard Primary School

Council notes:

1. The Labour Government run, Department for Education's decision to place the proposed new primary school at Wynyard under a "minded to cancel" status, despite the school being a long-planned, fully evidenced and infrastructure-led requirement within the Wynyard Masterplan.
2. That Wynyard is a designated high-growth settlement, with over 2,000 existing homes, more than 1,500 additional dwellings already approved or in the pipeline, and long-term plans for up to 6,800 homes, generating a clearly demonstrable and sustained demand for additional primary school places.
3. That the nearest existing primary schools serving Wynyard are already significantly oversubscribed, with the only walkable school operating above capacity, forcing families into car-dependent travel or cross-boundary schooling arrangements.
4. That substantial developer contributions exceeding £1 million have already been secured through Section 106 agreements specifically for the provision of a new primary school in the Wynyard area, alongside land assembly and infrastructure investment undertaken in good faith.
5. That the removal of a core piece of education infrastructure fundamentally undermines the sustainability principles underpinning Garden Village status, contradicts national policy on housing-led infrastructure delivery, and risks setting a damaging precedent for future growth communities.

Council believes:

1. That national strategies responding to falling pupil numbers in some areas must not be applied indiscriminately where clear, evidenced local growth and oversubscription exist.
2. That withdrawing school provision from emerging communities such as Wynyard risks creating unsustainable, car-dependent developments and erodes public confidence in long-term planning commitments.

3. That growth areas which have complied with planning frameworks, delivered housing, secured land, and raised developer contributions should be prioritised, not penalised, within national education funding decisions.

Council resolves:

1. To formally write to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, calling on her to urgently rethink the government's approach to school funding decisions in high-growth and emerging communities.
2. To request that education infrastructure required to support housing growth is treated as essential national infrastructure, protected from blanket cancellation policies driven by national averages rather than local evidence.
3. **To urge the Chancellor to work with the Department for Education to reverse or pause the proposed** cancellation of the Wynyard primary school and to ensure that funding strategies properly reflect the needs of up-and-coming communities.
4. To circulate the Council's position to local Members of Parliament and relevant government departments to reinforce the case for a fair, evidence-led national schools strategy.

Signed by: Councillors Darby, Doyle, Martin-Wells, Napper and Young

- (13) To receive the Chief Executive's report and to pass such resolutions thereon as may be deemed necessary;
- (14) To receive questions from and provide answers to the public in relation to matters of which notice has been given under Rule 9;
- (15) To answer questions of Members of the Council under Rule 10;
 - a) Questions to the Chairs about recent decisions of Council Committees and Forums without notice under Council Procedure Rule 10.1
 - b) Questions on notice to the Chair of any Committee or Forum under Council Procedure Rule 10.2
 - c) Questions on notice to the Council representatives on the Police and Crime Panel and Cleveland Fire Authority
 - d) Minutes of the meetings held by Cleveland Fire Authority on 17 October 2025

FOR INFORMATION

Date of next meeting – Thursday 19th February at 6.30pm in the Civic Centre, Hartlepool

ITEM (4)

**Minutes of the Council
meeting held on 11
December 2025**

COUNCIL

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

11 December 2025

The meeting commenced at 6.30 pm in the Civic Centre

The Ceremonial Mayor (Councillor Thompson) presiding:

COUNCILLORS:

Allen	Boddy	Buchan
Cook	Cranney	Creevy
Doyle	Dunbar	Feeney
Hall	Hargreaves	Harrison
Holbrook	Jorgeson	Lindridge
Little	Martin-Wells	Morley
Napper	Nelson	Oliver
Reeve	Roy	Scarborough
Smith	Young	

Officers: Denise McGuckin, Managing Director
Chris Woodcock, Interim Director of Public Health
Hayley Martin, Director of Legal, Governance and Human Resources
Julian Heward, Senior Public Relations Officer
Jo Stubbs. Principal Democratic Services and Legal Support Officer

63. CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENT

Members observed a minute silence in remembrance of former Councillor Jim Ainslie

64. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENT MEMBERS

Councillors Rob Darby, Matthew Dodds, John Leedham, Corinne Male, Owen Riddle and Chris Wallace

65. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST FROM MEMBERS

Councillor Mike Young - item 11 (b)(i)

66. BUSINESS REQUIRED BY STATUTE TO BE DONE BEFORE ANY OTHER BUSINESS

None

67. MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

The minutes of the Council meeting held on 2 October 2025 having been laid before Council

RESOLVED – That the minutes be confirmed

68. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL ON THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

None

69. BUSINESS REQUIRED BY STATUTE

- (a) Director of Public Health Annual Report – Report of Interim Director of Public Health

The Interim Director of Public Health presented the Annual Report, a legal requirement under the Health and Social Care Act 2012. The 2025 Annual Report focuses on the challenges from smoking, a major driver of ill health and health inequalities in Hartlepool. A copy of the Director's report was appended to the report and a video was presented to the meeting from the Annual Report.

RESOLVED – That the content of the Annual Report 2025 and the continued work taking place to reduce smoking in Hartlepool be noted

70. ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chief Executive referred to an item on her business report regards an update on the Tees Valley Combined Authority. Tom Bryant, Chief Executive of the TVCA was invited to address members.

Mr Bryant had been in post since June 2025. He acknowledged the need for the organisation to improve following the issuing of a Best Value Notice against them in April 2025. Since then changes had been made to the Senior Leadership Team and an improvement plan formulated. A Local Government Association Advisory Board was monitoring progress against the improvement plan which would be reviewed in April 2026. Regular reports are presented to

TVCA Cabinet. Partnership working was key to these improvements and Mr Bryant would continue to work with Officers, Councillors and the Town's MP.

Members welcomed Mr Bryant and echoed his wish for greater partnership, communications and working relations between the TVCA and Hartlepool Borough Council.

71. TO DISPOSE OF BUSINESS (IF ANY) REMAINING FROM THE LAST MEETING AND TO RECEIVE THE REPORT OF ANY COMMITTEE TO WHICH SUCH BUSINESS WAS REFERRED FOR CONSIDERATION.

Motion to Full Council – Council Tax

At the previous meeting a motion had been presented relating to Council Tax. At that time it was agreed that a report on this matter would be brought to the next ordinary Council meeting.

The Leader of the Council gave a verbal update on the Council's current financial position. She detailed the financial cuts which had been made by the Government over the years and the subsequent Local Government grants which had been made since Labour came into Government in 2024. The ruling Labour party felt Council Tax should be frozen for 2025-26 because it was the right thing to do for families. The MP was fighting to change the national Council Tax system and they wanted to stand by him in this fight. Changes to the national system would be benefit everyone. She urged opposition Councillors to work with Labour to help improve the town and the services the Council provides.

An opposition member confirmed their shared ambition for the town while noting the need to be realistic and pragmatic.

72. TO RECEIVE REPORTS FROM THE COUNCIL'S COMMITTEES

(a) Further Periodic Review of the Constitution – Report of Constitution Committee

At the previous Council meeting members had considered a Constitution Committee report proposing amendments to the process for motions on notice and questions to Council. At that time Council had voted to adjourn those recommendations until the next ordinary meeting of Council in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 22.2. A further report was now brought to Council including additional changes to Committee Chairs and Vice Chairs as recommended by Constitution Committee

The recommendations of the Constitution Committee were moved by Councillor Hargreaves and seconded by Councillor Young.

RESOLVED – That the following recommendations of the Constitution Committee be approved unanimously

That the following amended wording to align the deadlines for the receipt of Motions on Notice and Questions on Council be included within part 4 of the constitution

- I. Except for motions which can be moved without notice under rule 12, written notice of every motion, signed by at least 5 elected Members must be submitted to and received by the Chief Executive, or by electronic mail to the Chief Executive before 12 noon **at least seven clear working days before the date of the meeting** (motions on notice – section 11.1)
- II. A question may only be asked if notice has been given by delivering it in writing or by electronic mail to the Chief Executive **no later than noon at least seven clear working days before the date of the meeting**. Each question must give the name and address of the questioner and must name the Chair of Committee to whom it is to be put (if the questioner is under 16 years of age the notice must include the name, address and signature of the parent or guardian of the questioner).

That Article 6 of the Constitution be amended to indicate that the Chair of Adult Services and Public Health Committee also be the Chair of the Health and Wellbeing Board given the cross over of health responsibilities of both bodies

That Council Committee be enabled to appoint up to two Vice Chairs at Annual Council. This would enable more Elected Members to share the role and responsibility and provide more support to the Departments.

(b) **A19/Elwick Road/North Lane Junction and Elwick Northern Bypass/Hartlepool Western Link Project Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO), Side Roads Orders (SROS) and Slip Roads Order (SLRO) – Report of Neighbourhoods and Regulatory Services Committee**

The Leader of the Council presented a report seeking Council's approval to move forward and to progress to the making of the four orders as set out in the report.

The recommendations of the Neighbourhoods and Regulatory Services Committee were moved by Councillor Hargreaves and seconded by Councillor Scarborough

RESOLVED – That the recommendations be approved unanimously as set out in the report

73. TO CONSIDER ANY OTHER BUSINESS SPECIFIED IN THE SUMMONS OF THE MEETING

None

74. REPORT FROM THE POLICY COMMITTEES

Proposals in relation to the Council's approved budget and policy framework

(a) Statement of Licensing Policy – Report of Licensing Committee

The Chair of the Licensing Committee presented the report which provided Elected Members with an opportunity to consider the adoption of a revised Licensing Policy as required by the Licensing Act 2003.

The Licensing Act 2003 requires Local Authorities to publish a Licensing Policy every five years and as Hartlepool's last policy was published in 2021, a new one was required. A new paragraph had been introduced under the Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act 2025 ('Martyn's Law') to ensure public premises and events are better prepared for terrorist attacks requiring organisers to take reasonable practicable steps to mitigate the impact of a terrorist attack and reduce physical harm. The onus would be on licensees to comply with any requirements. A new section had also been introduced referencing Public Health as a Responsible Body while the stance on cumulative impact remain the same as in the 2021 Statement.

The recommendation of the Licensing Committee was moved by Councillor Jorgeson and seconded by Councillor Buchan:-

RESOLVED – That the adoption of the draft Statement of Licensing Policy be approved unanimously with effect from 1st January 2026

(b) Local Council Tax Support 2026/27 – Report of Finance and Corporate Affairs Committee

The Finance and Corporate Affairs Committee had considered a report at its November meeting in relation to the Local Council Tax Support Scheme for the forthcoming financial year (2026/27). The current simplified scheme had been introduced in April 2024 and therefore had only been in operation for a short period of time. It appeared to be functioning well and had resulted in a reduced administrative burden on the Council as well as greater clarity for council tax payers. The Council also exercises its discretion to disregard war pensions when calculating Housing Benefit.

The recommendations of the Finance and Corporate Affairs Committee were moved by Councillor Hargreaves and seconded by Councillor Creevy

A recorded vote was taken:

Those for:-

Councillors Allen, Boddy, Buchan, Cranney, Creevy, Doyle, Dunbar, Feeney, Hall, Hargreaves, Harrison, Holbrook, Jorgeson, Lindridge, Little, Martin-Wells, Morley, Napper, Nelson, Oliver, Reeve, Roy, Scarborough, Smith, Thompson and Young

Those against:-

None.

Those abstaining:-

None.

The vote was carried, unanimously.

(c) Council Tax Base 2026/27 – Report of Finance and Policy Committee

The Finance and Corporate Affairs Committee had received a report to its November meeting setting out the calculation of the Council Tax Base for the forthcoming year and inform precepting authorities, Police and Crime Commissioner for Cleveland and Cleveland Fire authority, and local precepting authorities (Parish Councils) before 31 January 2026. The Council Tax Base was expressed as the number of Band D equivalent properties.

The proposed Tax Base for the Council area for 2026/27 was £26,975. This was an increase of 520 (1.97%) from the current base. The calculation and relevant commentary was included in the report to Finance and Corporate Affairs Committee, attached at Annex 1.

Finance and Corporate Affairs Committee recommended that Full Council:-

- a) Approve a Council Tax Base for Hartlepool for 2026/27 of £26,975 as detailed in Annex 1 of Appendix 1.
- b) Approve a Council Tax Base for 2026/27 for Parishes who may levy a precept upon the Council's Collection Fund as follows:-

Brierton	15
Claxton	42.2
Dalton Piercy	132.5
Elwick	247.0
Greatham	276.0
Hart	575.6
Headland	811.5
Newton Bewley	35.0
Wynyard	1247.4

The recommendations of the Finance and Corporate Affairs Committee were moved by Councillor Hargreaves and seconded by Councillor Boddy. A recorded vote was taken.

Those for:-

Councillors Allen, Boddy, Buchan, Cranney, Creevy, Doyle, Dunbar, Feeney, Hall, Hargreaves, Harrison, Holbrook, Jorgeson, Lindridge, Little, Martin-Wells, Morley, Napper, Nelson, Oliver, Reeve, Roy, Scarborough, Smith, Thompson and Young

Those against:-

None.

Those abstaining:-

None.

The vote was carried, unanimously.

Proposals for departures from the approved budget and policy framework

(d) Acquisition of nine houses for Housing Revenue Account on the South West Extension – Report of Finance and Corporate Affairs Committee

The Finance and Corporate Affairs Committee had received a report to their November meeting to approve the prudential borrowing required to facilitate the acquisition of nine affordable rented units from Persimmon Homes. The report detailed the proposed acquisition setting out the benefits and full business case. As the purchase requires prudential borrowing it must be legally approved by Full Council.

A member referred to the previous 106 agreement as it related to this site and queried whether these houses had been part of the tranche of 13 included within that. It was confirmed that this was the case.

The recommendation of the Finance and Corporate Affairs Committee was moved by Councillor Hargreaves and seconded by Councillor Lindridge. However following the inclusion of confidential information as part of the discussion it was felt that this item should be further discussed in closed session. It was therefore adjourned until later in the meeting.

RESOLVED – That Council approve the prudential borrowing as set out in the confidential appendix to facilitate the purchase of nine affordable rented units on the Persimmon 'South West Extension' site.

75. MOTIONS ON NOTICE

Two motions had been received as follows:

(1) A Fifth Licensing Objective to Tackle Alcohol Harm

Council notes:

- The Licensing Act 2003 sets out four statutory objectives:
 1. The prevention of crime and disorder,
 2. Public safety,
 3. The prevention of public nuisance, and
 4. The protection of children from harm.
- Despite the significant burden that alcohol places on the NHS, emergency services, community safety, and families — particularly in the North East — there is no specific objective related to public health in the Licensing Act.
- Local authorities, while able to act as licensing authorities and responsible authorities under the Act, are limited in how effectively they can use licensing policy to reduce alcohol harm, even in areas with high alcohol-related hospital admissions or early mortality.
- Public health organisations, including Balance (the North East Alcohol Office), the Alcohol Health Alliance UK, and the Local Government Association, have long called for the introduction of a fifth licensing objective to better protect communities.

Council believes:

- A new licensing objective, “the protection and promotion of public health in relation to alcohol,” would empower councils and Directors of Public Health to:
 - Object to or condition alcohol licence applications based on local evidence of alcohol-related harm;
 - Manage outlet density and late-night availability;
 - More effectively protect vulnerable residents and reduce health inequalities.
- This change would align England with Scotland and Northern Ireland, where public health is already recognised in licensing legislation

Council therefore resolves to:

- Write to the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government and the Home Secretary to call for an urgent review of the Licensing Act 2003 and to introduce a fifth statutory objective: “To protect and promote public health in relation to alcohol.”
- Write to Balance, the North East Alcohol Office, asking it to support this call and to lead or coordinate a refreshed regional campaign to strengthen licensing powers in relation to alcohol harm.
- Work with other councils, public health partners, and the Local Government Association to promote the inclusion of public health as a licensing objective through joint lobbying and information-sharing.

Signed by: Councillors Harrison, Oliver, Hargreaves, Creevy, Allen, Dunbar, Holbrook, Hall, Boddy, Morley, Bailey-Fleet, Male, Cook, Nelson, Jorgeson, Thompson, Wallace, Scarborough, Riddle and Dodds

The motion was moved by Councillor Oliver and seconded by Councillor Allen

Councillor Young moved an amendment to the motion that the letters to the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, the Home Secretary and Balance include a reference to the differential between where a person lives and where they consume alcohol and the need to pinpoint the location.

The amendment was approved unanimously.

(2) Learning Disability Nursing

This Council Notes That:

A coalition of leading health and disability organisations, spearheaded by the learning disability charity Mencap and including the Royal College of Nursing, recently wrote to the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, the Rt Hon Wes Streeting MP, warning of the "imminent collapse" of the Learning Disability (LD) Nursing profession.

The number of Registered Learning Disability Nurses in England has declined by a shocking 43% since 2009, with projections indicating that the domestic supply of newly qualified LD Nurses could cease by as early as 2028 if urgent intervention is not taken.

LD Nurses are essential in addressing severe health inequalities; the recent Learning from Lives and Deaths Review (LeDeR) highlighted that people with a learning disability die on average 20 years earlier than the general population and are twice as likely to die avoidably.

The letter highlights the alarming rate of course closures at academic institutions, which is leaving entire regions without localised training programmes for future LD Nurses.

Mencap and the coalition have called on the Government to recommit to funding the training targets outlined in the 2023 NHS Workforce Plan, guarantee financial support for students and employers, and introduce minimum staffing levels to safeguard patient lives.

The Council believes that:

The crisis in Learning Disability Nursing constitutes a real threat to the health and human rights of residents with a learning disability within the Borough of Hartlepool.

As a Council committed to addressing health inequalities, we have a responsibility to advocate for the specialist healthcare workforce that protects our most vulnerable residents.

The skills and specialist advocacy provided by LD Nurses are critical and irreplaceable, ensuring person-centred care, reducing inequalities, and preventing avoidable deaths in all healthcare settings, from primary care to acute hospitals.

This Council resolves to:

Support this campaign by writing to the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, the Rt Hon Wes Streeting MP, the Chief Nursing Officer for England, and the Chief Executive of the North East and Cumbria Integrated Care Board, formally endorsing the demands of the MENCAP-led coalition and urging them to enact the proposed 'rescue plan' for the profession.

Use the resources of Hartlepool Borough Council to promote the work of Learning Disability Nursing in our community and highlight the benefits of this as a profession. As well as highlighting the importance of LD nursing in combatting the stark inequalities faced by people with a learning disability

Use all possible influence to encourage Teesside University to continue their pre-registration LD Nursing Degree route continues and ensure that the relevant NHS Trust has a robust plan to ensure the supply of LD nurses in our area for the future.

Signed by: Councillors Hargreaves, Boddy, Allen, Morley, Holbrook, Harrison, Oliver, Cook, Creevy, Dunbar, Nelson, Jorgeson, Hall, Thompson, Bailey-Fleet, Wallace, Male, Scarborough, Riddle and Dodds

The motion was moved by Councillor Allen and seconded by Councillor Creevy. It was approved unanimously in its entirety.

76. CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT

Committee Chairs and Memberships

Members were informed of membership changes made under delegated powers by the Director of Legal, Governance and HR as shown in the document appended to the report, including changes in a number of Chair appointments

RESOLVED – that the membership changes be noted

Outside Body Appointments

Members were informed of membership changes made under delegated powers by the Director of Legal, Governance and HR as shown in the document appended to the report. The following additional changes were also highlighted:

National Museum of the Royal Navy now renamed Royal Navy Museums – The Director of Housing, Growth and Communities appointed to the vacant post

The Northern Studios (Hartlepool) Ltd – The Director of Housing, Growth and Communities appointed to the vacant post

TVCA Education Employment and Skills Partnership Board – Councillor Oliver replaces Councillor Hargreaves

RESOLVED – That the membership changes be noted

Outside Body Vacancies

Nominations were sought for the following vacancies:

Teesside Pension Board – 1 vacancy

Tees Valley Combined Authority – Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 1 substitute vacancy

RESOLVED – That the vacancies be noted

National Social Worker of the Year 2025 Awards

Members were advised that Charlotte Roberts, Assistant Team Manager in the Learning Disability Team, was shortlisted for the Practice Educator of the Year Award and John Lovat, Assistant Director for Adult Social Care was shortlisted for the Lifetime Achievement Award. Members congratulated them for on this achievement and thanked them for their outstanding contribution to the service.

Criminal Justice Operational Implementation Taskforce

Members were advised of the Chief Executive's recent appointment to the Criminal Justice Operational Implementation Taskforce as a representative of the Society of Local Authority Chief Executives.

Rescheduling of Council meeting

Members were asked to approve the rescheduling of the Council meeting scheduled for 15 January 2026 to 5th February 2026 to fit in with the Chief Executive recruitment process. This was approved unanimously.

RESOLVED – That the meeting of Council previously scheduled for 15 January 2026 be moved to 5 February 2026

77. PUBLIC QUESTION

The following question had been received from Tom Casey to the Chair of Neighbourhoods and Regulatory Services Committee:

With respect to the TV ERF contract, why are Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS) costs not included in the contract gate fee price when we know that incinerators will be included in the UK ETS from 2028?

Also, The market rate for incineration seems set to fall due to overcapacity and greater diversion of material away from incineration and the associated freeing up of existing capacity. In stark contrast, the cost per tonne agreed for the TV ERF contract is only expected to rise, e.g. due to inflation, as the agreed gate fee is index-linked to protect Viridor from inflationary risk. This means that entering into a long-term waste disposal contract that features a minimum tonnage guarantee and an exclusivity clause can be expected to benefit the incinerator operator at the expense of local taxpayers. What is the Council doing to minimise exposure to such risks associated with minimum tonnage guarantees and an exclusivity arrangements?

As Mr Casey was not present it was agreed that as per the constitution a written response would be forwarded to Mr Casey and copied to Councillors for information.

78. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL

- a) Questions to the Chairs about recent decisions of Council Committees and Forums without notice under Council Procedure Rule 10.1

None.

- b) Questions on notice to the Chair of any Committee or Forum under Council Procedure Rule 10.2

None.

- c) Questions on notice to the Council representatives on the Police and Crime Panel and Cleveland Fire Authority

None.

- d) The minutes of the meeting held by the Cleveland Fire Authority on 6 June 2025 and 1 August 2025 and the Cleveland Police and Crime Panel on 16 September 2025 were noted.

79. 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 80 – (Acquisition of nine houses for Housing Revenue Account on the South West Extension – Report of Finance and Corporate Affairs Committee) – 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)information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)

80. ACQUISITION OF NINE HOUSES FOR HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT ON THE SOUTH WEST EXTENSION – REPORT OF FINANCE AND CORPORATE AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

Detailed in the closed minutes

81. ACQUISITION OF NINE HOUSES FOR HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT ON THE SOUTH WEST EXTENSION – REPORT OF FINANCE AND CORPORATE AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

RESOLVED – That Council approve the prudential borrowing as set out in the confidential appendix to facilitate the purchase of nine affordable rented units on the Persimmon ‘South West Extension’ site.

The meeting concluded at 7.45pm

CEREMONIAL MAYOR

ITEM (6)

Report of Director of Legal,
Governance and HR



Council

Appointment of Chief Executive (Head of Paid Service)

5 February 2026

Report of: Hayley Martin, Director of Legal, Governance and HR

Subject: Appointment of Chief Executive (Head of Paid Service)

1. Council Plan Priority

Hartlepool will be a place:
- where people live healthier, safe and independent lives. (People)
- that is connected, sustainable, clean and green. (Place)
- that is welcoming with an inclusive and growing economy providing opportunities for all. (Potential)
- with a Council that is ambitious, fit for purpose and reflects the diversity of its community. (Organisation)

2. Purpose of Report

- 2.1 The purpose of this report is to seek Council approval for the appointment of Matt Wilton to the position of Chief Executive (Head of Paid Service), following the recommendation of the Council's Appointments Panel.

3. Background

- 3.1 Following formal notification of the current Chief Executive's intention to retire in 2026, the Appointments Committee agreed on 19th November 2025 to commence a recruitment process and commissioned Gatenby Sanderson recruitment agency to manage the process.
- 3.2 A comprehensive and targeted recruitment campaign was launched on 20th November 2025, closing on 9 January 2026. The campaign generated 11 applications, from which:
- 6 candidates were longlisted and undertook technical interviews and stakeholder panel.
 - 4 candidates progressed to final interview.
- 3.3 Stakeholder involvement included 4 participants representing Tees Valley Combined Authority, Cleveland Police, North Tees & Hartlepool Found Trust and the Northern School of Art.
- 3.4 The Appointment's Panel concluded its final interviews on 27 January 2026 and identified Matt as the preferred candidate.

4. Proposals

- 4.1 It is proposed that Council:
- i) Approves the appointment of Matt Wilton as Chief Executive (Head of Paid Service), subject to satisfactory pre-employment checks.
 - ii) Notes that, following approval, arrangements will be made to issue a contract of employment and agree a start date.
 - iii) The salary will be set at £155,000, in line with the established pay range.
 - iv) A summary biography is attached at **Annex A**.

5. Other Considerations/Implications

RISK IMPLICATIONS	<p>There are no identifiable risks associated with approving the recommended appointment.</p> <p>A failure to appoint would result in non-compliance with statutory duties to maintain a Head of Paid Service.</p>
FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS	<p>The Chief Executive role is an established post within the Council's budget.</p> <p>There are no additional financial implications arising from this appointment.</p>
SUBSIDY CONTROL	N/A
LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS	<p>The appointment of the Chief Executive (Head of Paid Service) must be made by Full Council, in line with the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and the Council's Constitution.</p> <p>The recruitment process has complied with:</p> <p>Officer Employment Procedure Rules</p> <p>Statutory requirements relating to Head of Paid Service functions</p> <p>Employment and equalities legislation</p>
SINGLE IMPACT ASSESSMENT	<p>A Single Impact Assessment is not required for this decision.</p> <p>The recruitment process was conducted in accordance with the Council's equality, diversity and inclusion commitments</p>
STAFF CONSIDERATIONS	<p>A fair, transparent and robust recruitment process has been undertaken.</p> <p>Induction arrangements will be implemented to support a smooth leadership transition.</p>

ASSET MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS	There are no asset management implications associated with this appointment.
ENVIRONMENT, SUSTAINABILITY AND CLIMATE CHANGE CONSIDERATIONS	There are no environmental or climate-related implications linked to this report.
CONSULTATION	<p>The Leader and all Members have been notified of the proposed appointment.</p> <p>Consultation has taken place during the selection process through stakeholder panels, as detailed in the Background section.</p>

6. Recommendations

6.1 Council is requested to:

- i) Note the recruitment and selection process undertaken for the appointment of the Chief Executive (Head of Paid Service).
- ii) Approve the recommendation of the Appointment's Panel to appoint Matt Wilton as Chief Executive (Head of Paid Service), subject to satisfactory completion of pre-employment checks.

7. Reasons for Recommendations

- 7.1 To ensure the Council fulfils its statutory duty to employ a Head of Paid Service at all times.
- 7.2 To provide continuity of strategic leadership following the retirement of the current Chief Executive.
- 7.3 To confirm an appointment made through a rigorous, fair and comprehensive recruitment process aligned with the Council's Constitution and employment procedures.

8. Background Papers

- 8.1 There are no background papers for this report.

9. Contact Officers

Hayley Martin, Director of Legal, Governance and Human Resources
Hayley.martin@hartlepool.gov.uk
01429 523002

ANNEX A

Matt brings a wealth of experience in local government, economic development, regeneration and organisational transformation.

Currently serving as Deputy Chief Executive at Newcastle City Council, Matt has demonstrated strong capabilities in strategic planning, governance, financial sustainability and cross-sector collaboration.

Matt has led major initiatives, including the establishment of the North East's first Mayoral Development Zone, the development of inclusive economic and anti-poverty strategies, and securing substantial funding for decarbonisation projects.

Matt has shown how his leadership has been instrumental in delivering complex change programmes, enhancing performance management frameworks and fostering positive relationships with partners, stakeholders and Members.

Matt brings a track record of delivery, particularly in place-making, skills development and addressing inequalities, with a range of achievements in project delivery.

ITEM (15)(d)

**Minutes of the meetings of the Cleveland
Fire Authority held on 17 October 2025**

CLEVELAND FIRE AUTHORITY

MINUTES OF ORDINARY MEETING

17 OCTOBER 2025



PRESENT:

CHAIR

Cllr David Coupe – Middlesbrough Council

HARTLEPOOL BOROUGH COUNCIL

Cllrs Gary Allen, Bob Buchan, Christopher Wallace

MIDDLESBROUGH COUNCIL

Cllr Naweed Hussain

REDCAR & CLEVELAND BOROUGH COUNCIL

Cllrs Peter Chaney, Mary Ovens, Steve Kay

STOCKTON ON TEES BOROUGH COUNCIL

Cllrs Jim Beall, John Gardner, Stefan Houghton, Andrew Sherris, Mick Stoker

AUTHORISED OFFICERS

Chief Fire Officer, Legal Adviser & Monitoring Officer, Treasurer,

ACFO - Director of Service Delivery

Area Manager – Assistant Director of Community Protection

Area Manager – Assistant Director of Prevention, Protection & Planning

Assistant Director of Assets

Assistant Director of Governance & Assurance

PREVENTION TEAM

GM Alan Turner

Rita Richardson (Fire Safety Education Officer)

Matthew Lidster (Road & Water Safety Team Leader)

Matthew Thompson (Community Safety Advocate)

FIRE BRIGADES UNION

James Sudron – Cleveland Acting Secretary (Observing)

Nick Cain – Cleveland Acting Chair (Observing)

APOLOGIES:

ACFO - Director of Strategic Planning, People & Resources

Cllrs John Kabuye, Dennis McCabe - Middlesbrough Council

43. DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS INTEREST

It was noted no Declarations of Interests were submitted to the meeting.

44. MINUTES

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of proceedings of the Annual meeting on 6 June 2025 and Extraordinary meeting on 1 August 2025 be confirmed, subject to the amendment of Min. No. 25.1.

The Treasurer referred to Min. No. 25.1 of the Extraordinary Meeting on 1 August 2025 and informed Members that since that meeting he had been provided with an updated figure of £69,100.11 as the total amount from the C.I.C. to be written-off. This was an increase from the £66,019.93 previously reported. Members noted this change and agreed that the minutes be amended accordingly.

45. MINUTES OF MEETINGS

RESOLVED - that the Minutes of the Audit & Governance Committee meetings on 27 June and 22 August 2025 and the Executive Committee meetings on 4 July, 29 August (Special) and 19 September 2025 be confirmed.

46. COMMUNICATIONS RECEIVED BY THE CHAIR

No communications were received by the Chair.

47. REPORTS OF THE CHIEF FIRE OFFICER

47.1 Prevention Departmental Presentation

Members received a presentation by the Prevention Team outlining their roles in delivering community safety across the Brigade area. The Chair thanked the Team for the insightful demonstration of the extensive services they offer. Councillor Chaney praised the Team for their support in Redcar & Cleveland and suggested Members utilise the offer for any issues in their Ward.

RESOLVED - That Members noted the presentation.

47.2 HMICFRS Inspection 2023-25 – Update on Areas for Improvement (AFI)

The Chief Fire Officer (CFO) presented the Brigade's progress to date against the 16 areas for improvement identified in Cleveland's third round HMICFRS Inspection report covering the period 2023-25.

He referred Members to the action plan at Appendix 1 and noted that AFI 7 & 11 were still outstanding but gave assurances that work was underway to ensure they would be progressed as priority.

RESOLVED - That Members noted the progress against the HMICFRS Areas for Improvement (AFIs) detailed at Appendix 1.

47.3 Service Plan Priorities 2025/26 – Update Report

Members received an update on the progress of Service Plan Priorities for 2025/26 which were approved by the Authority on 28 March 2025.

The CFO referred Members to the action log at Appendix 1 and noted that of the 50 priorities:

- 50 were in progress (41 on track and 9 behind schedule)
- 2 had been completed
- 7 had not been started

He confirmed that the Assistant Director of Governance & Assurance would health check the priorities and provide a narrative to the Executive Committee.

RESOLVED – That the progress against the 2025/26 Service Plan Priorities be noted.

47.4 Cleveland Fire Brigade Risk Management Plan (CRMP) 2026-30

The CFO provided a verbal update on the progress of the Brigade's 2026-30 iteration of the Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) and reported that to-date 975 survey responses had been received since it was launched on 15 September.

He noted that in 2021, engagement activity for the current CRMP (2022-26) had only attracted 420 survey responses and he praised the pre-consultation work with staff and communities for this outstanding response.

The CFO reported that work was currently underway on establishing new performance metrics and to agree a new 'purpose' which will replace the current vision and mission.

RESOLVED – That the progress of the CRMP 2026-30 be noted.

47.5 Integrated Fire Control Collaboration (IFCC) Project Overview

The ACFO – Service Delivery (ACFO-SD) provided Members with an update on the IFCC project which had encountered technical infrastructure issues causing significant delays to the original go live date of Summer 2025. The report covered:

- Project Governance – a Strategic Board was established with bi-monthly updates with representatives of all four fire and rescue services involved in the collaboration (Cleveland, County Durham & Darlington, Hereford & Worcester and Shropshire). Individual project teams were also established in each FRS to implement the technical and infrastructure solutions required for the system
- Project Progress – slippage caused by technical delays further exacerbated by the four project teams moving at different paces therefore new Go Live Date is December 2026.
- Project Delay: Financial Impact - current overall Capital position is a projected underspend of £224k which includes the recharge income from County Durham & Darlington FRS for the cost of shared digital phone lines comprising of £37k over three years.
- Financial Position: 2025/26 Revenue & Reserves – current overall position projected to be £168k underspend due to delay in licencing costs which only commence when the system goes live.

The Assistant Director of Assets (ADoA) gave members assurance that while the project delays are disappointing, the Brigade's current mobilisation system is still fully functioning.

RESOLVED - That the progress of the Project be noted and further reports be received as required.

47.6 Critical Incidents Update: Grenfell Tower & Manchester Arena

The CFO informed Members of a change to the Brigade's arrangements to manage the recommendations from the Grenfell Tower and Manchester Arena inquiries. He reported that these would now be managed by the newly established 'Critical Incidents' Group which will also encompass the learning from any future large scale incidents.

47.6 Critical Incidents Update: Grenfell Tower & Manchester Arena

RESOLVED:-

- (i) That Members noted the name change of the action group from Grenfell / Manchester Arena to Critical Incidents.
- (ii) That the Progress against Grenfell Action Plan and Manchester Arena Action Plan be noted.

47.7 Information Pack

- 47.2.1 National Joint Circulars
- 47.2.2 Employer Circular
- 47.2.3 Campaigns

RESOLVED – that the information pack be noted.

48. JOINT REPORT OF THE CHIEF FIRE OFFICER AND TREASURER

48.1 Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) 2026/27 – 2028/29

The Treasurer provided Members with a detailed presentation outlining the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) 2026/27 to 2028/29 which covered:

- National Policy Issues
- Spending Review
- Fair Funding Review 2 – consultation proposal
- Forecasts 2026/27 to 2028/29
- Asset Management Plan
- Recommended Strategy for Managing Forecast Deficit

The Treasurer reported that the proposed Fair Funding Review 2 changes were extremely disappointing and meant that the Authority was facing total budget cuts of £2.973m, assuming Council Tax is increased in line with forecast referendum limits. This includes the impact of a forecast Government funding reduction of £2.416m which is 81% of the forecast deficit.

The Treasurer provided Members with the following three interdependent proposals to address the budget deficit:

Proposal 1 – Council Tax

The strategy is based on using available Council Tax flexibility to secure recurring local income to reduce the forecast deficit to the lower figure of £2.973m. The Authority needs to recognise that not using available Council Tax flexibility reduces recurring resources and the only viable option for replacing this income is additional recurring service cuts.

Proposal 2 – Use of Budget Support Fund

The Authority has previously earmarked a Budget Support Fund to manage the impact of national funding reforms. In previous years use of the funding has been limited, with £0.294m approved to support the 2025/26 Revenue Budget, leaving £2.563m currently uncommitted. This is a temporary solution to a permanent reduction in recurring funding and simply defers a budget deficit to a later year.

48.1 Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) 2026/27 – 2028/29 (cont.)

Therefore, use of the Budget Support Fund should only be used in the context of also implementing proposals 1 and 3. On the basis of Members approving both these proposals the Treasurer will be able to support the use of £1.345m of this reserve (i.e. 53%) to support the 2026/27 revenue budget.

Adopting both these principles will enable the Treasurer to also discharge his statutory responsibility and confirm to the Authority when the final budget proposals are approved that they are robust.

Proposal 3 – Development of robust savings plan

Adoption of proposal 1 and 2 will enable the 2026/27 budget to be set without requiring service cuts to be implement from April 2026.

The Treasurer reported that if the Authority does not wish to support the budget using available Council Tax flexibility in 2026/27 the reduction on recurring income of £0.995m will need to be replaced by identifying recurring savings from 1 April 2026 to ensure the budget position does not become unmanageable.

He added that at this early stage the forecasts in the report do not include any budget pressures which may emerge as part of the detailed budget review which has not yet commenced. Details of any emerging issues will be reported in the next MTFS update, although given the scale of the forecast deficit every effort will be made to minimise any unavoidable net budget pressures.

Members thanked the Treasurer for the report and asked whether the CFOs robust savings plan would include cuts to services. The CFO reported that he would be looking at all functions to make savings. The Treasurer highlighted that that as services are impacted the financial position of the Authority becomes less resilient. He reiterated the significant risks around pay awards and inflation which were still unknown.

RESOLVED - That as recommended by the Executive Committee on 19 September 2025, Members approved the following proposals, which will be subject to final confirmation as part of the final MTFS report to be considered on 13th February 2026:-

- (i) **Voluntary Revenue Provision strategy detailed in paragraphs 6.10 to 6.14.**
- (ii) **Reserves Strategy detailed in section 7.**
- (iii) **Asset Management Plan changes detailed in section 8.**

49. LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) (VARIATION ORDER) 2006

RESOLVED - “That Under Section 100(A) (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business, on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 3 and 4 of Part 1 Schedule 12A of the 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 and namely information relating to any consultations or negotiations, or contemplated consultations or negotiations, in connection with any labour relations matter arising between the authority or a Minister of the Crown and employees of, or office holders under, the authority.”

50. CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES OF MEETINGS

RESOLVED – that the Confidential Minutes of the Extraordinary Meeting on 1 August 2025 be confirmed.

The Treasurer informed Members that he was liaising with external auditors Forvis Mazars LLP on how the 2024/25 group accounts will be recorded for the C.I.C. and suggested he may need to provide a narrative in the accounts to ensure full transparency to the public. He gave Members assurances that this would not impact future years' accounting.

The Treasurer agreed to keep Members updated on progress.

51. CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES OF MEETINGS

RESOLVED – that the Confidential Minutes of the Executive Committee meetings on 4 July and 19 September 2025 be confirmed.

**COUNCILLOR DAVID COUPE
CHAIR**