



Hartlepool  
Borough Council

# Audit and Governance Committee Agenda

24 February 2026

**Time:** 4pm

**Location:** Council Chamber

**Members:** Audit and Governance Committee

Councillors Moss Boddy, Fiona Cook, Rob Darby, Gerard Hall, Phillip Holbrook, Michael Jorgeson, Corinne Male, Shane Moore (C), Scott Reeve and Aaron Roy.

**Standards Co-opted Independent Members: -**

Mr Martin Slimings and Mr David Whitmore

**Standards Co-opted Parish Council Representatives:**

Parish Councillor Kane Forrester (Wynyard) and Parish Councillor Patricia Andrews (Headland)

**Local Police Representative**

- 
1. Apologies for absence
  2. To receive any declarations by members
  3. Minutes

3.1. To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 27<sup>th</sup> January 2026.



## 4. Audit items

- 4.1. Forvis Mazars report – Audit completion report 2024/25 – *Director of Finance, IT and Digital*
- 4.2. The 2024/2025 Financial Report (including the 2024/25 statement of accounts) - *Director of Finance, IT and Digital*

## 5. Standards items

- 5.1. None.

## 6. Statutory Scrutiny items

### **Crime and Disorder issues**

- 6.1. Safer Hartlepool Partnership Action Plan 2025-2026 – *Assistant Director (Regulatory Services)*

### **Health scrutiny issues**

- 6.2. Preventing Suicide (Tees) – Presentation – *Preventing Suicide (Tees) Public Health Practitioner*
- 6.3. Veteran health investigation – Results of GP practice survey – *Scrutiny and Legal Support Officer*

## 7. Other items

- 7.1. None.

## 8. Minute from recent meetings for receipt by the committee

- 8.1 Health and Wellbeing Board – None
- 8.2 Finance and Policy Committee relating to Public Health issues – None
- 8.3 Tees Valley Health Scrutiny Joint Committee – None
- 8.4 Safer Hartlepool Partnership – 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2025



- 8.5 Tees Valley Area Integrated Care Partnership – None
- 8.6 Regional Health Scrutiny – None
- 8.7 Durham, Darlington and Teesside, Hambleton, Richmondshire and Whitby STP Joint Health Scrutiny Committee - None

## 9. Any other business which the chairman considers urgent

### For information

Date of next meeting –

Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> March 2026, 5pm





Hartlepool  
Borough Council

# Audit and Governance Committee

## Minutes and Decision Record

27 January 2026

### Meeting commenced

**Time:** 4pm

**Location:** Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Hartlepool

### Present:

Councillor: Rob Darby (In the Chair)

Councillors: Phillip Holbrook, Michael Jorgeson and Corinne Male.

Standards Co-opted Members:

Martin Slimings – Independent Member

David Whitmore - Independent Member

Local Police representative:

Also present: Councillor Christopher Wallace as substitute for Councillor Aaron Roy in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 4.2.

Matt Neligan, Deputy Chief Executive and Chief Strategy Officer  
University Hospital Tees (UHT)

Stuart Irvine, Director of Risk, Assurance & Compliance (UHT)

Neil Atkinson, Chief Delivery Officer (UHT)

Anthony Frain, Constituency Manager, MP for Hartlepool

Officers: James Magog, Director of Finance, IT and Digital  
Joan Stevens, Democratic Services and Statutory Scrutiny Manager  
Gemma Jones, Scrutiny and Legal Support Officer

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## 54. Apologies for Absence

Councillors Aaron Roy and Fiona Cook

Parish Councillor Kane Forrester

## 55. Declarations of Interest

None

## 56. Minutes

Minutes from 9 December 2025 – received.

## 57. Treasury Management Strategy 2026/27 and Third Quarter Review 2025/26 – *Director of Finance, IT and Digital*

The Director of Finance, IT and Digital was in attendance to provide the Committee with the third quarter update of the 2025/26 treasury management activity. It was explained that the in-year position remains broadly unchanged with the borrowing and investment position detailed within the report. It was noted that investments now stand at £31.1mil.

Members were informed that no new borrowing during 2025/26 had been entered into as of 31st December 2025, the aim being to take out shorter-term borrowing should rates remain high. However, risks may need to be mitigated by taking out some longer term borrowing at a higher rate than anticipated.

The report also enabled the Committee to scrutinise the recommended 2026/27 Treasury Management Strategy before being referred to Council for approval. It was noted that Prudential Indicators and other regulatory information were appended to the report. The report also outlined the investment strategy for 2026/27 and the minimum revenue provision and interest costs.

### **Recommended**

- i) That Members note the 2025/26 Treasury Management 3rd Quarter Position detailed in Section 5.
- ii) That Members recommend to Council for approval, the Treasury Management Strategy 2026/27, including;
  - The borrowing strategy for 2026/27;
  - The investment strategy for 2026/27;
  - The prudential indicators as outlined in Appendix A; and
  - The minimum revenue provision statement.

## 58. University Hospital Tees – Strategy Update - *Representatives from University Hospital Tees*

Representatives from University Hospital Tees (UHT) presented to the Committee the UHT clinical strategy and potential ideas for the reconfiguring of services. It was explained that this was part of a wider engagement plan

with local authorities to ensure that local scrutiny committees are involved in this process.

An overview was provided of the geographical foot print of the UHT and the hospitals within its locality. It was highlighted that the University Hospital of Hartlepool holds 14 beds and includes a 24hr urgent treatment centre, provides a wide range of diagnostic services / outpatient clinics and day case and low risk surgery.

The rationale for service change was explained, this included –

- Long standing issues with staff resilience.
- An aging population, bringing additional and different demands such as a need for a greater focus on frailty and care closer to home.
- Parts of the UHT estates being beyond their economic life (University Hospital of North Tees).
- The need to move to a different model to deliver step change in efficiency and productivity.

A Member queried if representatives intended to come to a future Audit and Governance committee meeting to allow for further questioning on this issue. Representatives and the Democratic Services and Statutory Scrutiny Manager assured Members that there would be regular engagement with the committee on this issue, particularly where there would be proposed changes to existing health services.

A question was raised regarding the 14 beds at University Hospital of Hartlepool, it was explained that these beds were for inpatients that needed to be supported over night when attending for elective surgery.

The Deputy Chief Executive and Chief Strategy Officer outlined the strategic objectives of the plan and highlighted that the focus would be on teams to transform ways of working under three ‘pillars’ - patients and population, people and partnerships and places. Members were informed initial proposals were in development as a first step to designing the optimal model of healthcare in the area. This included reviewing data and performance across the group and considering a wide range of evidence of best clinical practice. Study visits to other NHS providers had also taken place.

Potential clinical changes were also discussed for areas such as –

- Community services and Hospital at Home beds
- Women and Children’s services
- Urgent and emergency care
- Medicine
- Surgery and anaesthetics
- Tertiary and Specialist

These would be in 3 broad phases that would take place up to 2030 and beyond.

The issue with estates was expanded upon with proposed variations to University Hospital of North Tees outlined, including potential redevelopment of existing sites, the centralising of some services or a possible full rebuild on a single site.

The engagement process was outlined including what work had already been undertaken with the public, staff and partners as well as future plans such as engagement with stakeholders, Health and Wellbeing Boards and scrutiny committees. It was advised that feedback from the North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board (NENC ICB) had reinforced the need for full engagement with local authority officers and members.

In the discussion that followed it was confirmed that the 14 beds at University Hospital of Hartlepool were for elective surgery patients.

Moving to the estates issue of the University Hospital of North Tees, Members were informed there were no plans to rebuild this hospital in Hartlepool. A representative from UHT confirmed that there would need to be significant financial investment for this to happen and the numbers did not reflect the need for an Accident and Emergency department to return to Hartlepool. However, existing services that were provided out of University Hospital of Hartlepool would be expanded. The problems with car parking at University Hospital of Hartlepool were also raised.

Members expressed concerns regarding the status of the maternity unit at University Hospital of Hartlepool that had been temporarily closed, they were advised that an update on this issue would be taken to the Health and Wellbeing Board in February 2026.

With reference to the University Hospital of North Tees, representatives advised that a number of scenarios were being considered. This included rebuilding parts of the hospital but this would require significant levels of investment and funding. There were also proposed plans to move more services into the community and centralise services that require more expertise.

A Member welcomed the idea of expanding the Hospital at Home model. They reiterated the car parking issues at local hospitals and the potential issues with public transport associated with accessing community sites.

Members also questioned if new sites were being considered for the University Hospital of North Tees. It was confirmed that all available options were being explored but any options that were out of town would need to be

carefully considered due to public transport. A long-term strategic approach to the road system would also need to be considered.

It was agreed that further questions on this presentation would be sent to the Scrutiny and Legal Support Officer to be passed on to representatives.

### **Recommended**

- i) That the Committee notes the content of the presentation and seeks clarification on any matters where necessary.
- ii) That any further questions arising from the presentation would be forwarded to representatives for answer.

## **59. Veterans' Health Investigation – update – Scrutiny and Legal Support Officer**

The Committee received evidence as part of the next stage in the investigation into veteran health.

### **Letter from the MP for Hartlepool**

The Constituency Manager for the MP for Hartlepool presented to the committee a letter of support from Jonathan Brash, MP and relayed their views on this matter. In the letter the MP outlined their full support of this investigation. The letter set out evidence drawn directly from casework and regular conversations with veterans about their experiences of engaging with GP services, both positive and negative.

In the discussion that followed, a suggestion was made to incorporate this casework into the investigation whilst being mindful of confidentiality issues and permission being sought from those involved.

### **Results from the veterans' survey**

The Scrutiny and Legal Support Officer provided the results from the veterans' survey that had been circulated to veterans in November and December 2025. A full summary of results was appended to the report.

Members were asked to note the low number of survey responses, 41 were received in total, of which 38 participants identified as veterans. Therefore, the statistical significance of the data needed to be taken into consideration.

Results from the survey indicated that most of the veterans who had responded to the survey had not been asked by their GP if they were a veteran. Participants also had little awareness of the Veteran Friendly GP Accreditation Scheme.

Over half of participants surveyed had visited the GP practice for a service-related health condition. The results of the survey illustrated that interactions with GP's were on a whole positive, however, there were differing levels of

satisfaction in relation to consultations about general health and service-related issues.

When participants were asked for general comments and feedback, most comments related to difficulties in accessing appointments and their practice seeming to have a lack of veteran awareness. It was noted that access to GP appointments were highlighted as an issue by the wider population and not specific to veterans.

It was explained that the findings implied that the increased promotion of the Veteran Friendly GP Accreditation Scheme and the increased awareness of veteran specific issues may be of benefit to veteran patients.

In the discussion that followed the Armed Forces Champion emphasised that some veterans may not want to engage in surveys, particularly younger veterans. They noted the results of the survey that suggested consultations about veteran specific issues scored lower than consultations about general health. They raised the importance of GP practices having a thorough understanding of veteran specific health problems. They noted that casework they had undertaken also reflected the need for better awareness of veteran specific issues.

The Democratic Services and Statutory Scrutiny Manager highlighted that this issue was not just specific to Hartlepool, and this was something that was being addressed in other areas. Reference was made to the recent presentation the Committee had received from the NENC ICB Armed Forces Lead. The positive to note was that 100% of GP Practices in Hartlepool were signed up to the Veteran Friendly GP Accreditation scheme. The NENC ICB Armed Forces Lead would also be working directly with Hartlepool GP Practices in the near future.

### **Recommended**

- i) That the Committee receives the information provided as part of the evidence gathering stage of the investigation and notes the results of the veterans' survey.

## **60. Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 (RIPA) – Quarter 3 Update - *Director of Legal, Governance and HR***

The Scrutiny and Legal Support Officer provided the Committee with an update in relation to powers under RIPA to conduct authorised covert surveillance. It was noted that in the Quarter to date of this meeting there had been 0 RIPA authorisations relating to directed surveillance.

**Recommended**

- i) That Members note the quarterly report.

**61. Minutes from recent meetings for receipt by the Committee**

Noted.

The Committee was reminded that a substitute can be provided if a Member is unable to attend the Tees Valley Joint Health Scrutiny Committee (TVJHSC). The Democratic Services and Statutory Scrutiny Manager also reiterated that items of significance raised at the TVJHSC would be circulated to all members of Audit and Governance.

**62. Any other business which the Chairman considers urgent**

An Independent Member raised the importance of a consistent Chair at committee meetings.

The meeting concluded at 5.25pm.

CHAIRMAN



**Hartlepool**  
Borough Council

## **AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE**

24<sup>th</sup> FEBRUARY 2026

**Report of:** Director of Finance, IT and Digital

**Subject:** FORVIS MAZARS REPORT – AUDIT  
COMPLETION REPORT 2024/25

### **1. COUNCIL PLAN PRIORITY**

<b>Hartlepool will be a place:</b>
- 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)
- a place with a Council that is ambitious, fit for purpose and reflects the diversity of its community. (Organisation)

### **2. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

2.1 To inform Members of the Audit and Governance Committee that arrangements have been made for representatives from our external auditors, Forvis Mazars, to attend this meeting, to present the content of the Audit Completion Report (ACR) in relation to the 2024/25 Statement of Accounts.

**3. BACKGROUND**

3.1 This report updates the Audit and Governance Committee on those matters within the ACR 2024/25.

**4. FINDINGS OF MAZARS**

4.1 Details of key messages are included in the main body of the ACR attached as **Appendix 1**. (to be released once agreed with Forvis Mazars).

**5. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS/IMPLICATIONS**

<b>RISK IMPLICATIONS</b>	There is a risk that if Members of the Audit and Governance Committee do not receive the information needed to enable a full and comprehensive review of governance arrangements at the Council, this may lead to the Committee being unable to fulfil its remit.
<b>FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS</b>	No relevant issues.
<b>LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS</b>	No relevant issues.
<b>CHILD AND FAMILY POVERTY</b>	No relevant issues.
<b>EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY CONSIDERATIONS</b>	No relevant issues.
<b>STAFF CONSIDERATIONS</b>	No relevant issues.
<b>ASSET MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS</b>	No relevant issues.
<b>ENVIRONMENT, SUSTAINABILITY AND CLIMATE CHANGE CONSIDERATIONS</b>	No relevant issues.
<b>CONSULTATION</b>	No relevant issues.

**6. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 6.1 That the Audit and Governance Committee note the ACR.

**7. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 7.1 To ensure the Audit and Governance Committee is kept up to date with the work of our External Auditor.

**8. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 8.1 Forvis Mazars Audit Completion Report 2024/25.

**9. CONTACT OFFICER**

James Magog  
Director of Finance, IT and Digital  
Email: [james.magog@hartlepool.gov.uk](mailto:james.magog@hartlepool.gov.uk)  
Telephone: 01429 523093



# Audit Completion Report

## Hartlepool Borough Council – year ended 31 March 2025

24 February 2025

Members of the Audit and Governance Committee

Hartlepool Borough Council

Civic Centre  
Victoria Road  
Hartlepool  
TS24 8AY

25 February 2025

Dear Committee Members,

## **Audit Completion Report – Year ended 31 March 2025**

We are pleased to present our Audit Completion Report for Hartlepool Borough Council (“the Council”) for the year ended 31 March 2025. The purpose of this report is to summarise our audit findings and conclusions.

This report is intended solely for the Audit and Governance Committee for the purpose of communicating certain matters that, in our professional judgement, are relevant to your oversight of the financial reporting process. To the fullest extent permitted by law Forvis Mazars LLP accepts no responsibility and disclaims all liability to any third party who purports to use or rely for any reason whatsoever on the report, its contents, conclusions, any extract, reinterpretation, amendment and/or modification. Accordingly, any reliance placed on the report, its contents, conclusions, any extract, reinterpretation, amendment and/or modification by any third party is entirely at their own risk.

We appreciate the courtesy and co-operation extended to us by Hartlepool Borough Council throughout our audit. We would be happy to discuss the contents of this report, or any other matters regarding our audit, with you in more detail.

Yours faithfully

Signed:   
James Collins (Feb 11, 2026 07:57:26 GMT)

James Collins

Forvis Mazars LLP

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Our reports are prepared in the context of the 'PSAA Statement of Responsibilities of Auditors and of Audited Bodies' and the 'Appointing Person Terms of Appointment' issued by Public Sector Audit Appointments Limited. This document is to be regarded as confidential to Hartlepool Borough Council. It has been prepared for the sole use of the Audit and Governance Committee as the appropriate sub-committee charged with governance. We do not accept any liability or responsibility to any other person in respect of the whole or part of its contents.

01

Executive Summary

# Executive summary

## Scope

We have been engaged to audit the financial statements of Hartlepool Borough Council for the year ended 31 March 2025 which are prepared in accordance with the 2024/25 Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting.

Our audit of the financial statements will be conducted in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK), relevant ethical and professional standards, our own audit methodology, and in accordance with the Code of Audit Practice.

## Audit status

Our audit procedures are now substantially complete for the year ended 31 March 2025.

Please refer to the *'Status of our audit'* section for a list of significant audit matters outstanding at the date of this report. We will provide an update to the Audit and Governance Committee on completion of those outstanding matters by way of a follow-up letter.

## Areas of focus and audit approach, and significant findings

We have not made any changes to our initial risk assessment and planned audit approach that was communicated to the Audit and Governance Committee in our Audit Strategy Memorandum.

Our significant risks and other areas of focus are set out in the *'Audit approach and risk summary'* section, with a summary of our audit approach over those areas. Significant findings from our audit are set out in the *'Significant findings'* section.

## Audit misstatements

A summary of the adjusted and unadjusted misstatements above our reporting threshold we have identified to date is set out in the *'Summary of misstatements'* section.

## Audit opinion

At the time of issuing this report and subject to the satisfactory conclusion of our remaining audit work, we anticipate issuing an unqualified opinion, without modification, as set out in Appendix C. However this is subject to receipt of confirmation from the Pension Fund auditor that they have been able to complete their audit procedures and no material issues are noted which would impact the Council.

If this work remains incomplete, we may be required to issue a qualification similar to that which was issued as part of the prior year 2023/24 audit. Should this become necessary, we will communicate with members of the Audit and Governance Committee at the earliest opportunity.

## Value for Money

We anticipate having no significant weaknesses in arrangements to report in relation to the arrangements that the Council has in place to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources. Further details have been provided in the *'Value for Money'* section of this report.

## Wider reporting powers

The 2014 Act requires us to give an elector, or any representative of the elector, the opportunity to question us about the accounting records of the Council and to consider any objection made to the accounts. No questions or objections have been received.

## Reporting to the group auditor

We anticipate completing our work on the Council's WGA submission, in line with the group instructions issued by the NAO. We anticipate reporting that the WGA submission is consistent with the audited financial statements. We have not yet received final group instructions from the National Audit Office in respect of our work on the Authority's WGA submission. We anticipate as a result we will not be in a position to issue our audit certificate when signing the audit opinion.

# Executive summary

## Qualitative aspects of the Council's accounting practices

We have reviewed the Council's accounting policies and disclosures and conclude that they comply with the 2024/25 Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting, appropriately tailored to the Council's circumstances.

Draft accounts were received from the Council on 30 June 2025 and were of a good quality. The working papers supporting the financial statements were also of good quality and were comprehensive. We are grateful for management's co-operation in facilitating our audit work.

## Significant matters discussed with management

There were no significant matters arising from the audit which required discussion with management.

## Significant difficulties during the audit

We have not encountered any significant difficulties and we have had the full co-operation of management. We are grateful to management for their co-operation throughout the audit.

## Other matters of significance

We encountered no significant difficulties during our audit and had no significant disagreements with management. There was effective co-operation and communication between Forvis Mazars, management, and the Audit and Governance Committee during our audit. All requested information and explanations were provided to us.

# 02

Status of the audit

# Status of our audit

Our audit work is substantially complete and there are currently no matters of which we are aware that would require modification of our audit opinion, subject to the satisfactory resolution of the outstanding matters set out below.

## Pensions

Our planned approach includes obtaining confirmations from the Pension Fund auditor on their audit procedures. At this stage we are awaiting confirmation from the Teesside Pension Fund auditor on the status of the Pension Fund audit.



## Audit Closure Procedures

These are our standard audit closure procedures including: reviewing the final version of the Statement of Accounts, consideration of post balance sheet events and completing our final quality review process.



## WGA

We have not yet completed our work in this area. We are waiting for clarification from the National Audit Office in regard to group audit requirements. We do not expect this before we sign the audit opinion and consequently, we will not be able to issue our audit certificate.



## Value for money arrangements

We have completed our work, but we will continue to assess arrangements up to the point of reporting which is planned by the end of February 2026.



## Status



Likely to result in a material adjustment or a significant change to disclosures in the financial statements.



Potential to result in a material adjustment or a significant change to disclosures in the financial statements.



Not considered likely to result in a material adjustment or a change to disclosures in the financial statements.



Work on value for money arrangements

# 03

Audit approach and risk summary

# Audit approach and risk summary

## Changes to our audit approach

There have been no changes to the audit approach we communicated in our Audit Strategy Memorandum, issued on 20 August 2025.

## Materiality

Our provisional materiality at the planning stage of our audit was set at £6.981m using a benchmark of 2% of gross operating expenditure as per the Audit Strategy Memorandum. Due to the timing of the Audit Strategy Memorandum the materiality figures were based on the figures per the 2023/24 final accounts.

Based on the final financial statement figures and other qualitative factors, the final overall materiality we applied was £7.071m (final performance materiality: £5.303m; final clearly trivial threshold: £212k ).

## Changes to our audit approach

There have been no changes to the audit approach. Our planned approach remains consistent with that set out in the Audit Strategy Memorandum

# Audit approach and risk summary

	Audit risk / key area of judgement	Fraud risk	Judgement	Error	Substantive audit procedures	Tests of controls	Misstatement identified	Control recommendations	Conclusion
Significant risks	Management override of controls	●	●	○	●	○	○	○	Risk satisfactorily addressed. At the date of this report, we have not identified any significant issues to report.
	Net defined benefit liability / asset valuation	○	●	○	●	○	○	○	At the date of this report, we have not identified any significant issues to report. However, this is subject to receipt of confirmation from the Pension Fund auditor that they have been able to complete their audit procedures and no material issues are noted which would impact the Council.
	Valuation of land, buildings, housing and investment property	○	●	○	●	○	●	○	Risk satisfactorily addressed. At the date of this report, we have not identified any significant issues to report.
	Accounting for leases under IFRS 16	○	●	●	●	○	○	○	Risk satisfactorily addressed. We have not identified any significant issues to report.

04

Significant findings

# Significant findings

The significant findings from our audit include our conclusions regarding the significant risks we identified and other key areas of judgement, which are set out in this section.

## Significant risks

### Management override of controls

#### Description of the risk

This is a mandatory significant risk on all audits due to the unpredictable way in which such override could occur. Management at various levels within an organisation are in a unique position to perpetrate fraud because of their ability to manipulate accounting records and prepare fraudulent financial statements by overriding controls that otherwise appear to be operating effectively. Due to the unpredictable way in which such override could occur there is a risk of material misstatement due to fraud on all audits and thus a significant risk on all audits.

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#### How we addressed this risk

We addressed this risk through performing audit work over:

- accounting estimates impacting amounts included in the financial statements;
- consideration of identified significant transactions outside the normal course of business; and
- journal entries recorded in the general ledger and other adjustments made in preparation of the financial statements.

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#### Audit conclusion

Our work has provided the assurance we sought in each of these areas and has not highlighted any material issues to bring to your attention.

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# Significant findings

The significant findings from our audit include our conclusions regarding the significant risks we identified and other key areas of judgement, which are set out in this section.

## Significant risks

### Net defined benefit asset / liability valuation

#### Description of the risk

The financial statements contain material pension entries in respect of retirement benefits. The calculation of these pension figures, both assets and liabilities, can be subject to significant volatility and includes estimates based upon a complex interaction of actuarial assumptions. This results in an increased risk of material misstatement.

We also note that in the prior period the backstop date introduced by the Amendment Regulations impeded our ability to obtain sufficient appropriate evidence over the following material elements of the Pension balances disclosed within the financial statements:

- The value of scheme assets as at 31 March 2024 (£628.250m) as disclosed in notes 45;
- And the return on plan assets for the year ended 31 March 2024 (£32.275m) as disclosed in note 45.

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#### How we addressed this risk

We addressed this risk through performing the following work:

- We discussed with key contacts any significant changes to the pension estimates. In addition to our standard programme of work in this area, we evaluated the management controls the Council have in place to assess the reasonableness of the figures provided by the Actuary and consider the reasonableness of the Actuary's output, referring to an expert's report on all actuaries nationally which is commissioned annually by the National Audit Office.
- We reviewed the appropriateness of the key assumptions included within the valuations, compared them to expected ranges and reviewed the methodology applied in the valuation. We considered the adequacy of disclosures in the financial statements.
- We also sought assurance from the auditor of Teesside Pension Fund in accordance with our normal practices

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#### Audit conclusion

As detailed in the previous pages our planned approach includes obtaining confirmations from the Pension Fund auditor. At this stage we are awaiting confirmation from the Teesside Pension Fund auditor on the status of the Pension Fund audit.

# Significant findings

The significant findings from our audit include our conclusions regarding the significant risks we identified and other key areas of judgement, which are set out in this section.

## Significant risks

### Valuation of land, buildings, housing and investment property

#### Description of the risk

The financial statements contain material entries on the Balance Sheet as well as material disclosure notes in relation to the Council's holding of land, buildings, council housing and investment properties. Although the Council uses a valuation expert to provide information on valuations, there remains a high degree of estimation uncertainty associated with the revaluation of land, buildings and investment properties due to the significant judgements and number of variables involved in providing revaluations.

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#### How we addressed this risk

We addressed this risk through performing the following work:

- We addressed this risk by considering the Council's arrangements for ensuring that land, buildings and investment property values were reasonable.
- We used data on valuation trends and relevant indices to assess the reasonableness of the valuations provided by the Council's valuer. We assessed the competence, skills and experience of the Council's valuer.
- We discussed the methods used with the valuer and substantively tested a sample of the in year valuations. For items tested we agreed to supporting calculation sheets and confirmed that the calculations were materially correct. This includes confirming source data used was consistent with floor plans and indices.

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#### Audit conclusion

Our work has provided the assurance we sought in each of these areas and has not highlighted any material issues to bring to your attention.

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# Significant findings

The significant findings from our audit include our conclusions regarding the significant risks we identified and other key areas of judgement, which are set out in this section.

## Significant risks

### Accounting for leases under IFRS 16

#### Description of the risk

IFRS 16 is applicable from 1 April 2024 and is designed to report information that shows lease transactions and provides a better basis for users of financial statements to assess the amount, timing and uncertainty of cash flows arising from leases.

The Council is required to make accounting entries in respect of IFRS16 in its 2024/25 accounts. Application of a new accounting standard to these significant balances will require judgement and presents a significant risk to the material accuracy of the financial statements.

In year 1, there is also a significant risk that these will be materially complete.

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#### How we addressed this risk

We addressed this risk through performing the following work:

- Obtained an understanding of the methodology adopted by the Council in valuing the right-of-use assets, including the systems, controls, and key judgments applied in determining lease terms and discount rates.
- Critically reviewed the accuracy and completeness of the Council's assessment.
- Sample tested the valuation of both right-of-use assets and corresponding lease liabilities.
- Considered disclosure adequacy, evaluating whether the presentation of lease balances and related notes in the draft financial statements provided transparent and compliant information to users.

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#### Audit conclusion

Our work has provided the assurance we sought in each of these areas and has not highlighted any material issues to bring to your attention.

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# Significant findings

## Wider responsibilities

Our powers and responsibilities under the 2014 Act are broad and include the ability to:

- issue a report in the public interest;
- make statutory recommendations that must be considered and responded to publicly;
- apply to the court for a declaration that an item of account is contrary to law; and
- issue an advisory notice under schedule 8 of the 2014 Act.

We have not exercised any of these powers as part of our 2024/25 audit.

The 2014 Act also gives rights to local electors and other parties, such as the right to ask questions of the auditor and the right to make an objection to an item of account. No such objections have been raised.

# 05

Internal control conclusions

# Significant control deficiencies

As part of our audit, we obtained an understanding of the Council's internal control environment and control activities relevant to the preparation of the financial statements, which was sufficient to plan our audit and determine the nature, timing, and extent of our audit procedures. Although our audit was not designed to express an opinion on the effectiveness of the Council's internal controls, we are required to communicate to Those Charged with Governance any significant deficiencies in internal controls that we identified in during our audit.

## Deficiencies in internal control

A deficiency in internal control exists if:

- A control is designed, implemented, or operated in such a way that it is unable to prevent, detect, and/ or correct potential misstatements in the financial statements; or
- A control that is necessary to prevent, detect, and/ or correct misstatements in the financial statements on a timely basis is missing.

The purpose of our audit was to express an opinion on the financial statements. As part of our audit, we have considered the Council's internal controls relevant to the preparation of the financial statements to design audit procedures to allow us to express an opinion on the financial statements, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Council's internal controls or to identify any significant deficiencies in their design or operation.

The matters reported in this section of our report are limited to those deficiencies and other control recommendations that we have identified during our normal audit procedures and which we consider to be of sufficient importance to merit being reported.

If we had performed more extensive procedures on internal control, we might have identified more deficiencies to report or concluded that some of the reported deficiencies need not in fact have been reported.

Our comments in this section should not be regarded as a comprehensive record of all deficiencies that may exist or improvements that could be made.

## Significant deficiencies in internal control

A significant deficiency in internal control is one which, in our professional judgement, has the potential for financial loss, damage to reputation, or a loss of information which may have implications on the achievement of business strategic objectives. Our view is that observations categorised as a significant deficiency is of sufficient importance to merit the attention of Those Charged With Governance.

We have not identified any significant deficiencies in the Council's internal controls as at the date of this report.

## Other observations

We also record our observations on the Council's internal controls where, in our professional judgement, there is a need to strengthen internal control or enhance business efficiency that do not constitute significant deficiencies in internal control but which we view as being important for consideration by management.

We have not identified any such control deficiencies as at the date of this report.

# Audit scope, approach, and timeline

## Follow up on deficiencies in internal control

Set out below are the internal control deficiencies identified during our prior-period audit, along with an update on the actions taken by the Council to address those issues. This includes deficiencies raised in earlier audits that remained unresolved at the commencement of our current audit.

### Description of deficiency

Our detailed testing highlighted that some elements of the year end residential homes costs are not recorded in the correct period. Based on follow up discussions Management have confirmed that the Council accounts for 13 lots of 4 weekly payments each year, this means that in each period 1 or 2 days are not accounted for.

### Potential effects

The omission of 1 or 2 days' costs in each period could lead to inaccuracies in financial statements. This misalignment might distort the actual financial position of the Council. Continuance of this practice may potentially lead to material misstatements.

### Recommendation

The Council should account for a full years cost each year, rather than using 13 four-weekly payment runs, which only cover 364 days. Additionally, the Council should ensure that year-end costs are allocated to the correct period.

### Management response in 2023/24

The recommendation is accepted and will be rectified in the 2024/25 accounts.

### Audit Team Update 2024/25

In the prior year, we reported that elements of year-end residential homes costs were not recorded in the correct accounting period. Our FY24/25 work confirmed that Management has addressed this issue. Management has now implemented the necessary adjustments to ensure that year-end costs are recorded in the correct period. Based on the evidence obtained, we consider this internal control recommendation resolved.

# Audit scope, approach, and timeline

## Follow up on deficiencies in internal control *continued*

### Description of deficiency

Our work on property valuations highlighted that the Valuation Report reported a valuation date of 1 April 2023. Our review of valuations noted that the accounting treatment aligned with a 31 March 2024 valuation. The valuation indices used in detailed valuations were closer to the 31 March 2024 than 1 April 2023. But the accounting treatment adopted does not align to a 1 April 2023 valuation. For example, the Code requires accumulated depreciation to be written out at the date of valuation, i.e. the 1 April 2023. However, the Council have written out depreciation as at 31 March 2024 valuation. The difference in asset values if the valuation was accounted for at 1 April 2023 would be a reduction in asset value of £1.502 million. As noted we do not believe this treatment to result in a material misstatement given the carrying amount of the asset at the 31 March 2024 is based on valuation data nearer the 31 March 2024 than 1 April 2023.

---

### Potential effects

The misalignment between the valuation date and the accounting treatment could lead to inaccuracies in financial reporting. Incorrectly writing out depreciation for the period ending 31 March 2024, may result in overstated asset values and misstated depreciation expenses, impacting the carrying value of assets.

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### Recommendation

We recommend management revisit valuation dates and ensure that any corresponding accounting treatments are consistently aligned.

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### Management response in 2023/24

Our Valuer has confirmed that it is good valuation practice to use the most up to date indices at the time of carrying out the valuation. As most valuations are carried out in February the valuation date will be amended to 31 March in line with the accounting treatment.

---

### Audit Team Update 2024/25

In the prior year, we reported that the valuation report for property, plant and equipment stated a valuation date of 1 April 2023, while the accounting treatment applied by the Council aligned with a 31 March 2024 valuation. As part of our FY24/25 work, we confirmed that Management has addressed this issue. The Council has now aligned the valuation date and the associated accounting treatment in accordance with the Code's requirements. Based on the evidence obtained, we consider this internal control recommendation resolved.

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# Audit scope, approach, and timeline

## Follow up on deficiencies in internal control *continued*

### Description of deficiency

Valuations - Issues Identified with the valuer's report

As part of the valuations work we noted a number of issues in relation to the initial valuations report provided.

- The initial valuation report did not reference Housing Revenue Asset (HRA) properties. An updated report was subsequently provided.
  - Our audit procedures required a reconciliation between the Valuers report and the relevant asset register values, however the report only included the movement in value since the previous valuation therefore meaning a reconciliation was not initially possible. We further note that any assets that had not moved in value were not listed in the valuers report. The valuer subsequently provided an updated report which included this information and a reconciliation was possible.
  - The valuation report did not disaggregate valuations by asset type or valuation method.
- 

### Potential effects

- The initial omission of HRA properties from the valuation report can lead to incomplete financial reporting and misrepresentation of the Council's asset valuations.
  - Without displaying the specific values calculated a reconciliation between the valuer report and asset register is not possible. Without this valuation there is a risk that discrepancies are not identified leading to errors in the valuations uploaded to the asset register.
  - The failure to differentiate valuations by asset type or valuation method, such as Depreciated Replacement Cost (DRC) or Existing Use Value (EUV) makes consideration of the appropriateness of valuations more difficult.
- 

### Recommendation

- Valuation report should include HRA properties.
  - The valuation report should consistently include the value of all assets valued, where asset values have not moved the valuation report should also include these assets.
  - Future valuation reports should differentiate valuations by asset type (e.g. investments, surplus) and valuation method, such as Depreciated Replacement Cost (DRC) or Existing Use Value (EUV).
- 

### Management response in 2023/24

As noted above an updated report was produced during the audit to include HRA properties and the revaluation amount instead of the change in valuation. However, it is not felt that differentiating by asset type will be beneficial as individual valuation reports are analysed by component type, checked for valuation method before entering onto the Council's Asset Register. This is carried out before the Valuers Report is ready.

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### Audit Team Update 2024/25

In the prior year, we reported a number of issues with the initial valuation report provided by the Council's external valuer. As part of our FY24/25 work, we confirmed that Management has resolved these matters. The valuation report provides the information necessary to reconcile to the asset register. Based on the evidence obtained, we consider this recommendation resolved.

---

# Audit scope, approach, and timeline

## Follow up on deficiencies in internal control *continued*

### Description of deficiency

Beacon properties are an important method of valuing HRA assets. The documentation available did not explain how each beacon value was determined and did not include three specific comparable properties (as required by guidance) with any adjustments or explanations for those adjustments.

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### Potential effects

The absence of detailed explanations and specific comparable properties can lead to a lack of transparency in the valuation process, making it difficult for management to assess the valuation provided.

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### Recommendation

Future valuation reports should include detailed explanations of how each beacon value is derived. This should include detail of three direct comparable properties for each beacon. The report should also clearly document any adjustments made to these comparable properties.

---

### Management response in 2023/24

Our Valuer accepts the recommendation and will incorporate into the 2024/25 HRA valuations, albeit with the caveat it is not always possible to evidence 3 direct comparables and that sometimes a reduced number or the net has to be wider than so called 'direct' comparables.

---

### Audit Team Update 2024/25

In the prior year, we reported that the documentation supporting the valuation of beacon properties within the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) was insufficient. As part of our 2024/25 audit work, we confirmed that Management has addressed these issues. The valuation documentation now clearly sets out the basis for each beacon valuation and includes the required comparable properties together with appropriate explanations of adjustments made. Based on the evidence obtained, we consider this recommendation resolved.

---

# Audit scope, approach, and timeline

## Follow up on deficiencies in internal control *continued*

### Description of deficiency

During the Council Tax and NNDR walkthroughs, we observed that when parameters are updated in the system at the start of the financial year there was no formal review to ensure the new parameter had been correctly input.

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### Potential effects

Without verification, there is a risk that incorrect parameters are used, leading to inaccurate Council Tax and NNDR calculations.

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### Recommendation

Parameter updates are subject to review to verify their accuracy. This review should be documented.

---

### Management response in 2023/24

It was explained during the audit that the parameters are reviewed when they are updated but are not formally signed off. At least 2 colleagues update and review with a further final check before the data is confirmed. We have agreed to introduce a formal sign off for FY 2025/26.

---

### Audit Team Update 2024/25

Management has agreed to introduce a formal sign-off process for parameter updates from 2024/25 onwards. As this process will be implemented in the next financial year, we will revisit this internal control recommendation as part of our 2025/26 audit.

---

# Audit scope, approach, and timeline

## Follow up on deficiencies in internal control *continued*

### Description of deficiency

The Council revalued their heritage assets as at 31 March 2024. This was the first time since 2018. During our review of the revalued assets we identified several assets which were present on the 2024 insurance valuation schedule which had been historically owned by the Council but had not been recognised within the heritage assets balance. These omissions were not material and have now been recognised.

---

### Potential effects

The omission of heritage assets from the accounts disclosure could lead to a material misstatement. Failure to recognise and account for all heritage assets can impact the Council's asset management practices, including maintenance, preservation, and insurance coverage.

---

### Recommendation

We recommend the Council complete a review at year end of all Heritage assets recognised against additions in year to ensure the balance at year end is materially complete.

---

### Management response in 2023/24

A reconciliation of all assets per the 2004, 2011, 2018 and 2024 valuation schedules has been carried out. The Council has commissioned the external valuer to revalue all assets not revalued as part of the 2024 asset revaluation.

---

### Audit Team Update 2024/25

As part of our 2024/25 audit, we confirmed that Management has addressed this issue. We confirmed that Management has undertaken a reconciliation of assets across the 2004, 2011, 2018 and 2024 valuation schedules. The underlying records have been updated accordingly. In addition, the Council commissioned the external valuer to revalue heritage assets that were not included in the 2024 valuation exercise. Based on the work completed in 2024/25, we consider this recommendation resolved.

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06

Summary of misstatements

# Summary of misstatements

## Unadjusted misstatements

Our overall materiality, performance materiality, and clearly trivial (reporting) threshold were reported in our Audit Strategy Memorandum. Any subsequent changes to those figures are set out in the *'Audit approach and risk summary'* section of this report.

We identified no misstatements above our reporting threshold, or that we deem to be material by nature, as at the date of this report which were not adjusted.

# Summary of misstatements

## Adjusted misstatements

The misstatements in the table below have been adjusted by management. We report all individual misstatements above our reporting threshold that we identify during our audit and which management had adjusted and any other misstatements we believe Those Charged With Governance should be made aware of.

Description	Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement		Balance Sheet	
	Dr (£ '000)	Cr (£ '000)	Dr (£ '000)	Cr (£ '000)
<p>Dr: Revaluations ( HRA line I&amp;E )</p> <p>Dr: Capital Adjustment Account</p> <p>Cr: Council Dwellings</p> <p>Cr: MIRS</p> <p>The Council identified an error relating to Council Dwellings. Additions totalling £0.256m were entered into the asset register on the same day as the revaluation (31 March 2025). These additions related to fixtures and fittings within the properties, such as boilers and bathroom installations. As the additions were recorded on the valuation date, the closing asset values increased by the full amount of the additions. However, the valuer confirmed that these works did not result in any change in the properties' valuation. As a result, the year-end asset value is overstated by £0.256m.</p>	£256		£256	(£256)
<p>Dr: Heritage Assets</p> <p>Cr: Revaluation Reserve</p> <p>The adjustment arises from the Council's updated revaluation of heritage assets. This revised assessment increases the reported value of these assets by £0.284m, reflecting the Council's latest valuation.</p>			£284	(£284)
	£256	0	£540	(£796)

# Summary of misstatements

## Disclosure misstatements

We identified the following disclosure misstatements during our audit that have been corrected by management:

- Note 2: Critical Judgements in Applying Accounting Policies - The disclosure required amendment to make reference to the Pupil Referral Unit owned by the Council.
- Note 16: Right of Use Assets - In Note 16, the IFRS 16 transition adjustments are currently presented within the 'additions' line, with the opening balance shown as nil. An amendment was required to recognise an appropriate opening balance equal to the IFRS 16 transition adjustments. The 'additions' line has therefore been revised to include only in-year ROU asset additions. This correction also affects Note 14 (Property, Plant and Equipment) and Note 33, which sets out the capital financing requirements.
- Note 35: Nature and Extent of Risks Arising from Financial Instruments - The decrease in fair value had been incorrectly reported as £15.243m, rather than the correct amount of £11.407m which represents the impact of a 1% increase in the discount rate.
- Note 32: Dedicated Schools Grant - A disclosure error was identified on the 'Carry forward to 2025/26' line. The Council had originally reported a deficit of £3.344m; however, under the Code guidance, this line should only present a surplus or zero. Where the calculation results in a deficit, the amount disclosed must be shown as zero, with any in-year deficit instead reflected within the DSG Unusable Reserve.
- Note 27: Grant Income and Taxation – An amount of £0.532m was incorrectly disclosed under the Dedicated Schools Grant line instead of the Other Department for Education Grant to which it relates. A reclassification was therefore required within the disclosure to correct this presentation.
- Note 30: Related Party Transactions – An update was required within the 'Other Public Bodies' paragraph to include £0.095m of expenditure relating to Health Watch payroll service, which had previously been omitted.
- Some amendments were made to correct minor casting and classification errors.

07

Fraud considerations

# Fraud considerations

We have a responsibility to plan and perform our audit to obtain reasonable assurance that the financial statements are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

## Your responsibilities

Management has primary responsibility for the prevention and detection of fraud. It is important that management, with Those Charged With Governance oversight, place a strong emphasis on fraud prevention, which may reduce opportunities for fraud to take place, and fraud deterrence, which could persuade individuals not to commit fraud because of the likelihood of detection and punishment. This involves a commitment to creating a culture of honesty and ethical behaviour which is reinforced by Those Charged With Governance's active oversight.

## Our responsibilities

We have a responsibility for obtaining reasonable assurance that the financial statements taken as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error. The distinguishing factor between fraud and error is whether the underlying action that results in a misstatement is intentional or unintentional. Two types of intentional misstatements are relevant to us – misstatements resulting from fraudulent financial reporting, and misstatements resulting from the misappropriation of assets.

## ISA presumed fraud risks

As set out in the 'Audit approach and risk summary' section, the risks of fraud as a result of management override of controls were identified as significant risks.



08

Value for Money

# Value for Money

## Approach to Value for Money

We are required to form a view as to whether the Council has made proper arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources. The NAO issues guidance to auditors that underpins the work we are required to carry out in order to form our view and sets out the overall criterion and sub-criteria that we are required to consider.

This is the first audit year where we have undertaken our value for money (VFM) work under the full 2024 Code of Audit Practice (the Code). Our responsibility remains to be satisfied that the Council has proper arrangements in place, and to report in the auditor's report where we are not satisfied that arrangements are in place. Where we have issued a recommendation in relation to a significant weaknesses this indicates we are not satisfied that arrangements are in place. Separately we provide a commentary on the Council's arrangements in the Auditor's Annual Report.

A key change in the 2024 Code of Audit Practice is the requirement for us to issue our Auditor's Annual Report for the year ending 31st March 2025 to you in draft by the 30th November 2025. This is required whether our audit is complete or not. Should our work not be complete, we will report the status of our work and any findings up to that point (and since the issue of our previous Auditor's Annual Report).

The Code requires us to structure our commentary to report under three specified criteria:

- **Financial sustainability** - How the Council plans and manages its resources to ensure it can continue to deliver its services;
- **Governance** - How the Council ensures that it makes informed decisions and properly manages its risks; and
- **Improving economy, efficiency and effectiveness** - How the Council uses information about its costs and performance to improve the way it manages and delivers its services.

At the planning stage of the audit, we undertake work to understand the arrangements that the Council has in place under each of the reporting criteria and we identify risks of significant weaknesses in those arrangements. Although we describe this work as planning work, we keep our understanding of arrangements under review and update our risk assessment throughout the audit to reflect emerging issues that may suggest significant weaknesses in arrangements exist.

The table overleaf outlines the risks of significant weaknesses in arrangements that we have identified, the risk-based procedures we have undertaken, and the results of our work.

Where our risk-based procedures identify actual significant weaknesses in arrangements we are required to report these and make recommendations for improvement. Where such significant weaknesses are identified, we report these in the audit report by exception. We will also highlight emerging issues or other matters that do not represent significant weaknesses but still require attention from the Council.

The primary output of our work on the Council arrangements is the commentary on those arrangements that forms part of the Auditor's Annual Report. This commentary will provide a summary of the work we have undertaken and our judgements against each of the specified reporting criteria. We have issued the Auditor's Annual Report in draft at the end of November 2025.

## Status of our work

We have completed our work, but we will continue to assess arrangements up to the point of reporting which is planned by the end of February 2026.

We anticipate having no significant weaknesses in arrangements to report in relation to the arrangements that the Authority has in place to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources.

We have completed our work in respect of the Council's arrangements for the year ended 31 March 2025 and we have not identified any significant weaknesses in arrangements that have required us to make a recommendation. Our draft audit report at Appendix C confirms that we have no matters to report in respect of significant weaknesses. As noted above, our commentary on the Council's arrangements has been provided in the draft Auditor's Annual Report which has been issued at the end of November 2025.

# Value for Money

## Risks of significant weaknesses in arrangements

In our Audit Strategy Memorandum we reported the risks of significant weaknesses in arrangements that we had identified as part of our planning procedures. Our responses to those identified risks are outlined in the table below.

Risk of Significant Weakness in Arrangements	Financial Sustainability	Governance	Improving the 3Es	Work Undertaken and Conclusions Reached
<p><b>Financial sustainability</b> The Council has reported significant budget deficits in recent years and as at February 2025 was forecasting a £2.2m deficit in 2024/25. This has been largely due to a £7m overspend in children’s social care</p> <p>Our work in 2023/24 did not identify any evidence to indicate a significant weakness in arrangements. However, we raised an ‘other recommendation’ to recognise that the Council needed to take action in future years to address the cost pressures (particularly in children’s social care) and deliver savings set out in the Transformation and Efficiency Strategy necessary to prevent any further draw on reserves.</p>	●			<p><b>Work undertaken</b> We considered the final outturn position for 2024/25 including the achievement of savings targets and the Council’s reserves. We reviewed the 2025/26 medium term financial plan and monitoring of in-year financial performance. We have considered how the Council is addressing the significant overspends in children’s social care and the achievement of its savings targets and delivery of the Transformation and Efficiency Strategy.</p> <p><b>Conclusions</b> Based on our review we have not identified any evidence to indicate a significant weakness in arrangements. We have, however, identified two ‘other recommendations’ which reflect the ongoing pressures in the Councils budget. We will continue to monitor the Council position in our future value for money work. Further detail can be found in our Auditor’s Annual Report.</p>

# Appendices

A: Internal control conclusions

B: Draft management representation letter

C: Draft audit report

D: Confirmation of our independence

E: Other communications

# Appendix A: Internal control conclusions

## Other deficiencies in internal control

A deficiency in internal control exists if:

- A control is designed, implemented, or operated in such a way that it is unable to prevent, detect, and/ or correct potential misstatements in the financial statements; or
- A control that is necessary to prevent, detect, and/ or correct misstatements in the financial statements on a timely basis is missing.

The purpose of our audit was to express an opinion on the financial statements. As part of our audit, we have considered the Council's internal controls relevant to the preparation of the financial statements to design audit procedures to allow us to express an opinion on the financial statements, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Council's internal controls or to identify any significant deficiencies in their design or operation.

The matters reported in Appendix A are limited to those deficiencies and other control recommendations that we have identified during our normal audit procedures and which we consider to be of sufficient importance to merit being reported. If we had performed more extensive procedures on internal control, we might have identified more deficiencies to report or concluded that some of the reported deficiencies need not in fact have been reported. Our comments in Appendix A should not be regarded as a comprehensive record of all deficiencies that may exist or improvements that could be made.

We have not identified any internal control observations as at the date of this report.

# Appendix B: Draft management representation letter

## TO BE PROVIDED ON CLIENT LETTERHEAD

The client should provide this letter to us on client headed note paper, it should be signed by the Director of Finance, IT and Digital and dated as close to (but not after) the date of the audit report as possible.

Address to:

James Collins

Audit Director

Forvis Mazars LLP

Dear James,

### **Hartlepool Borough Council - Audit for Year Ended 31 March 2025**

This representation letter is provided in connection with your audit of the financial statements of Hartlepool Borough Council ("the Council") for the year ended 31 March 2025 for the purpose of expressing an opinion as to whether the financial statements give a true and fair view in accordance with the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2024/25 (the Code), and applicable law.

I confirm that the following representations are made on the basis of enquiries of management and staff with relevant knowledge and experience (and, where appropriate, inspection of supporting documentation) sufficient to satisfy myself that I can properly make each of the following representations to you.

#### **My responsibility for the financial statements and accounting information**

I believe that I have fulfilled my responsibilities for the true and fair presentation and preparation of the financial statements in accordance with the Code, as amended by applicable law.

#### **My responsibility to provide and disclose relevant information**

I have provided you with:

- access to all information of which I am aware that is relevant to the preparation of the financial statements such as records, documentation and other material;
- additional information that you have requested from us for the purpose of the audit; and
- unrestricted access to individuals within the Council you determined it was necessary to contact in order to obtain audit evidence.

I confirm as Director of Finance, IT and Digital (Section 151 officer) that I have taken all the necessary steps to make me aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that you, as auditors, are aware of this information.

## Appendix B: Draft management representation letter (Continued)

As far as I am aware there is no relevant audit information of which you, as auditors, are unaware.

I confirm that there is no information provided to you as part of the audit that I consider legally privileged.

### **Accounting records**

I confirm that all transactions that have a material effect on the financial statements have been recorded in the accounting records and are reflected in the financial statements. All other records and related information, including minutes of all Council and committee meetings, have been made available to you.

### **Accounting policies**

I confirm that I have reviewed the accounting policies applied during the year in accordance with International Accounting Standard 8 and consider these policies to faithfully represent the effects of transactions, other events or conditions on the Council's financial position, financial performance and cash flows.

### **Accounting estimates, including those measured at current or fair value**

I confirm that the methods, significant assumptions and the data used by the Council in making the accounting estimates, including those measured at current or fair value, are appropriate to achieve recognition, measurement or disclosure that is in accordance with the applicable financial reporting framework.

# Appendix B: Draft management representation letter (Continued)

## Contingencies

There are no material contingent losses including pending or potential litigation that should be accrued where:

- information presently available indicates that it is probable that an asset has been impaired or a liability had been incurred at the balance sheet date; and
- the amount of the loss can be reasonably estimated.

There are no material contingent losses that should be disclosed where, although either or both the conditions specified above are not met, there is a reasonable possibility that a loss, or a loss greater than that accrued, may have been incurred at the balance sheet date.

There are no contingent gains which should be disclosed.

All material matters, including unasserted claims, that may result in litigation against the Council have been brought to your attention. All known actual or possible litigation and claims whose effects should be considered when preparing the financial statements have been disclosed to you and accounted for and disclosed in accordance with the Code, as amended by applicable law.

## Laws and regulations

I confirm that I have disclosed to you all those events of which I am aware which involve known or suspected non-compliance with laws and regulations, together with the actual or contingent consequences which may arise therefrom.

The Council has complied with all aspects of contractual agreements that would have a material effect on the accounts in the event of non-compliance.

## Fraud and error

I acknowledge my responsibility as Director of Finance, IT and Digital (Section 151 officer) for the design, implementation and maintenance of internal control to prevent and detect fraud and error and I believe I have appropriately fulfilled those responsibilities.

I have disclosed to you:

- all the results of my assessment of the risk that the financial statements may be materially misstated as a result of fraud;
- all knowledge of fraud or suspected fraud affecting the Council involving:
  - management and those charged with governance;
  - employees who have significant roles in internal control; and
  - others where fraud could have a material effect on the financial statements.

I have disclosed to you all information in relation to any allegations of fraud, or suspected fraud, affecting the Council's financial statements communicated by employees, former employees, analysts, regulators or others.

# Appendix B: Draft management representation letter (Continued)

## **Related party transactions**

I confirm that all related party relationships, transactions and balances, have been appropriately accounted for and disclosed in accordance with the requirements of the Code, as amended applicable law.

I have disclosed to you the identity of the Council's related parties and all related party relationships and transactions of which I am aware.

## **Impairment review**

To the best of my knowledge, there is nothing to indicate that there is a permanent reduction in the recoverable amount of the property, plant and equipment below their carrying value at the balance sheet date. An impairment review is therefore not considered necessary.

## **Charges on assets**

All the Council's assets are free from any charges exercisable by third parties except as disclosed within the financial statements.

## **Future commitments**

The Council has no plans, intentions or commitments that may materially affect the carrying value or classification of assets and liabilities or give rise to additional liabilities.

## **Subsequent events**

I confirm all events subsequent to the date of the financial statements and for which the Code, as amended by applicable law, require adjustment or disclosure have been adjusted or disclosed.

Should further material events occur after the date of this letter which may necessitate revision of the figures included in the financial statements or inclusion of a note thereto, I will advise you accordingly.

## **Impacts of Russian Forces entering Ukraine**

I confirm that I have carried out an assessment of the potential impact of Russian Forces entering Ukraine on the Council, including the impact of mitigation measures and uncertainties, and that the disclosure in the Narrative Report and the subsequent events note to the financial statements fairly reflects that assessment.

## **Historic shortfall in Social Residential Care Expenditure**

Following the identification of the historic residential payment error in 2023/24 I confirm that I am not aware of any further errors in accruals that have any cumulative impact on the Councils on-going financial resilience or MTFS.

# Appendix B: Draft management representation letter (Continued)

## Tariffs

I confirm that I have carried out an assessment of the potential impact of changes in US trade policy in respect of tariffs, including the impact of reciprocal tariffs by other countries, including the impact of mitigation measures and uncertainties, and that the disclosure in the Narrative Report and the subsequent events note to the financial statements fairly reflects that assessment.

## Going concern

To the best of my knowledge there is nothing to indicate that the Council will not continue as a going concern in the foreseeable future. The period to which I have paid particular attention in assessing the appropriateness of the going concern basis is not less than twelve months from the date of approval of the accounts.

## Annual Governance Statement

I am satisfied that the Annual Governance Statement (AGS) fairly reflects the Council's risk assurance and governance framework and I confirm that I am not aware of any significant risks that are not disclosed within the AGS.

## Narrative Report

The disclosures within the Narrative Report fairly reflect my understanding of the Council's financial and operating performance over the period covered by the financial statements.

## Unadjusted misstatements

I confirm that the effects of the uncorrected misstatements are immaterial, both individually and in aggregate, to the financial statements as a whole. A list of the uncorrected misstatements is attached to this letter as an Appendix. **Please make sure the appendix is attached to the letter and not cross-referenced to the appendix in the Audit Completion Report.**

## Arrangements to achieve economy, effectiveness and efficiency in Use of Resources (Value for Money arrangements)

I confirm that I have disclosed to you all findings and correspondence from regulators for previous and ongoing inspections of which I am aware. In addition, I have disclosed to you any other information that would be considered relevant to your work on value for money arrangements.

Yours faithfully,

Director of Finance, IT and Digital (Section 151 officer)

Date:

# Appendix C: Draft audit report

## Report on the audit of the financial statements

### Opinion on the financial statements

We have audited the financial statements of Hartlepool Borough Council ('the Council') for the year ended 31 March 2025, which comprise the Movement in Reserves Statement, the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement, the Balance Sheet, the Statement of Cash Flows, the Housing Revenue Account, the Collection Fund and notes to the financial statements, including material accounting policy information.

The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2024/25.

In our opinion, the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the financial position of the Council as at 31st March 2025 and of its expenditure and income for the year then ended; and
- have been properly prepared in accordance with the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2024/25.

### Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the "Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements" section of our report. We are independent of the Council in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

### Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the Director of Finance, IT and Digital's use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, and taking into account the requirements of the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2024/25, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the Council's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the Director of Finance, IT and Digital with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

### Other information

The other information comprises the information included in the Statement of Accounts, other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. The Director of Finance, IT and Digital is responsible for the other information. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

Our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements, or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether there is a material misstatement in the financial statements or a material misstatement of the other information. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

# Appendix C: Draft audit report (continued)

## **Responsibilities of the Director of Finance, IT and Digital Chief Financial Officer for the financial statements**

As explained more fully in the Statement of the Director of Finance, IT and Digital's Responsibilities, the Director of Finance, IT and Digital is responsible for the preparation of the Statement of Accounts, which includes the financial statements, in accordance with proper practices as set out in the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2024/25, and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view. The Director of Finance, IT and Digital is also responsible for such internal control as the Director of Finance, IT and Digital determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

The Director of Finance, IT and Digital is required to comply with the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2024/25 and prepare the financial statements on a going concern basis on the assumption that the functions of the Council will continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. The Director of Finance, IT and Digital is responsible for assessing each year whether or not it is appropriate for the Council to prepare its accounts on the going concern basis and disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern.

## **Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements**

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud is detailed below.

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud.

Based on our understanding of the Council, we considered that non-compliance with the following laws and regulations might have a material effect on the financial statements: employment regulation, health and safety regulation, anti-money laundering regulation, data protection, environmental protection, corruption and anti-bribery, non-compliance with implementation of government support schemes relating to COVID-19.

To help us identify instances of non-compliance with these laws and regulations, and in identifying and assessing the risks of material misstatement in respect to non-compliance, our procedures included, but were not limited to :

- gaining an understanding of the legal and regulatory framework applicable to the Council, the environment in which it operates, and the structure of the Council, and considering the risk of acts by the Council which were contrary to the applicable laws and regulations, including fraud;
- inquiring with management and the Audit and Governance Committee, as to whether the Council is in compliance with laws and regulations, and discussing their policies and procedures regarding compliance with laws and regulations;
- inspecting correspondence, if any, with relevant licensing or regulatory authorities;
- reviewing relevant meeting minutes in the year;
- communicating identified laws and regulations throughout our engagement team and remaining alert to any indications of non-compliance throughout our audit; and
- considering the risk of acts by the Council which were contrary to applicable laws and regulations, including fraud.

## Appendix C: Draft audit report (continued)

We also considered those laws and regulations that have a direct effect on the preparation of the financial statements, such as the Local Government Act 2003 (and associated regulations made under section 21), the Local Government Finance Acts of 1988, 1992 and 2012, and the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014.

In addition, we evaluated the Director of Finance, IT and Digital's incentives and opportunities for fraudulent manipulation of the financial statements (including the risk of override of controls) and determined that the principal risks were related to posting manual journal entries to manipulate financial performance, management bias through judgements and assumptions in significant accounting estimates, and significant one-off or unusual transactions.

Our audit procedures in relation to fraud included but were not limited to :

- making enquiries of management, and the Audit and Governance Committee on whether they had knowledge of any actual, suspected or alleged fraud;
- gaining an understanding of the internal controls established to mitigate risks related to fraud;
- discussing amongst the engagement team the risks of fraud; and
- addressing the risks of fraud through management override of controls by performing journal entry testing.

There are inherent limitations in the audit procedures described above and the primary responsibility for the prevention and detection of irregularities including fraud, rests with both management and the Audit and Governance Committee. As with any audit, there remained a risk of non-detection of irregularities, as these may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal controls.

We are also required to conclude on whether the Director of Finance, IT and Digital's use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate. We performed our work in accordance with Practice Note 10: Audit of financial statements and regularity of public sector bodies in the United Kingdom, (Revised 2024) and Supplementary Guidance Note 01, issued by the National Audit Office in November 2024.

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the Financial Reporting Council's website at [www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities](http://www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities). This description forms part of our auditor's report.

# Appendix C: Draft audit report (continued)

## **Report on the Council's arrangements for securing economy, efficiency, and effectiveness in its use of resources**

### **Matter on which we are required to report by exception**

We are required to report to you if, in our view we are not satisfied that the Council has made proper arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources for the year ended 31 March 2025.

We have nothing to report in this respect.

### **Responsibilities of the Council**

The Council is responsible for putting in place proper arrangements to secure economy, efficiency, and effectiveness in its use of resources, to ensure proper stewardship and governance, and to review regularly the adequacy and effectiveness of these arrangements.

### **Auditor's responsibilities for the review of arrangements for securing economy, efficiency, and effectiveness in the use of resources**

We are required under Section 20(1)(c) of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 to satisfy ourselves that the Council has made proper arrangements for securing economy, efficiency, and effectiveness in its use of resources. We are not required to consider, nor have we considered, whether all aspects of the Council's arrangements for securing economy, efficiency, and effectiveness in its use of resources are operating effectively.

We have undertaken our work in accordance with the Code of Audit Practice, having regard to the guidance issued by the Comptroller and Auditor General in November 2024.

### **Matters on which we are required to report by exception under the Code of Audit Practice**

We are required by the Code of Audit Practice to report to you if:

- we issue a report in the public interest under section 24 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014;
- we make a recommendation under section 24 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014; or
- we exercise any other special powers of the auditor under sections 28, 29 or 31 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014.

We have nothing to report in these respects.

# Appendix C: Draft audit report (continued)

## Use of the audit report

This report is made solely to the members of Hartlepool Borough Council, as a body, in accordance with part 5 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 and the Statement of Responsibilities of Auditors and Audited Bodies published by Public Sector Audit Appointments Limited. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the members of the Council those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the members of the Council, as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

## Delay in certification of completion of the audit

We cannot formally conclude the audit and issue an audit certificate until we have completed the work required in relation to consolidation returns and received confirmation from the NAO that the group audit of the Whole of Government Accounts has been completed and that no further work is required to be completed by us.

*[Signature]*

James Collins, Key Audit Partner  
For and on behalf of Forvis Mazars LLP (Local Auditor)

The Corner  
Bank Chambers  
26 Mosley Street  
Newcastle Upon Tyne  
NE1 1DF

*[Date: To be confirmed]*

## Appendix D: Confirmation of our independence

We communicate any matters which we believe may have a bearing on the independence or the objectivity of Forvis Mazars LLP and the audit team. As part of our ongoing risk assessment, we monitor our relationships with you to identify any new actual or perceived threats to our independence within the regulatory or professional requirements governing us as your auditors.

We confirm that no new threats to independence have been identified since issuing our Audit Strategy Memorandum and therefore we remain independent.

## Appendix E: Other communications

	Other communication	Response
	<b>Compliance with Laws and Regulations</b>	<p>We have not identified any significant matters involving actual or suspected non-compliance with laws and regulations.</p> <p>We will obtain written representations from management that all known instances of non-compliance or suspected non-compliance with laws and regulations whose effects should be considered when preparing financial statements have been disclosed.</p>
	<b>External confirmations</b>	<p>We did not experience any issues with respect to obtaining external confirmations.</p>
	<b>Related parties</b>	<p>We did not identify any significant matters relating to the audit of related parties.</p> <p>We will obtain written representations from management confirming that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. they have disclosed to us the identity of related parties and all the related party relationships and transactions of which they are aware; and</li> <li>b. they have appropriately accounted for and disclosed such relationships and transactions in accordance with the requirements of the applicable financial reporting framework.</li> </ol>
	<b>Going Concern</b>	<p>We have not identified any evidence to cause us to disagree with Director of Finance, IT and Digital that the Council will be a going concern, and therefore we have not identified any evidence to cause us to consider that the use of the going concern assumption in preparation of the financial statements is not appropriate.</p>

# Appendix E: Other communications

Other communication		Response
	<b>Subsequent events</b>	<p>We are required to obtain evidence about whether events occurring between the date of the financial statements and the date of the auditor’s report that require adjustment of, or disclosure in, the financial statements are appropriately reflected in those financial statements in accordance with the applicable financial reporting framework.</p> <p>We will obtain written representations from management that all events occurring subsequent to the date of the financial statements and for which the applicable financial reporting framework requires adjustment or disclosure have been adjusted or disclosed.</p>
	<b>Matters related to fraud</b>	<p>Our audit was designed to obtain reasonable assurance whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement due to fraud. Please refer to the section titled ‘Fraud considerations’ for our fraud considerations and conclusion.</p> <p>We will obtain written representations from management and the Council, confirming that</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. they acknowledge their responsibility for the design, implementation and maintenance of internal control to prevent and detect fraud;</li> <li>b. they have disclosed to the auditor the results of management’s assessment of the risk that the financial statements may be materially misstated as a result of fraud;</li> <li>c. they have disclosed to the auditor their knowledge of fraud or suspected fraud affecting the entity involving:             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. management;</li> <li>ii. employees who have significant roles in internal control; or</li> <li>iii. others where the fraud could have a material effect on the financial statements; and</li> </ol> </li> <li>d. they have disclosed to the auditor their knowledge of any allegations of fraud, or suspected fraud, affecting the entity’s financial statements communicated by employees, former employees, analysts, regulators or others.</li> </ol>

# Appendix E: Other communications

Other communication	Response
 <p><b>System of Quality Management</b></p>	<p>To address the requirements of ISQM (UK) 1, our firm’s System of Quality Management team completes, as part of an ongoing and iterative process, a number of key steps to assess and conclude on our firm’s System of Quality Management, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensuring there is an appropriate assignment of responsibilities under ISQM (UK) 1 and across Leadership</li> <li>• Establishing and reviewing quality objectives each year, ensuring ISQM (UK) 1 objectives align with our firm's strategies and priorities</li> <li>• Identifying, reviewing, and updating quality risks each quarter, taking into consideration a number of input sources (such as FRC / ICAEW review findings, internal monitoring findings, findings from our firm’s root cause analysis and remediation functions, etc.)</li> <li>• Identifying, designing, and implementing responses as part of the process to strengthen our firm's internal control environment and overall quality</li> <li>• Evaluating responses and remediating control gaps or deficiencies</li> </ul> <p>We perform an evaluation of our system of quality management on an annual basis. Our latest evaluation was performed as of 31 August 2024. Details of that assessment and our conclusion are set out in our 2023/2024 Transparency Report, which is available on our website <a href="#">here</a>.</p>

# Contact

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## AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

24<sup>th</sup> FEBRUARY 2026

**Report of:** Director of Finance, IT and Digital

**Subject:** THE 2024/2025 FINANCIAL REPORT  
(INCLUDING THE 2024/25 STATEMENT OF  
ACCOUNTS)

### 1. COUNCIL PLAN PRIORITY

<b>Hartlepool will be a place:</b>
- 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)
- a place 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 present an update on the 2024/25 Financial Report and seek approval by the Committee.

### 3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 In accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, all Local Authorities are required to produce a draft annual Statement of Accounts. For 2024/25 the deadline was 30 June 2025.
- 3.2 The draft 2024/25 Financial Report was published on the Council's website on 27 June 2025 in line with the statutory deadline. The external audit commenced in September 2025.

### 4. AUDIT COMPLETION REPORT

- 4.1 As Members will be aware the purposes of the Audit Completion Report (ACR) are:

- to share information to assist both the auditor and those charged with governance (i.e. Members of the Audit and Governance Committee) to fulfil their respective responsibilities;
- to provide constructive observations arising from the audit process to those charged with governance;
- to ensure as part of a two way communication process the external auditors, gain an understanding of the attitude and views of those charged with governance at the Council of internal and external operational, financial, compliance and other risks which might affect the accounts, including the likelihood of those risks materialising and how they are managed; and,
- to receive feedback from those charged with governance on the performance of the engagement team.

- 4.2 The ACR is provided as part of the Audit Completion Report 2024/25 included elsewhere on the meeting agenda. It should be noted that whilst the External Auditors have substantially completed their work the audit is not complete. It is hoped that this outstanding work will be completed before this Committee takes place and an update will be provided. If not this Committee will be provided with an update in relation to any outstanding work in a follow-up letter prior to the auditor's report being signed.

### 5. UPDATED 2024/25 FINANCIAL REPORT

- 5.1 The Financial Report updated for the misstatements identified in the ACR is attached at **Appendix A**.

## 6. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS/IMPLICATIONS

<b>RISK IMPLICATIONS</b>	No relevant issues.
<b>FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS</b>	Covered in previous paragraphs.
<b>LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS</b>	No relevant issues.
<b>CHILD AND FAMILY POVERTY</b>	No relevant issues.
<b>EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY CONSIDERATIONS</b>	No relevant issues.
<b>STAFF CONSIDERATIONS</b>	No relevant issues.
<b>ASSET MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS</b>	No relevant issues.
<b>ENVIRONMENT, SUSTAINABILITY AND CLIMATE CHANGE CONSIDERATIONS</b>	No relevant issues.
<b>CONSULTATION</b>	No relevant issues.

## 7. CONCLUSIONS

- 7.1 The updated Financial Report has been agreed with External Auditors and is attached at **Appendix A**.

## 8. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 8.1 It is recommended that Members:-
- i) Note the report;
  - ii) Approve the Financial Report, as shown in **Appendix A**; and
  - iii) Note and agree, should a material error be identified in the outstanding issues, that results in amendments to the Financial Report, these amendments are actioned and delegated authority be given to the Director of Finance, IT and Digital in consultation with the Chair of the Audit and Governance Committee to approve the updated Statement of Accounts 2024/25

**9. CONTACT OFFICERS**

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# Financial Report 2024/25 Hartlepool Borough Council



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# SECTION 1 : Narrative Report

## **INTRODUCTION**

The narrative report provides an overall explanation of the Council's financial position, including major influences affecting the accounts. This will enable readers to understand and interpret the financial statements.

The narrative report sets out:

- Our Strategy and Objectives
- Our Performance 2024/25
- Risk Management Arrangements
- Financial Performance 2024/25
- Financial Outlook – General Fund 2025/26 to 2027/28
- Borrowing Facilities and Investment Strategy
- Pensions
- Statement of Accounts

## **OUR STRATEGY AND OBJECTIVES**

During 2024/25 work focused on the development of a new Council Plan for the Borough beginning with analysis of the Big Conversation which had taken place over 12 weeks between November 2023 and February 2024. During the Big Conversation the Council sought to engage as many people as possible including residents, employees and partners from the public, private, voluntary, community and social enterprise sectors and there were over 1,600 engagements including:

- 662 public survey responses (including paper, online and easy read versions)
- 48 business survey responses
- 149 responses to the quick poll
- 522 postcard responses
- 266 attendances registered at face-to-face sessions supported by officers from the Council
- 18 face-to-face sessions held by the Council or other public, voluntary, community and social enterprise partner organisations

A change in the political leadership of the Council took place in May 2024 and whilst focus was on delivering the new administration's election pledges work continued developing the new Council Plan.

The Council Plan 2030 was approved by Finance and Policy Committee in April 2025. The Plan, as set out overleaf, establishes a clear vision for Hartlepool and outlines the Council's priorities for the next 5 years. The Plan has and will continue to shape our services and financial strategies. The Council Plan, Medium Term Financial Strategy and Capital Strategy are three parts of a single plan which ensures that the links between the three are strengthened.



# Our Vision for the future of Hartlepool in 2030

## Hartlepool will be...

... a place where people live healthier, safe and independent lives.

**People**



... a place that is connected, sustainable, clean and green.

**Place**



... a place that is welcoming with an inclusive and growing economy providing opportunities for all.

**Potential**



... a place with a Council that is ambitious, fit for purpose and reflects the diversity of its community

**Organisation**



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

Our priorities for the next 5 years will be...

- Working with our partners to reduce poverty and to minimise the impact of poverty on our residents.
- Helping people understand what they are entitled to so that they can access the benefits they are eligible to receive by supporting the training and development of our workforce and partnership working with Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) organisations.
- Working with our schools and academy trusts to ensure we have strongly performing schools that serve children well and improve their future life chances across all key stages.
- Meeting the needs of children with special educational needs in a local school wherever possible unless specialist provision is in their best interests.
- Providing seamless, high-quality services to children and their families that are responsive to need and enable them to achieve and thrive.
- Transforming our multi agency early help system to support children to remain safely within their families, have their needs met and reduce reliance on statutory specialist services.
- Providing a children's social care system that supports children and young people and their families and helps them to stay together in loving homes, be safe and uses the family network to help families experiencing problems.
- Reducing the number of victims of domestic abuse by being part of a multi-agency system where victims are protected and provided with support that meets their needs.
- Delivering the Community Safety Strategy bringing together strategic partners to focus on tackling anti-social behaviour, including off-road bikes, and reducing serious violence within Hartlepool.
- Delivering the Drug and Alcohol Strategy and reducing the number of drug and alcohol related deaths.
- Reducing the number of residents who smoke through the delivery of the Tobacco Control Strategy.
- Delivering new cycle schemes across the Borough to encourage residents to live healthier and more active lives.
- Delivering targeted health improvement campaigns and interventions to improve the health and wellbeing of local people.
- Put in place interventions to start to tackle the inequalities in life expectancy and healthy life expectancy.

## SECTION 1 : Narrative Report

- Supporting local employers to create cultures that value the health and wellbeing of their workforce and wider community through the Better Health at Work Award.
- Working together with partners to develop local, accessible services and opportunities for residents to increase their physical activity including the Highlight Active Wellbeing Hub.
- Delivering an Adult Social Care information and advice offer promoting wellbeing and independence and making people aware of what's already available in the community. Expanding this to include digital and technology solutions that allow people to self-serve, such as online financial assessment.
- Providing or commissioning high quality adult social care services that are safe, timely, responsive, and person-centred, and enable people to be supported by well trained and appropriately skilled staff.
- Focussing on early action and support that promotes care closer to home and prevents avoidable admissions to hospital and to permanent residential care.
- Delivering an approach to safeguarding adults that meets the needs of adults who are most at risk of abuse or neglect.
- Supporting opportunities for local people to volunteer and improve their confidence, skills, and experience and to contribute to the local community.
- Increasing the literacy skills of adults for life and work, by realising the ambition of the Hartlepool Literacy Taskforce.
- Engaging residents in learning to increase their skills, confidence and raise their aspirations through the delivery of Hartlepool Employment and Skills Strategy.
- Continuing to develop our Community Hubs, providing opportunities for people to access support and services.
- Supporting our communities to be strong, resilient, empowered and inclusive.

### **Hartlepool will be a place that is connected, sustainable, clean and green. (PLACE)**

Our priorities for the next 5 years will be...

- Meeting local need, reducing homelessness and improving the supply of good quality housing through the delivery of the Housing and Homelessness Strategy.
- Tackling empty commercial and residential properties and combating tenants causing anti-social behaviour, and landlords who allow it.
- Increasing the number of houses owned by the Council and the range of social housing options available to those residents who need homes for social rent.
- Delivering the Town Deal Programme including the Wesley Chapel and reimagining Middleton Grange Phase 1.
- Transforming the Museum of Hartlepool and Wingfield Castle into vibrant, welcoming spaces telling the story of Hartlepool.
- Developing Hartlepool Waterfront into a visitor destination providing leisure, culture and heritage opportunities with improved access from the town centre, along Church Street and into the Marina.
- Displaying our artistic treasures for the people of Hartlepool.
- Creating a new waste transfer station within the Borough providing a more efficient approach to waste collection.
- Increasing recycling rates through the introduction of food waste collections and education with residents on the benefits of recycling.
- Delivering the A19 / Elwick Road / North Lane Junction and Elwick Road / Hartlepool Western Link Project reducing pressure on our existing A19 junctions and improving access into Hartlepool.
- Making improvements to key junctions in the local road network ensuring a more reliable and efficient bus network and better connectivity across the town.
- Delivering the Net Zero Strategy and reducing carbon emissions by the Council.
- Ensuring our parks and coastline are welcoming, community led and thriving green and blue spaces.

### **Hartlepool will be a place that is welcoming with an inclusive and growing economy providing opportunities for all. (POTENTIAL)**

Our priorities for the next 5 years will be...

- Developing a thriving production village surrounding the film and tv studios which provides opportunities for supply chain businesses and improved employment opportunities.
- Increasing the number and range of businesses within Hartlepool and building opportunities for our young people to have great jobs and careers through the Inclusive Growth Strategy and regeneration schemes.
- Supporting our local supply chain to benefit from the opportunities created by the Council and its partners through public contracts.
- Embedding our approach to social value so that it is simpler for Small and Medium Enterprises bidding for Council opportunities, supports cultural alignment with major suppliers and maximises the positive impact on our communities.

## SECTION 1 : Narrative Report

- Developing a Community Wealth Growth initiative to stimulate investment, create jobs and keep Hartlepool's money in Hartlepool.
- Working in partnership with North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust through the Health & Social Care Academy to increase the range of qualifications in health disciplines and promote social care as a career choice.
- Supporting the partnership with Hartlepool College of Further Education and delivery partners through the Civil Engineering Skills Academy – Hartlepool, to increase the range of qualifications and apprenticeships in fabrication, welding, construction and civils and promote engineering as a career choice.
- Delivering bespoke employer led programmes based on the skills needs and priorities of local employers to create a skilled workforce.
- Supporting Hartlepool residents with complex barriers to employment get back into work through the national 'Connect to Work' programme, improving the employment rate, and improving economic activity.
- Working collaboratively with Tees Valley Combined Authority (TVCA) and the Hartlepool Development Corporation to bring investment into the Borough.

### **Hartlepool will be a place with a Council that is ambitious, fit for purpose and reflects the diversity of its community. (ORGANISATION)**

Our priorities for the next 5 years will be...

- Ensuring the council is financially sustainable, with a balanced Medium Term Financial Plan, and annual accounts that are timely, accurate, true and fair.
- Continuing to lobby central government for a fairer funding system that recognises the level of poverty and need that we have here in Hartlepool.
- Reviewing the senior officer structure to ensure maximum efficiency.
- Reforming our electoral system to make savings and bring stability to the Council.
- Bringing together stakeholders from all sectors through the Hartlepool Partnership to drive a shared strategic vision.
- Developing a Residents Forum to ensure the views of local people are heard.
- Delivering accessible communications which are aligned to the priorities of the Council and our communities.
- Providing a Council website that is accessible and becomes the default option to contact the council.
- Implementing a digital and IT transformation strategy that will continue to evolve and ensure that we have a modern, fully enabled and efficient workforce.
- Transforming the Council into a modern, data informed organisation where data empowers us to make informed decisions, enhance service quality, foster community engagement, optimise resource allocation, plan for the future, embrace innovation and promote transparency.
- Delivering a strategic and operational workforce plan which enables the Council to focus resources on key skills to support talent growth, apprenticeship planning, succession planning, recruitment and retention and risk management in the workforce and support strategic workforce planning.
- Supporting the health and wellbeing of our workforce.
- Ensuring our workforce has the foundations to deliver and develop the best service performance possible for the benefit of the Hartlepool community.
- Undertaking a review of Council buildings and assets to ensure that they meet the needs of residents and the organisation now and in the future.

### **OUR PERFORMANCE 2024/25**

Whilst there was no formal Council Plan in place during 2024/25 the following achievements were delivered:

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

Hartlepool Poverty Truth Commission launched in Hartlepool in May 2024. Led by charity Thrive Teesside the mission is a unique and powerful way of developing new insights and initiatives to tackle poverty. The idea is built on the concept that lasting social change only happens when people who are struggling come together with those in positions of power to tackle key issues. The creation of the Hartlepool Poverty Truth Commission was a recommendation that came out of an investigation into family poverty by the Council's Audit and Governance Committee.

Children's Services were inspected and rated as 'Outstanding' overall by Ofsted. The inspectors noted many examples of positive practice with families, with key strengths including consistent responses about the most vulnerable children in the borough and compassionate work with children and families throughout all service areas. Across the course of the past year, all HBC run children's homes have been inspected by Ofsted and judged to be 'Good' or 'Outstanding'.

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Adult Social Care services delivered by the Council were rated 'Good' by the Care Quality Commission (CQC) following an inspection in November 2024. The CQC described 'an organisation which had strong leaders, who were committed to making improvements so that people across Hartlepool are supported to lead healthier lives and reduce the need for formal support where possible' and stated that 'staff at the authority were passionate about serving local people and had a good understanding of how to meet their needs'. The CQC commented that 'Hartlepool Borough Council should be pleased with the many positive findings in our report and are already building on this with further improvement plans'.

In July 2024 day services provided at the Centre for Independent Living for adults with learning disabilities and autism were audited by the National Autistic Society and achieved Advanced Accreditation for demonstrating standards of excellence in supporting autistic people within a day setting. The accreditation was awarded following an in-depth assessment that included interviews with staff, reviews of support plans, observation of activities and a survey of people who use the service.

A new service launched in April 2024 providing care for people with planned overnight support needs. The service aims to avoid admissions to 24hr care and to support people to return home following a short-term admission. An evaluation showed that the service had been very successful with many people supported to fully regain their independence and excellent feedback from people supported and their families.

The Hartlepool Literacy Task Force was launched at a Literacy Summit in February as statistics show that more than a third of Hartlepool adults have very low levels of literacy, drastically affecting their life chances and those of their families. Public sector partners, organisations from the Voluntary Community and Social Enterprise sector and local businesses were asked to sign a special pledge to work together to champion literacy for everyone and make literacy skills more accessible and relevant, to create a skilled workforce to meet the needs of employers both now and in the future.

The Jobs and Skills Service offers a wide range of courses covering literacy, numeracy, and digital skills alongside qualifications to provide jobs in key sectors such as health and social care, education, and early years. Meanwhile, the Learning for Inclusion programme offers informal activities – such as woodturning, cooking, and horticulture – designed to help tackle social isolation, bring communities together and encourage family learning and better health. The results for the 2023/24 academic year were highest for over a decade, with 1,470 enrolments and an achievement rate of 89.5% – well above the national benchmark.

A Young People's Wellbeing Hub launched on Hartlepool Now helping those aged 13-19 year-old to find advice and activities when they need a bit of extra support to help them thrive. Young people worked with Hartlepool Borough Council's Youth Services Team to create the web page, which is based on the NHS i-THRIVE model.

Youth Voice For Hartlepool, a group of young people aged 13-19 supported by Hartlepool Borough Council's Youth Services Team, launched their own recipe book 'Scran – A Young Person's Guide To Easy Cooking'. The book is packed with mouth-watering, quick, healthy recipes which won't break the bank and was researched by the young people with help from their families and friends. Copies of the book were given to youth clubs and youth centres across Hartlepool as well as to secondary schools and it is also available free to download on the Council's website.

Free Swim Safe sessions were delivered for children aged 7 – 14 years old at Seaton Carew from 22 to 30 June as part of the Council's promotion of Drowning Prevention Week, a campaign run by the Royal Life Saving Society UK.

The Hartlepool Recovery Festival organised by Start, Hartlepool's substance misuse service, ran throughout September. It comprised a range of informal, warm and thoughtfully curated events to raise awareness of Start services and educate and inform people on the personal and communal impacts of addiction and stigma, and the importance of treatment. Events included a cricket match, bike ride, creative writing workshop, music event at The Studio, 7-a-side football tournament, women's wellbeing day and culminated with a Reflections of Recovery panel discussion at the Community Hub Central.

A mass training initiative was held in Hartlepool to teach people how to administer a life-saving drug which can quickly reverse the effects of an opioid overdose. Hartlepool's Nalox-athon comprised free drop-in training sessions at a range of community locations with the aim of significantly increasing the number of people able to inject Naloxone. Organised by Start - Hartlepool's substance misuse service, the Nalox-athon took place from 27-30 August to mark International Overdose Awareness Day 2024, which this year had the theme of "Together We Can".

The Community Safety Plan for 2024/2027 was agreed by Council in February 2025. The Safer Hartlepool Partnership will now focus their activity on 4 key priority areas. These are Anti-Social Behaviour, Drugs and Alcohol, Domestic Violence and Abuse and Serious Violence.

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£335,408 has been invested in Hartlepool's Victoria Ward as part of the Home Office's Safer Streets 5 programme. The initiative involved the Council working closely with The Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) for Cleveland and Cleveland Police to tackle neighbourhood crime and anti-social behaviour. Measures included:

- Security improvements to 36 alley gates in the Stephen Street, Suggitt Street, Sandringham Road, Sheriff Street, Dent Street and Derwent Street areas.
- Nine new street lighting columns installed at alley gates which had no street lighting.
- Three new mobile CCTV cameras which can be deployed in hot-spot locations and remotely monitored by the Council's CCTV control room.
- Employment of a Community Cohesion Officer and Environmental Projects Officer who have worked with local residents to deliver activities including litter picks, spot checks on back alleys and fly-tipping, clean-up campaigns and security improvements at the homes of vulnerable residents.
- Some of the money, along with additional funding provided by Thirteen Group, has been used to set up the Developing Neighbourhoods fund offering grants up to £250 to existing groups/initiatives and up to £500 to new groups/initiatives.

There have been 11 premises closure orders obtained by the Community Safety Team in 2024/25. These orders were obtained in response to drug dealing with violent behaviour, bladed weapons, threats of violence, verbal abuse and noise nuisance.

There have been 5 premises closure orders and 2 extensions obtained by the Licensing Team for the closure of retail premises engaging in the sale of illicit and counterfeit cigarettes and tobacco.

Pupils from Years 5 and 6 across Hartlepool schools took part in a multi-agency event organised by the Council to learn about how to stay safe. Through Crucial Crew pupils took part in a series of workshops covering issues such as electrical safety, road safety, water safety, cybercrime, first aid and the dangers of vaping.

Using the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) the Council introduced a new initiative to tackle shoplifting. The Shop Watch scheme involves giving premises radios that can be used by staff to alert other nearby premises to a shoplifting incident, and it also provides them with a link to the Council's CCTV control room. The UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) is a pot of money provided by the UK Government and administered locally by Tees Valley Combined Authority and can only be spent in the town centre area within Hartlepool.

The Youth Justice Strategic Plan for 2024/25 was agreed by Council in October 2024 and sets out how the service will strive to continuously improve by:

- Maintaining and building upon the current Health offer with trauma informed practice at its core.
- Continuing to work with partners to develop a clear and consistent approach to all forms of child exploitation.
- Building on the improving the Youth Justice Service offer of a 'whole family approach'.
- Ensuring the Service maintains a 'child first' ethos.
- Continuing to maintain a creative Early / Targeted Intervention, Prevention and Diversion offer.

Dedicated blood pressure testing kiosks which have been installed in Community Hub Central and Community Hub South and 60 easy-to-use home blood pressure monitoring kits are available for residents who are shown to have a high average blood pressure to borrow for seven days to check their blood pressure at home and then share their readings directly with their GP. The Council secured funding from the North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board for the initiative which aims to encourage residents to regularly check their blood pressure to help prevent heart disease, strokes and other health conditions.

Seaton Carew Community Hub reopened in March following a £250,000 investment to upgrade the facilities and enable a wider range of activities and services to be delivered. The investment included £200,000 grant from the Arts Council England Libraries Improvement Fund and £50,000 from the Council in the form of a roof replacement. The Hub has been transformed into a warm, welcoming, accessible and energy-efficient venue which includes a new layout and improved access with a new accessible toilet, wider powered doors and levelled access around the perimeter.

Crossing The Tees Book Festival – a collaboration between the library services of Hartlepool, Stockton, Middlesbrough, Redcar and Cleveland and Darlington Borough Councils supported by funding from Arts Council England – ran from Thursday 6 to Friday 21 June. Events in Hartlepool included sessions where people could meet authors and hear them read from some of their books, workshop activities and an open mic session.

The Big Lime Triathlon took place on 11 August with 257 finishers in total including complete beginners, club and GB athletes.

Armed Forces Day was celebrated on 29 June 2024 with Hartlepool Armed Forces Liaison group, local Reserve Army units and Cadet detachments teaming up with the Heugh Battery Museum to celebrate.

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Hartlepool's proud links with the Armed Forces have been further strengthened with the affiliation of a new Royal Navy frigate with the town. HMS Venturer is one of five Type 31 frigates currently being built at Rosyth and is expected to come into service before the end of the decade, where she will play an important role in maritime security around the world, protecting the United Kingdom's interests.

The Council in partnership with TransformersHPL, a Hartlepool organisation working to promote community togetherness, created a display in Hartlepool Art Gallery showcasing African arts and crafts to celebrate Black History Month. The display gave visitors the opportunity to learn more behind the history and meanings of different items like Kente Cloth - the traditional fabric of Ghana - or the connection between naming traditions and jewellery. The Art Gallery also hosted music workshops and storytelling sessions for families on 19 October.

Safeguarding Adults Week took place from 18 to 22 November to raise awareness of adult abuse and neglect and the help that's available.

The Council, NHS Choices, Catcote Academy and Catcote Futures are working in partnership to provide supported internships for 16-24 year olds with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) and / or autism. Each employer involved offers a diverse range of experiences for young people to help them each achieve the best outcome with support of a trained job coach. Supported internships give young people the opportunity to improve their life chances by supporting them to gain sustained, paid employment, helping them to gain skills, experience and financial independence and building their confidence and self-esteem.

The Outdoor Activities Team at Hartlepool Borough Council passed its Learning Outside the Classroom (LOtC) inspection, an essential assessment process for organisations that facilitate outdoor learning and adventure activities, ensuring that teams comply with industry standards and best practice. Highlighting the Team's commitment to providing a high-quality, safe and enriching service they met expectations in all aspects of the service.

Carlton Adventure retained its quality mark, the AHOEC (Association of Heads of Outdoor Education Centres) Gold Standard renewed following a rigorous inspection. The inspection found that the Centre and its staff met the required criteria in all areas. As a result, the Centre also automatically met the requirements of the Learning Outside the Classroom Quality Badge and Adventuremark.

Hartlepool Borough Council commissioned North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust and Hartlepool & Stockton Health to deliver a new Hartlepool Stop Smoking Service. The service, which complements existing schemes including specialist support for pregnant women, hospital inpatient advice, and community navigators at Hartlepool's Community Hubs, provides:

- 12-week support programme (including nicotine replacement therapies and/or an e-cigarette)
- Face-to-face clinics across the community
- Telephone consultations
- Home visits for housebound patients
- Workplace clinics

The team, which can take self-referrals from people looking to quit as well as from health staff, will also offer training and support for other community professionals.

### **Hartlepool will be a place that is connected, sustainable, clean and green. (PLACE)**

Seaton Carew was granted a Seaside Award by the environmental charity Keep Britain Tidy – an accolade only given to English beaches which are safe, clean and meet the highest environmental standards.

Ward Jackson Park and Summerhill Country Park retained their Green Flag Awards – an accolade both sites have held since 2008. The Green Flag Awards scheme, which is managed by environmental charity Keep Britain Tidy, recognises well-managed parks and green spaces, setting the benchmark for the management of green spaces across the United Kingdom and around the world.

The Council's free Fireworks Spectacular, was held on 8 November 2024.

The Council is delivering an electric vehicle home-charging trial to help accelerate the uptake of electric vehicles (EVs) across the town.

Six new enforcement officers with an environmental focus have taken to the streets of Hartlepool to tackle anti-social behaviour such as fly-tipping, dog fouling and litter. The additional full-time staff are being funded by the UK Government through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) administered by Tees Valley Combined Authority.

## SECTION 1 : Narrative Report

Five Multi Agency “weeks of action” have taken place in Foggy Furze, Burn Valley, Victoria Ward, Throston and the Headland. Across these weeks the Council have worked with partners to tackle a range of issues in the wards including anti-social behaviour, littering, dog fouling, removal of untaxed vehicles and fly-tipping.

The appointments system at the Household Waste Recycling Centre ended in September removing the requirement for residents to book online before visiting the facility.

A new Housing Allocation Policy for Hartlepool was agreed in September 2024. The Policy aims to make best use of the social housing stock that is available in Hartlepool and be flexible to adapt to changing demands.

The Council has, in recent years, developed an ambitious Capital Programme, ensuring investment in existing and new assets within the Borough, to support delivery of the priorities set out in the Council Plan. The Capital Programme for 2025/26 – 2027/28 was agreed by Council in February 2025.

£600,000 restoration work on Hartlepool’s Stranton Grange Crematorium Chapels has been delivered tackling the increasing problem of damp in the two 100-year-old chapels as well as significantly improving the appearance of the chapels themselves.

The Council was awarded over £300,000 from the Department for Culture, Media and Sport’s Museum Estate and Development (MEND) Fund for urgent repairs to the clock tower of Hartlepool Art Gallery. The investment will be part of a wider strategic plan to develop the Art Gallery and reopen the tower to the public.

The Council has been awarded £631,000 by the National Lottery Heritage Fund to take the Tides of Change project into the development phase. The project aims to transform the visitor experience at the Museum of Hartlepool and paddle steamer Wingfield Castle turning the two attractions into an exciting destination for visitors and residents, telling the story of Hartlepool in a fresh, engaging way, accessible to everyone.

The Wesley Chapel renovation, part funded by the Hartlepool Town Deal, continues to make progress and work on the internal fit-out began in January 2025.

The Waterfront Connectivity Phase Two project, part of the Hartlepool Town Deal, began in March. The project will see improvements to footpaths, cycling routes/facilities, streetlighting and signage in and around Hartlepool marina and The Waterfront, and builds on the success of a pedestrian route linking Seaton Carew to Hartlepool Marina which opened in 2023.

Construction of Highlight, Hartlepool’s new flagship leisure development, has continued throughout the year with the steel frame being completed in September. Internal works are progressing and by the end of March work had begun on the internal tiling work.

### **Hartlepool will be a place that is welcoming with an inclusive and growing economy providing opportunities for all. (POTENTIAL)**

Hartlepool Creative Business Week took place Monday 20 May to Friday 24 May centred on The BIS in Whitby Street. Over the course of the week, a range of free advice and information sessions were held for creative businesses, freelancers and/or creative practitioners.

Hartlepool Art Gallery hosted the British Museum Touring Exhibition ‘Drawing attention: emerging artists in dialogue’ between Saturday 18 May and Saturday 24 August – giving visitors the chance to discover some of the most compelling up-and-coming names in the field of contemporary drawing, displayed alongside highlights from the British Museum collection.

Hartlepool Business Week took place from 14 to 18 October with a number of sessions held across the week, mainly at The BIS in Whitby Street – the Council’s award-winning centre for creative start-ups. Topics covered included what you need to know to become self-employed, doing business with Hartlepool Borough Council, bid writing, how to access financial support to grow your business, how to maximise the global potential of your business and trade successfully overseas and recruiting and developing a successful workforce.

The Health and Social Care Academy (HSCA) at the University Hospital of Hartlepool was officially launched in September 2024. One of five of Hartlepool Borough Council’s Town Deal transformation projects £1.25m in funding was secured back in 2022 to support its development at North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust. The new academy has a dedicated academy manager and clinical training team. It includes a bespoke ‘at home’ simulation suite, an immersive suite, a four-bed training bay, ICT suite, trainee common room and several flexible training and classrooms.

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Hartlepool Restaurant Week organised by the Economic Growth Team took place from 27 January to 2 February with 27 businesses signed up to take part. Over 2,200 people took part in the previous Restaurant Week in October.

The Economic Growth Team launched the 'Be your own boss' campaign at the end of January to support budding entrepreneurs who dream of running their own business.

### **Hartlepool will be a place with a Council that is ambitious, fit for purpose and reflects the diversity of its community. (ORGANISATION)**

Council agreed to expand the remit of the Economic Growth and Regeneration Committee in May 2024 to include:

- Strategic procurement
- Delivery and monitoring of Capital Programme schemes
- Approval of grant-aided schemes related to economic growth and regeneration
- Skills and learning
- Culture and events
- Communications and marketing

The Council received Silver in the Supportive Social Work Employer Award category of the Social Worker of the Year Awards, a national accolade for excellence as an employer in supporting, leading and championing its social workers for both children and adults. The awards are judged by an independent panel of social workers, people with lived experience and senior figures from the world of social work.

New Workforce Equality, Diversity and Inclusion and Work Experience policies were agreed in June 2024.

A Transformation Plan for the Council was agreed in June 2024 setting out how the Council will change the way that resources are used so that we are able to continue to provide high quality services whilst responding to the difficult financial situation that we continue to face. The Plan builds on the changes that the Council has already delivered over the last 10+ years and outlines how we will continue to evolve as an organisation.

The Council maintained excellence in the Better Health at Work Award, a scheme that supports and recognises the efforts of employers addressing health and wellbeing in the workplace.

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100% of Council Children's Homes are judged as 'Good' or 'Outstanding' by Ofsted	95.6% of adult social care providers rated as 'Good' or 'Outstanding' by the Care Quality Commission (CQC)	79.8% of employees agreed that they had regular meetings with their manager to discuss their support requirements, progress and performance and their role
94.9% of 16-17 year olds in education and training	<b>Council Performance 2024/25</b>	68.5% of employees thought that Hartlepool Borough Council cares about the wellbeing of its workforce
93.19% Council Tax collection rate (long term rate 98.5%)	97.02% Business Rates collections (long term rate 99.0%)	42,898 active self-online accounts
35.2% of Council spend to local suppliers	356 Council homes for social rent	293,237 digital transactions made

### **RISK MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS**

Our corporate approach to risk management aims to ensure that we have robust processes in place to support the delivery of our strategic priorities, as established within our Council Plan, and our service aims. The Council agreed our current Risk Management Framework on 24 June 2019. The Framework has simplified the Council's approach, provided further clarity to officers about how risk should be considered within the Council and demonstrates the added value of appropriate risk management. A Strategic Risk Register has been identified at a corporate level within the performance management framework and changes are reported to Elected Members regularly through the monitoring of the Council Plan.

Using a proactive approach we identify the risks to the delivery of our strategic priorities and service aims. Our Strategic Risk Register articulates each individual risk, quantifies its likelihood and potential impact and names the senior officer who owns the risk. We regularly review our risks to provide assurance that our management of risk is effective.

Our Strategic Risk Register is reviewed regularly and currently includes risks relating, for example, to finance, ICT, safeguarding and health and safety. Risks are scored in the context of their existing controls, and the purpose of the risk management approach is to ensure early intervention and regular scrutiny in order to ensure that risks are controlled, allowing the Council to manage impacts and deliver opportunities and effective services and service change by making informed decisions.

Our risk management activity can broadly be described at three levels;

- Executive Leadership Team (ELT) is responsible for ensuring the effective management of risks in the Strategic Risk Register.
- Departments maintain their own risk registers covering the delivery of their services and major projects.
- Services within Departments maintain their own operational risk registers.

It is our aim to ensure consistent and effective risk management is embedded throughout the organisation with officers from across the Council receiving appropriate training in risk management and support from Departmental Risk Management Lead Officers. Collectively, risk management at all levels of our organisation allows us to manage the operational and strategic risks which affect our ability to deliver services and our strategic priorities over the short, medium and long term.

Our risk profile is constantly evolving. Over recent years there has been a climate of increased and sustained pressure in terms of austerity, demographic changes and increased expectations on public services resulting in an imperative to deliver more with less.

Consequently, our strategic focus has been on driving growth and transformation and reforming public services. We have had to innovate in order to seize opportunities to develop new ways of working, new delivery models and efficiencies; all of these have been essential in transforming the Council and enabling us to respond positively in a climate of austerity. Systematic risk assessment and risk management is core to both the identification and delivery of opportunities.

The Council's Risk Management Framework is reviewed annually, and considered as required by Audit and Governance Committee and Finance and Policy Committee and endorsed and owned by ELT.

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### **FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE 2024/25**

The Council spends money on a wide range of services to help support the people of Hartlepool to achieve and enjoy a better quality of life. This spending can be General Fund revenue or Housing Revenue Account spending which relates to day to day running costs such as staffing, purchasing goods / services from third parties and utilities; or Capital spending on assets which are of benefit to residents over a longer period, such as buildings, operational vehicles and economic regeneration.

The following sections provide more detail in relation to these areas.

#### **General Fund 2024/25 – Approved Budget**

The Council prepared and approved a Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) covering the period to 2026/27. This strategy reflected the decision to increase Core Council Tax in 2024/25 by 0.99% and the Adult Social Care precept by 2%. To support this plan the Council used reserves of £3.2m to underpin the budget in 2024/25 and recognised this deferred a budget deficit to be addressed in 2025/26 and subsequent years. By taking this phased approach the Council avoided significant service cuts being made earlier than potentially necessary.

The detailed 2024/25 budget decisions were made in early February 2024, then finalised by Council later that month when the final level of Government funding for 2024/25 was confirmed.

The budget shortfall to be addressed totalled £13.1m for 2024/25, which reflected a higher level of forecast inflation and continuing pressures in Children’s Social Care. This was addressed through a combination of measures, including the above noted Council tax increase:

• Savings	£1.9m
• Council Tax and ASC precept (including base increase)	£2.3m
• Business Rates	£1.7m
• Increase in Government Funding	£3.8m
• One-off funding	£0.2m
• Reserves	£3.2m

As highlighted above, reserves were required to balance the 2024/25 budget, with £3.2m earmarked for use from the Budget Support Fund.

#### **General Fund 2024/25 – Actual Outturn**

The 2024/25 financial year was extremely challenging for the Council. During the year the Council continued to feel the impact of recent spikes in general inflation and significant demand and cost pressures within Children’s Social Care.

In response to the emerging forecast overspend reported early in the year, non-essential spending restrictions were again introduced. These actions were successful in that the outturn position improved by the end of the financial year, although the underlying significant pressures within Children’s Social Care remained.

During the year a pay award of £1,290 per employee was agreed, this was below that budgeted for when setting the 2024/25 budget, therefore providing an in-year saving of £1.0m to offset pressures elsewhere.

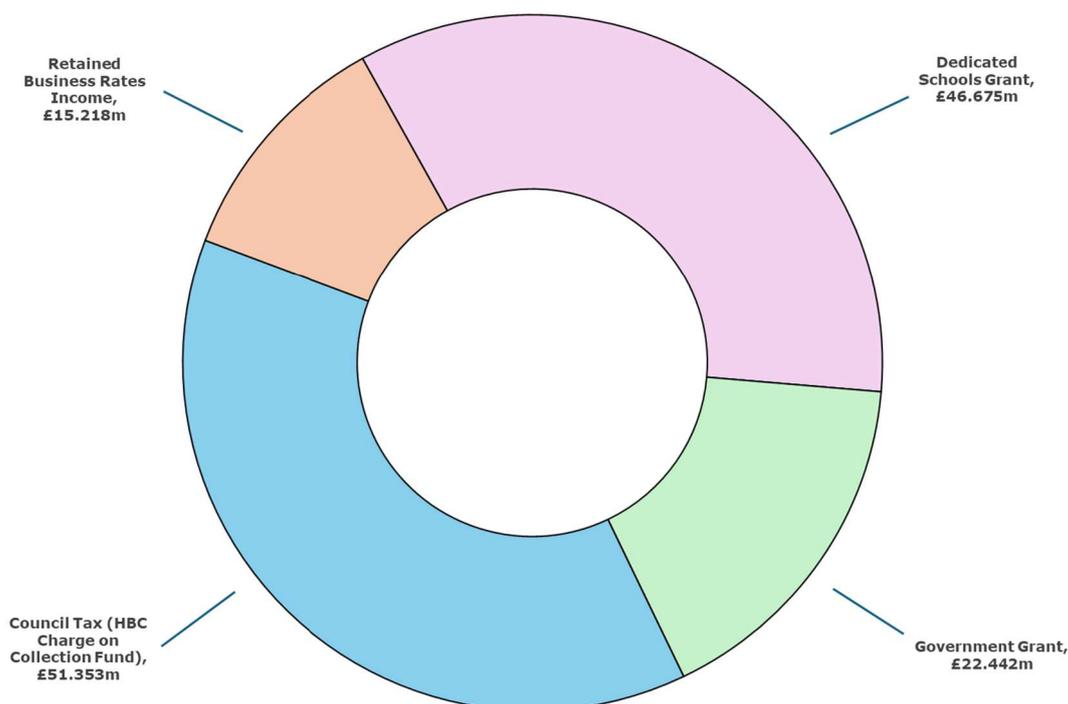
The Council also benefited from increased treasury investment returns and a business rates levy distribution from government, which further supported the improvement.

The outturn position is summarised in the table overleaf and shows a required additional financial contribution from the Budget Support Fund of £0.256m.

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	2024/25 Approved Budget £000	2024/25 Actual Expenditure / (Income) £000	2024/25 Variance Adverse / (Favourable) £000
<b>Departmental Expenditure</b>			
Adult & Community Based Services	42,630	43,052	422
Children's & Joint Commissioning	34,955	41,514	6,559
Development, Neighbourhoods & Regulatory Services	22,321	21,029	(1,292)
Finance, IT and Digital	4,281	3,869	(412)
Legal, Governance and HR	2,133	1,973	(160)
Dedicated Schools Grant Related Expenditure	46,675	46,675	-
<b>Total Departmental Position</b>	<b>152,995</b>	<b>158,112</b>	<b>5,117</b>
Non Departmental Expenditure	(17,307)	(21,929)	(4,622)
Business Rates Levy Distribution	-	(239)	(239)
Housing Revenue Account	-	-	-
<b>Final Outturn</b>	<b>135,688</b>	<b>135,944</b>	<b>256</b>

The Council's budget of £135.688m, including the Dedicated Schools Grant of £46.675m, was funded from the following sources:



### Housing Revenue Account (HRA)

This is a separate account and contains the costs of owning and maintaining properties which are let to tenants. These costs are funded from rent paid by tenants.

The HRA shows the in-year economic cost of providing housing services in accordance with generally accepted accounting practices, rather than the amount to be funded from rents and Government grants. Authorities charge rents to cover expenditure in accordance with the legislative framework; this may be different from the accounting cost. The increase or decrease in the year, on the basis of which rents are raised is shown in the Movement on the HRA Statement.

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The HRA budgeted for a £0.028m surplus for the 2024/25 financial year. The net nil actual position at year end, results in a £0.028m adverse variance when compared to budget.

The HRA faced a number of pressures during 2024/25, in particular the continued increase in maintenance costs in relation to damp and mould, a shortfall in rental income from the Resettlement Accommodation scheme, due to the properties coming online later than anticipated and increased interest payable upon updating the Capital Financing Requirement (CFR). These overspends were offset through a combination of favourable variances including income due from an insurance claim and lower council tax charges due to reduced void rates. In addition, in order to mitigate the in-year pressures, a lower voluntary contribution to the Major Repairs Reserve was made, which offset the overspend, however it meant that there was no surplus available to contribute to the reserve.

The HRA reserve remains at £0.500m. As at 31 March 2025 the HRA stock is 356 properties. Two Right-to-Buy sales were processed during the year.

### Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG)

The DSG is a ring-fenced grant and can only be applied to meet expenditure properly included in the Schools Budget, as defined in the School and Early Years Finance (England) Regulations 2025. The Schools Budget includes elements for a range of educational services provided on an authority-wide basis and for the Individual Schools Budget, which is divided into a budget share for each maintained school.

The DSG had a brought forward deficit balance of £1.589m as at 1 April 2024.

The 2024/25 in-year overspend on the DSG totalled £3.343m. The overspend was as a result of significant increase in expenditure in the high needs block element of activity.

Owing to this deficit position the Council has produced a DSG Management Plan, which has been agreed with the Department for Education. The plan will continue to be updated and monitored.

The DSG cumulative deficit balance totalled £4.932m as at 31 March 2025.

Accounting regulations covering the period up to 31 March 2026 do not allow this balance to be included in the General Fund. In accordance with accounting regulations this balance was transferred to the Dedicated Schools Grant Adjustment Account which is an unusable reserve.

### Pooled Budgets - Better Care Fund

The Better Care Fund (BCF) has been established by the Government to support the introduction of a fully integrated health and social care system. Section 75 of the National Health Service Act 2006 gives powers to Local Authorities and Integrated Care Boards (ICBs) to establish and maintain pooled budgets to support the outcomes of the BCF. The Council has entered into a pooled budget arrangement with NHS North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board. Further details are provided in Note 45.

### Capital Expenditure

Capital expenditure relates to spend on the purchase of, or improvement of assets that have a long-term value to the Council and our residents, such as highways and buildings.

In 2024/25 the Council had budgeted capital expenditure of £106.030m (including HRA). Reprofiling of expenditure and cost variations of £60.999m were reported to members during the financial year. Of the remaining £45.031m forecast to be spent, actual capital programme expenditure incurred totalled £37.827m. Recognition of Right-of-Use assets totalling £0.557m was also capitalised during 2024/25. A breakdown of the total £38.384m by expenditure type and financing source is detailed below.

	<u>£000</u>	<u>%</u>
<b>Expenditure</b>		
Regeneration and Other Schemes	26,707	70
Highway Maintenance & Construction	586	2
Housing Investment Programme	4,192	11
School Improvements	2,809	7
Disabled Facility Grant	1,620	4
Vehicle Purchase	2,470	6
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>38,384</b>	<b>100</b>

## SECTION 1 : Narrative Report

	<u>£000</u>	<u>%</u>
<b>Capital Financing</b>		
Capital Grant	28,497	74
Borrowing	5,277	14
Direct Revenue Funding	4,095	11
Capital Funding Reserves	391	1
Capital Receipts	124	-
<b>Total Capital Financing</b>	<b>38,384</b>	<b>100</b>

The rephasing predominantly reflects the profile of expenditure in relation to major regeneration schemes that are to be completed over multiple financial years.

### Capital Receipts

The Council received gross receipts of £0.436m in 2024/25 from the sale of assets.

### FINANCIAL OUTLOOK – GENERAL FUND 2025/26 TO 2027/28

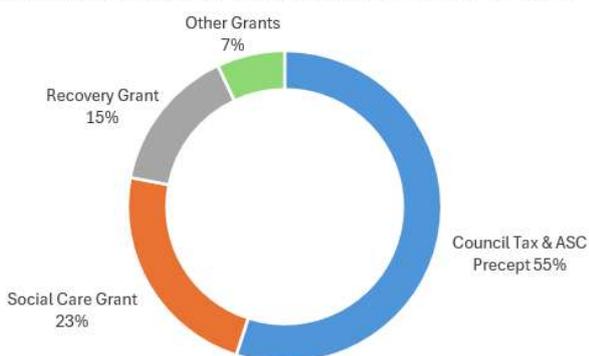
The Government provided a one-year grant settlement for 2025/26, which is the seventh successive one-year settlement.

The settlement provided an increase in core spending power (the Government's measure of resources available for local services) of £3.9 billion or a 6.0% increase in spending power nationally for 2025/26. Of this amount Government figures forecast 55% (£2.158 billion) coming from Council Tax and the Adult Social Care (ASC) precept. This underlines the continued reliance of the current funding system on Council Tax and the ASC precept to fund local services.

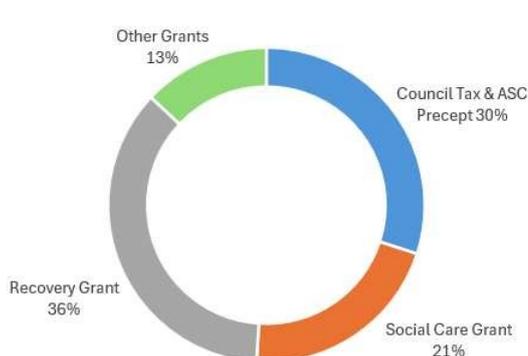
The grant formula benefitted Hartlepool, which meant a smaller proportion of the increase in core spending power relied on Council Tax and the ASC precept. The new government's Policy Statement which accompanied the funding settlement confirmed that the additional national resource into local government, was being distributed via existing grants but also via the creation of new grants namely the 'Recovery Grant' and 'Children's Social Care Prevention Grant'. The Recovery Grant noted as being highly targeted towards those authorities with the highest levels of deprivation, benefitting Hartlepool and similar councils.

### Comparison of changes in National and Hartlepool Core Spending Power increase for 2025/26

National increase in Core Spending Power 2025/26



Hartlepool increase in Core Spending Power 2025/26



Subsequent to the provisional local government finance settlement issued by government in December 2024, a further £522m was announced and allocated to councils in relation to the Employer National Insurance Contributions Grant and an increase in the Children's Social Care Prevention Grant, Hartlepool's increase in funding allocations, beyond initial estimates, totalled £0.161m.

Inflationary pressures in the sector continue to have a significant impact on the cost of services, including the cost of Adult and Children's Social Care Services provided by external providers, with increases in the National Living Wage and Employer National Insurance Contributions, being notable factors. Significant additional resources of £6.9m were directed into Children's Social Care, to meet demand and inflationary pressures.

## SECTION 1 : Narrative Report

In total the Council faced a budget pressure of £19.4m when setting the 2025/26 budget, which was ultimately funded from:

• Increase in Government Funding	£10.0m
• Savings	£2.8m
• Council Tax and ASC precept (including base increase)	£4.0m
• Increase in Business Rates	£0.9m
• One-off funding	£0.7m
• Reserves	£1.0m

The Council continues to face financial pressures during 2025/26, the position will continue to be closely monitored, and proactively managed during the financial year. The 2025/26 budget and the MTFS are reliant on delivering both the approved savings plans, and over the medium-term, the Council's Transformation Plan. A number of transformation projects have now commenced, aligned to the following transformation principles which will underpin all of our transformation activities:

- **Commissioning and Procurement** – being efficient and commercially minded with a consistent approach across the Council.
- **Communications and Marketing** – ensuring clear and consistent messaging and branding from the Council. Actively promoting the Council and Hartlepool to residents, visitors and potential investors.
- **Data** – making the best use of available data to inform decisions and future service delivery. Ensuring that all decisions are based on appropriate data and evidence.
- **Digital** – promoting customer self-service through efficient and IT / Digital enabled processes. Giving employees access to digital infrastructure that will enable more efficient and effective service delivery and decision making. Utilising Artificial Intelligence in a controlled and responsible manner.
- **Employees / Organisational Culture** – ensuring employees are skilled and empowered to adapt and excel as the organisation evolves. Demonstrating our organisational values and behaviours in all that we do.
- **Equality, Diversity and Inclusion** – respecting and valuing everyone's differences and needs. Seeking to address inequalities including poverty and socio-economic disadvantage.
- **Governance** – being a lean organisation with appropriate delegations in place allowing members to set the strategic direction and officers the space and freedom to enact. Ensuring an appropriate Performance Assurance Framework is in place that provides assurance at all levels of the organisation.
- **Income Generation** – ensuring we have a consistent and coherent policy on fees and charges. Undertaking trading activity where it is appropriate, adds value and covers costs. Ensuring that where commercial activity is considered that this is open, transparent and supported by a robust business plan.
- **Net Zero** – ensuring we take all available opportunities to reduce emissions and our carbon footprint.
- **Property / Assets** – making efficient use of council land and property. This will include embedding hybrid working and reducing the need for physical office space. Also, reducing the carbon impact of Council activities.
- **Residents** - enabling residents to live independent lives through empowerment and signposting. Ensuring resident engagement and building trust between the Council and its community.
- **Resources** - making better use of resources / reducing financial costs.

Positively, from a government funding perspective, the Local Government Finance Policy Statement confirmed the Government's commitment to a full package of funding reforms for 2026/27, and that this will be the start of a multi-year settlement period. It was noted that, the funding reforms will build on the previous government's Fair Funding Review, and there will also be a full business rates baseline reset. Consultations on the reforms have now commenced and will continue during 2025.

The above reforms, although welcome currently make financial planning difficult. The Council's MTFS, published February 2025, presented a balanced budget over the 3 years to 2027/28. This position is reliant upon a number of assumptions and delivery of the savings and transformation plans. The position will continue to be reviewed and updated as the various aspects become clearer, in particular the impact of the Local Government funding reforms.

### **BORROWING FACILITIES AND INVESTMENT STRATEGY**

The Council's arrangements for borrowing accord with the approved Treasury Management Strategy, which was drawn up to comply with the Code of Practice for Treasury Management in Local Authorities published by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy.

The Council continues to keep under review the most opportune approach to borrowing. Given the increase in interest rates experienced since 2022, no new long term borrowing has been entered into. The position will be kept under

## **SECTION 1 : Narrative Report**

review, with the potential for shorter term borrowing options if these are determined to be most cost effective, when the need to borrow arises, pending a reduction in longer term rates.

The increase in interest rates also presented the Council with an opportunity to maximise investment returns over the short to medium term. Detailed cash flow modelling has allowed investments to be placed for a longer time period (up to a year) with a number of institutions, so as to achieve the higher rates of investment interest now available. This pro-active approach has enabled the Council to generate investment returns, making a significant one-off contribution to the MTFS.

### **PENSIONS**

The Council has accounted for retirement benefits according to International Financial Reporting Standard (IFRS) IAS 19. In the accounts as at 31 March 2025 there was a deficit on the Pensions Reserve of £6.938m (a deficit of £7.770m in 2023/24). The net Pensions Asset has changed mainly owing to actuarial gains on financial assumptions.

Details of the 2024/25 asset values, funded and un-funded obligations, interest income and cost, cashflows, remeasurements and the asset ceiling have all been calculated by the Council's actuary, Hymans Robertson LLP, with the detail provided in Notes 41 and 42 to the Statement of Accounts. Immediately following these valuations as at 31 March 2025, the market experienced a period of significant volatility. The actuary has therefore advised that the Council disclose that the financial market conditions (on which these accounting assumptions are based) and asset values may have changed materially since the reporting date.

A separate Pension Fund valuation is carried out every three years to determine the Council's contribution rate. Further information is included in Notes 41 and 42 to the Statement of Accounts.

### **INTERNATIONAL FINANCIAL REPORTING STANDARD 16 (IFRS 16) – LEASES**

The Council adopted IFRS 16 (Leases) with effect from 1 April 2024. The main impact of the requirements of IFRS 16 is that, for some arrangements previously accounted for as an operating lease, a Right-of-Use asset and a lease liability are now included on the Balance Sheet. The effect of this has been to increase the Balance Sheet assets by £0.557m as at 1 April 2024 with an equal increase in lease liabilities.

### **STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS**

The core financial statements comprise of:

- The Movement in Reserves Statement
- The Comprehensive Income & Expenditure Statement
- The Balance Sheet
- The Statement of Cash Flows

A brief explanation of their purpose precedes each statement.

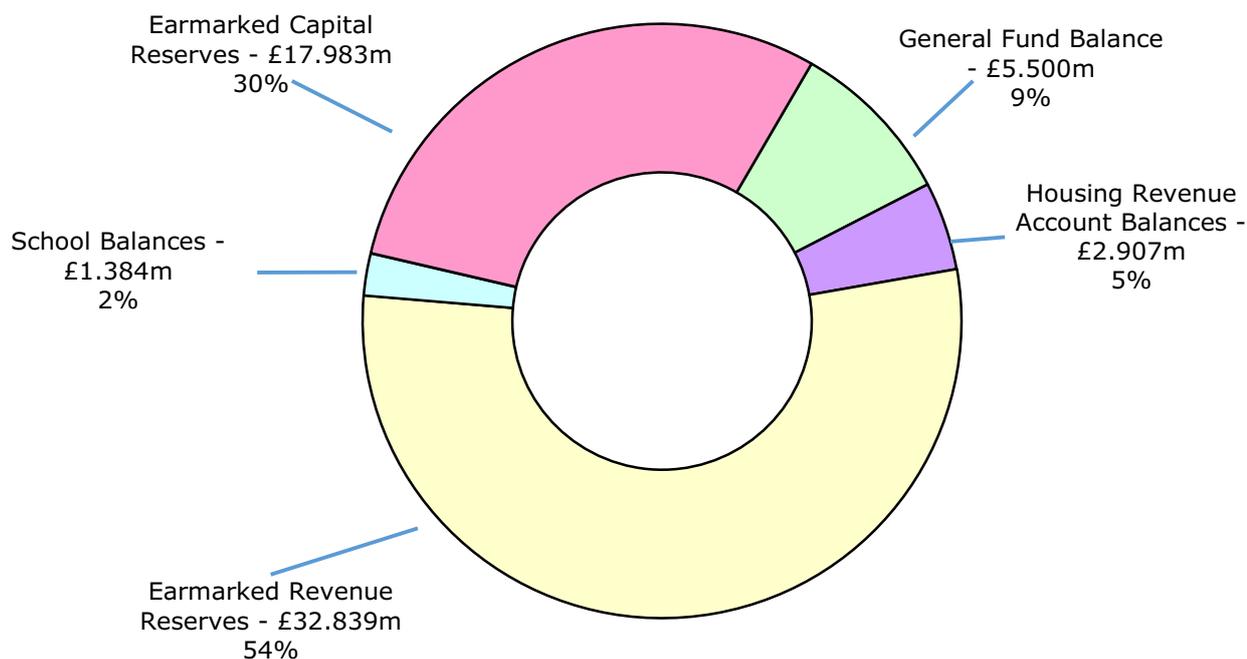
The major movements on the Balance Sheet are as follows:

- Property, Plant and Equipment, Investment Properties and Heritage Assets – the Council's total fixed assets have increased by £22.165m which comprises expenditure on Highlight, upwards revaluations of existing assets, less depreciation and disposals.
- Short Term Investments – totalled £36.199m as at 31 March 2025 (£43.873m as 31 March 2024). The decrease mainly relates to a reduction in cash available to invest arising from use of reserves to support the revenue budget and delayed borrowings to finance capital programme expenditure.
- Short Term Creditors – totalled £34.984m as at 31 March 2025 (£28.393m as 31 March 2024). The increase mainly relates to accruals for Residential and Homecare and the waterfront infrastructure capital works.
- At the 31 March 2025 the Authority had usable reserves of £60.613m (£69.978m at 31 March 2024).

Full details of the Council's usable reserves are provided in Note 6 and include the following key reserves:

## SECTION 1 : Narrative Report

### Analysis of Usable Reserves 31/03/25 - Total £60.613m



### Collection Fund

The Collection Fund is a statutory fund, separate from the General Fund of the Council, which accounts independently for transactions relating to Council Tax and Non Domestic Rates (NDR). The Fund is operated and reported on under the same accounting policies as Hartlepool Borough Council.

The total Council Tax charge for the year was £2,377.61 (£2,304.40 in 2023/24) for Band D properties, excluding parish precepts where these applied. This comprised £1,984.42 for the Council's own services, £303.73 for the Police and Crime Commissioner and £89.46 for Cleveland Fire Authority. Each Authority determined its own tax and made a precept on the Collection Fund.

The Council Tax for the Council's services was determined on the basis of an equated number of 26,173 Band D properties. When setting the charge a 1.5% allowance for non-collection was made. The Council Tax Base for the year was 25,780.

Further details on the income and expenditure of the Fund are shown in the Collection Fund notes.

	<u>£000</u>	<u>%</u>
<b>Expenditure</b>		
Hartlepool Council Precept	51,229	54
Police and Crime Commissioner Precept	7,830	8
Cleveland Fire Authority Precept	2,306	3
Central Government's Share NNDR	15,528	16
Hartlepool Council NNDR Precept	15,218	16
Cleveland Fire Authority NNDR Precept	311	-
Other	3,012	3
	<b>95,434</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Income</b>		
Council Tax	62,922	66
NNDR from Rate Payers	32,435	34
Other (Including contribution to previous year's deficit)	170	-
	<b>95,527</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Net Deficit / (Surplus) in Year</b>	<b>(93)</b>	

## SECTION 1 : Narrative Report

### ACCOUNTING POLICIES

The accounting policies adopted by the Council comply, except where specific reference is made, with the relevant recommended accounting practice.

The Council's policies are explained fully in the Statement of Accounting Policies.

### INSPECTION OF ACCOUNTS

Members of the public have a statutory right to inspect the accounts before the audit is completed, question the auditor and make objections at audit. The availability of the accounts for inspection was advertised on the Council's website and in relation to the 2024/25 financial year the inspection period is 30 June 2025 to 8 August 2025.



James Magog  
Director of Finance, IT and Digital  
Date: 24 February 2026

## SECTION 2 : Statement of Responsibilities for the Statement of Accounts

### The Council's Responsibilities

The Council is required to:

- make arrangements for the proper administration of its financial affairs and to secure that one of its officers has the responsibility for the administration of those affairs. In this Council, that officer is the Director of Finance, IT and Digital;
- manage its affairs to secure economic, efficient and effective use of resources and safeguard its assets; and
- approve the Statement of Accounts.

I confirm that the accounts set out in this document were approved by the Audit and Governance Committee at the meeting held on 24 February 2026.

Chair of Audit and Governance Committee

Date: 24 February 2026

### The Director of Finance, IT and Digital Responsibilities

The Director of Finance, IT and Digital is responsible for the preparation of the Council's Statement of Accounts in accordance with proper practices as set out in the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom ('the Code').

In preparing this Statement of Accounts, the Director of Finance, IT and Digital has:

- selected suitable accounting policies, and then applied them consistently;
- made judgements and estimates that were reasonable and prudent; and
- complied with the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting.

The Director of Finance, IT and Digital has also:

- kept proper accounting records which were up-to-date; and
- taken reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

### Certification of the Accounts by the Director of Finance, IT and Digital

In accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, I certify that Section 1 to 3 of the Financial Report 2024/25, which includes the Statement of Accounts, gives a true and fair view of the financial position of Hartlepool Borough Council at the accounting date and its income and expenditure for the year ended 31 March 2025.



James Magog CPFA

Director of Finance, IT and Digital

Date: 24 February 2026

## SECTION 3 : Statement of Accounts

### Movement in Reserves Statement for the year ended 31 March 2025

The statement shows the movement in year on the different reserves held by the Authority, analysed into 'usable reserves' (i.e. those that can be applied to fund expenditure or reduce local taxation) and other reserves. The Surplus or (Deficit) on the Provision of Services line shows the true economic cost of providing the Authority's services, more details of which are shown in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement. These are different from the statutory amounts required to be charged to the General Fund Balance for council tax setting purposes. The Net Increase / Decrease before Transfers to Earmarked Reserves line shows the statutory General Fund Balance before any discretionary transfers to or from earmarked reserves undertaken by the Authority.

	General Fund Balance	Earmarked Reserves	Housing Revenue Account	Major Repairs Reserve	Capital Receipts Reserve	Capital Grants Unapplied	Total Usable Reserves	Unusable Reserves	Total Reserves
	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s
<b>Balance at 31 March 2023 carried forward</b>	4,417	47,795	500	1,764	1,291	6,706	62,473	267,215	329,688
<b><u>Movement in reserves during 2023/24</u></b>									
Surplus or (deficit) on provision of services	(5,244)	-	(1,885)	-	-	-	(7,129)	-	(7,129)
Other Comprehensive Income and Expenditure	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	(76,163)	(76,163)
<b>Total Comprehensive Income and Expenditure</b>	(5,244)	-	(1,885)	-	-	-	(7,129)	(76,163)	(83,292)
Adjustments between accounting basis & funding basis under regulations (note 5)	3,906	(25)	2,080	208	(1,042)	9,506	14,633	(14,633)	-
<b>Net Increase/(Decrease) before Transfers to Earmarked Reserves</b>	(1,338)	(25)	195	208	(1,042)	9,506	7,504	(90,796)	(83,292)
Transfers to/(from) Earmarked Reserves	2,421	(2,421)	(195)	195	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Increase/(Decrease) in Year</b>	1,083	(2,446)	-	403	(1,042)	9,506	7,504	(90,796)	(83,292)
<b>Balance at 31 March 2024 carried forward</b>	5,501	45,349	500	2,167	249	16,212	69,977	176,417	246,396
<b><u>Movement in reserves during 2024/25</u></b>									
Surplus or (deficit) on provision of services	1,113	-	(325)	-	-	-	788	-	788
Other Comprehensive Income and Expenditure	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	8,705	8,705
<b>Total Comprehensive Income and Expenditure</b>	1,113	-	(325)	-	-	-	788	8,705	9,493
Adjustments between accounting basis & funding basis under regulations (note 5)	(2,566)	(3,935)	519	48	312	(4,532)	(10,154)	10,154	-
<b>Net Increase/(Decrease) before Transfers to Earmarked Reserves</b>	(1,453)	(3,935)	194	48	312	(4,532)	(9,366)	18,859	9,493
Transfers to/(from) Earmarked Reserves	1,452	(1,450)	(194)	192	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Increase/(Decrease) in Year</b>	(1)	(5,385)	-	240	312	(4,532)	(9,366)	18,859	9,493
<b>Balance at 31 March 2025 carried forward</b>	5,500	39,965	500	2,407	561	11,680	60,613	195,276	255,889

For detail on Usable and Unusable Reserves see Note 6 and Note 29.

## SECTION 3 : Statement of Accounts

### Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement for the year ended 31 March 2025

This statement shows the economic cost in the year of providing services in accordance with International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS), rather than the amount to be funded from taxation. Authorities raise taxation to cover expenditure in accordance with regulations; this may be different from the accounting cost. The taxation position is shown in the Movement in Reserves Statement.

2023/24			2024/25				
£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s		
Expenditure	Income	Net	Expenditure	Income	Net	Note	
91,043	(47,564)	43,479	Adult and Community Based Services	93,277	(45,916)	<b>47,361</b>	7
113,796	(77,331)	36,465	Children's and Joint Commissioning	124,025	(83,889)	<b>40,136</b>	7
16,684	(17,639)	(955)	Corporate	40,572	(45,443)	<b>(4,871)</b>	7
46,492	(19,920)	26,572	Development, Neighbourhood and Regulatory	43,322	(19,898)	<b>23,424</b>	7
32,661	(27,316)	5,345	Finance, IT and Digital	7,808	(2,374)	<b>5,434</b>	7
2,604	(182)	2,422	Legal, Governance and HR	2,772	(557)	<b>2,215</b>	7
3,305	(1,742)	1,563	HRA	1,827	(1,944)	<b>(117)</b>	
306,585	(191,694)	114,891	<b>Cost of Services</b>	<b>313,603</b>	<b>(200,021)</b>	<b>113,582</b>	
15,075	(800)	14,275	Other Operating Expenditure	5,934	(482)	<b>5,452</b>	8
27,386	(30,923)	(3,537)	Financing and Investment Income and Expenditure	34,018	(34,011)	<b>7</b>	9
-	(118,500)	(118,500)	Taxation and Non-Specific Grant Income	-	(119,829)	<b>(119,829)</b>	10
349,046	(341,917)	7,129	<b>(Surplus) / Deficit on Provision of Services</b>	<b>353,555</b>	<b>(354,343)</b>	<b>(788)</b>	
		(7,441)	(Surplus) / Deficit on Revaluation of Property, Plant and Equipment			(5,543)	29 Table 1
		83,604	Remeasurement of net defined benefit liability / (asset)			(3,162)	29 Table 3
		76,163	<b>Other Comprehensive Income and Expenditure</b>			<b>(8,705)</b>	
		83,292	<b>Total Comprehensive Income and Expenditure</b>			<b>(9,493)</b>	

## SECTION 3 : Statement of Accounts

### Balance Sheet as at 31 March 2025

The Balance Sheet shows the value of the assets and liabilities at 31 March 2025. The net assets of the Council (assets less liabilities) are matched by the reserves held by the Council. Reserves are classified in two categories. The first category of reserves are usable reserves, i.e. those reserves that the Council may use to provide services, subject to the need to maintain a prudent level of reserves and any statutory limitations on their use (for example the Capital Receipts Reserve that may only be used to fund capital expenditure or repay debt). The second category of reserves are those that the Council is not able to use to provide services. This category of reserve includes reserves that hold unrealised gains and losses (for example the Revaluation Reserve), where amounts would only become available to provide services if the assets are sold; and reserves that hold timing differences shown in the Movement in Reserves Statement line 'Adjustments between accounting basis and funding basis under regulations.'

31 March 2024 £000s		31 March 2025 £000s	Note
271,936	Property, Plant & Equipment	293,435	14
18,810	Heritage Assets	19,366	18
9,515	Investment Property	9,625	19
<u>3,016</u>	Long Term Debtors	<u>2,837</u>	20
303,278	<b>Long Term Assets</b>	<b>325,263</b>	
568	Inventories	576	-
40,046	Short Term Debtors	39,891	22
9,915	Cash & Cash Equivalents	8,491	24
<u>43,873</u>	Short Term Investments	<u>36,199</u>	34
94,401	<b>Current Assets</b>	<b>85,157</b>	
(6,273)	Bank Overdraft	(2,828)	24
(2,589)	Provisions	(2,597)	25
(28,393)	Short Term Creditors	(34,984)	26
(7,829)	Capital Grants Receipts in Advance	(9,710)	27
(2,701)	Revenue Grant Receipts in Advance	(2,221)	27
<u>(1,418)</u>	Short Term Borrowing	<u>(1,639)</u>	34
(49,203)	<b>Current Liabilities</b>	<b>(53,979)</b>	
(1,163)	Provisions	(1,131)	25
(9,387)	Capital Grants Receipts in Advance	(9,679)	27
(8,693)	Other Long Term Liabilities	(8,278)	28
<u>(82,837)</u>	Long Term Borrowing	<u>(81,464)</u>	34
(102,080)	<b>Long Term Liabilities</b>	<b>(100,552)</b>	
<u>246,396</u>	<b>Net Assets</b>	<b>255,889</b>	
69,978	Usable Reserves	60,613	6
176,417	Unusable Reserves	195,276	29
<u>246,396</u>	<b>Total Reserves</b>	<b>255,889</b>	

## SECTION 3 : Statement of Accounts

### Statement Of Cash Flows For The Year Ended 31 March 2025

The Cash Flow Statement shows the changes in cash and cash equivalents of the Council during the reporting period. The statement shows how the Council generates and uses cash and cash equivalents by classifying cash flows as operating, investing and financing activities. The amount of net cash flows arising from operating activities is a key indicator of the extent to which the operations of the Council are funded by way of taxation and grant income or from the recipients of services provided by the Council. Investing activities represent the extent to which cash outflows have been made for resources which are intended to contribute to the Council's future service delivery. Cash flows arising from financing activities are useful in predicting claims on future cash flows by providers of capital (i.e. borrowing) to the Council.

2023/24 £000s		2024/25 £000s	Note
(7,129)	Net Surplus / (Deficit) on the Provision of Services	788	
28,226	Adjustments to Net Surplus / (Deficit) on the Provision of Services for Non-cash Movements	25,044	37
(23,594)	Adjustments for items included in the Net Surplus / (Deficit) on the Provision of Services that are Investing and Financing Activities	(16,660)	38
(2,497)	<b>Net Cash (Outflow) / Inflow from Operating Activities</b>	9,172	
13,006	<b>Investing Activities</b>	(5,714)	39
(11,356)	<b>Financing Activities</b>	(1,437)	40
(847)	Net Increase / (Decrease) in Cash and Cash Equivalents	2,021	
4,489	Cash and Cash Equivalents at the beginning of the reporting period	3,642	
<u>3,642</u>	<b>Cash and Cash Equivalents at the end of the reporting period</b>	<u>5,663</u>	24

## SECTION 3 : Statement of Accounts

### Note 1: Accounting Standards that have been issued but have not yet been adopted

The Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom (the Code) requires the disclosure of information relating to the expected impact of an accounting change that will be required by a new standard which has been issued but is yet to be adopted by the 2024/25 Code. The Code also requires that changes in accounting policy are to be applied retrospectively unless transitional arrangements are specified, this would, therefore result in an impact on disclosures spanning two financial years.

Accounting changes that are introduced by the 2025/26 Code are:

- IAS 21 The Effects of Changes in Foreign Exchange Rate (lack of Exchangeability) issued in August 2023. The amendments to IAS 21 clarify how an entity should assess whether a currency is exchangeable and how it should determine a spot exchange rate when exchangeability is lacking, as well as require the disclosure of information that enables users of financial statements to understand the impact of a currency not being exchangeable.
- IFRS 17 Insurance Contracts issued in May 2017. IFRS 17 replaces IFRS 4 and sets out principles for recognition, measurement, presentation and disclosure of insurance contracts.
- Changes to the measurement of non-investment assets within the 2025/26 Code include adaptations and interpretations of IAS 16 Property, Plant and Equipment and IAS 38 Intangible Assets.

These changes are not expected to have a material impact on the Council's financial statements.

### Note 2: Critical Judgements in applying Accounting Policies

In applying the accounting policies, the Council has had to make certain judgements about complex transactions or those involving uncertainty about future events.

The critical judgements made in the Statement of Accounts are:

- There is a high degree of uncertainty about future levels of funding for local government beyond 2025/26. However, the Council has determined that this uncertainty is not yet sufficient to provide an indication that the assets of the Council might be impaired as a result of a need to close facilities and reduce levels of service provision.
- The Council has undertaken a review of all schools in Hartlepool and their accounting treatment. There are 38 schools in Hartlepool;
  - One Foundation School which is owned by the School Governing Body.
  - Six Community Schools owned by the Council.
  - Thirty Academy Schools which the Council have transferred to the Academies under 125 year leases.
  - One Pupil Referral Unit owned by the Council.

Below is an analysis of the accounting treatment for the Schools within the Authority, indicating whether the asset is held on or off the Balance Sheet:

<b>School Type</b>	<b>Land &amp; Buildings</b>	<b>School Playing Field</b>	<b>Equipment</b>
Foundation	Off	Off	Off
Community	On	On	On
Academy	Off	Off	Off
Pupil Referral Unit	Off	Off	On

The income and expenditure of all Foundation and Community Schools is included in the Council's Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement. Academies are not included as they produce their own statutory accounts.

## SECTION 3 : Statement of Accounts

### Note 3: Assumptions Made About the Future and Other Major Sources of Estimation Uncertainty

The Statement of Accounts contains estimated figures that are based on assumptions made by the Council about the future or that are otherwise uncertain. Estimates are made taking into account historical experience, current trends and other relevant factors. However, because balances cannot be determined with certainty, actual results could be materially different from the assumptions and estimates.

The items in the Council's Balance Sheet at 31 March 2025 for which there is a significant risk of material adjustment in the forthcoming financial year are as follows:

Item	Uncertainties	Effect if Actual Results Differ from Assumptions
Property, Plant and Equipment	Assets are depreciated over useful lives that are dependent on assumptions about the level of repairs and maintenance that will be incurred in relation to individual assets. The current economic climate makes it uncertain that the Council will be able to sustain its current spending on repairs and maintenance, bringing into doubt the useful lives assigned to assets.	At 31 March 2025, the Council had land and buildings to the value of £140.708m. A 1% change in the estimation of property values would lead to a £1.407m change in the value of the Council's land and buildings. These changes to valuations would not have a direct impact on the Council's general fund, since any effect charged to the CIES would be reversed to the Council's unusable reserves.
Pensions Asset / Liability	Estimation of the net liability to pay pensions depends on a number of complex judgements relating to the discount rate used, the rate at which salaries are projected to increase, changes in retirement ages, mortality rates and expected returns on pension fund assets. A firm of consulting actuaries is engaged to provide the Council with expert advice about the assumptions to be applied.	The effect on the net pensions asset of changes in individual assumptions can be measured. The Gross Carrying Amount (GCA) of the net pension liability is £6.938m. For example, a 0.1% increase in the discount rate assumption would result in a decrease in liability of £7.511m, however, the assumptions interact in complex ways. During 2024/25, there was a reduction in liabilities of £75.312m as a result of updating financial assumptions, a reduction of £0.885m as a result of changes in demographic assumptions and a reduction of £4.665m attributable to liability experience. Actual pension rates are determined on an actuarial basis every three years. The latest valuation has determined the employer's contribution for three years from 31 March 2022. A 0.1% increase in this rate would increase the Council's revenue budget requirement for pension costs by £74,000.

This list does not include assets and liabilities that are carried at fair value based on recently observed market prices.

### Note 4: Events after the Balance Sheet Date

The Statement of Accounts was authorised for issue by the Director of Finance, IT and Digital on 27 June 2025. Events taking place after this date are not reflected in the financial statements or notes. Where events taking place before this date provided information about conditions existing at 31 March 2025, the figures in the financial statements and notes have been adjusted in all material respects to reflect the impact of this information.

## SECTION 3 : Statement of Accounts

### Note 5: Adjustments between Accounting Basis and Funding Basis under Regulations

This note details the adjustments that are made to the total comprehensive income and expenditure recognised by the Council in the year in accordance with proper accounting practices to the resources that are specified by statutory provisions as being available to the Council to meet future capital and revenue expenditure.

2024/25	Usable Reserves						Movement in Unusable Reserves £000s
	Unearmarked General Fund Balance £000s	Earmarked Revenue & Capital Reserves £000s	Housing Revenue Account £000s	Major Repairs Reserve £000s	Capital Receipts Reserve £000s	Capital Grants Unapplied £000s	
<b>Adjustments primarily involving the Capital Adjustment Account:</b>							
<i>Reversal of items debited or credited to the Comprehensive Income &amp; Expenditure Statement</i>							
Charges for Depreciation and Impairment of Non-current Assets	8,678	-	358	-	-	-	(9,036)
Charges for Revaluation losses / gains on Property Plant and Equipment	696	-	99	-	-	-	(795)
Movements in the Market Value of Investment Properties	368	-	-	-	-	-	(368)
Capital Grants and Contributions	(23,965)	-	-	-	-	(4,532)	28,497
Direct Revenue Funding	(288)	(3,935)	-	-	-	-	4,223
Revenue Expenditure Funded from Capital Under Statute	5,614	-	-	-	-	-	(5,614)
Amounts of Non-current Assets written off on Disposal or Sale as part of the Gain/(Loss) on Disposal to the Comprehensive Income & Expenditure Statement	5,562	-	132	-	-	-	(5,694)
<i>Insertion of items not debited or credited to the Comprehensive Income &amp; Expenditure Statement</i>							
Provision for the Financing of Capital Investment (MRP)	(2,810)	-	-	-	-	-	2,810
<b>Adjustments primarily involving the Capital Grants Unapplied Account:</b>							
Transfer to Capital Grants Unapplied Account	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Adjustments primarily involving the Capital Receipts Reserve:</b>							
Transfer of Cash Sale Proceeds Credited as part of the Gain/(Loss) on Disposal to the Comprehensive Income & Expenditure Statement	(436)	-	-	-	436	-	-
Use of Capital Receipts Reserve to finance new capital expenditure	-	-	-	-	(124)	-	124
Use of Capital Receipts to Repay Prudential Borrowing	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Adjustments primarily involving the major Repairs Reserve:</b>							
Transfer to Major Repairs Reserve	-	-	(311)	311	-	-	-
Use of Major Repairs Reserve to finance new capital expenditure	-	-	-	(263)	-	-	263

## SECTION 3 : Statement of Accounts

### Note 5: Adjustments between Accounting Basis and Funding Basis under Regulations

2024/25	Usable Reserves						Movement in Unusable Reserves £000s
	Unearmarked General Fund Balance £000s	Earmarked Revenue & Capital Reserves £000s	Housing Revenue Account £000s	Major Repairs Reserve £000s	Capital Receipts Reserve £000s	Capital Grants Unapplied £000s	
<b>Adjustments primarily involving the Pensions Reserve:</b>							
Reversal of items relating to retirement benefits debited or credited to the Comprehensive Income & Expenditure Statement	11,187	-	11	-	-	-	(11,198)
Employer's Pension Contributions and Direct Payments to Pensioners payable in year	(8,842)	-	(26)	-	-	-	8,868
<b>Adjustments Primarily involving the Collection Fund Adjustment Account:</b>							
Amount by which council tax income credited to the Comprehensive Income & Expenditure Statement is different from council tax and income calculated for the year in accordance with statutory requirements	(144)	-	-	-	-	-	144
<b>Adjustments primarily involving the Accumulated Absences Adjustment Account:</b>							
Amount by which Officer Remuneration charged to the Comprehensive Income & Expenditure Statement on an accruals basis is different from Remuneration chargeable in the year in accordance with statutory requirements	(1,529)	-	-	-	-	-	1,529
<b>Adjustments Primarily involving the Dedicated Schools Grant Adjustment Account:</b>							
Amount transferred to the DSG Account under statute	3,343	-	-	-	-	-	(3,343)
<b>Total Adjustments</b>	<b>(2,566)</b>	<b>(3,935)</b>	<b>263</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>312</b>	<b>(4,532)</b>	<b>10,410</b>

2023/24	Usable Reserves						Movement in Unusable Reserves £000s
	Unearmarked General Fund Balance £000s	Earmarked Revenue & Capital Reserves £000s	Housing Revenue Account £000s	Major Repairs Reserve £000s	Capital Receipts Reserve £000s	Capital Grants Unapplied £000s	
<b>Adjustments primarily involving the Capital Adjustment Account:</b>							
<u>Reversal of items debited or credited to the Comprehensive Income &amp; Expenditure Statement</u>							
Charges for Depreciation and Impairment of Non-current Assets	11,850	-	283	-	-	-	(12,133)
Charges for Revaluation losses on Property Plant and Equipment	567	-	2,050	-	-	-	(2,617)
Movements in the Market Value of Investment Properties	323	-	-	-	-	-	(323)
Capital Grants and Contributions	(19,035)	-	-	-	-	(1,415)	20,450
Direct Revenue Funding	-	(25)	-	-	-	-	25
Revenue Expenditure Funded from Capital Under Statute	7,043	-	-	-	-	-	(7,043)
Amounts of Non-current Assets written off on Disposal or Sale as part of the Gain/(Loss) on Disposal to the Comprehensive Income & Expenditure Statement	15,753	-	-	-	-	-	(15,753)
Reversal of Lease Liability	(874)	-	-	-	-	-	874
<u>Insertion of items not debited or credited to the Comprehensive Income &amp; Expenditure Statement</u>							
Provision for the Financing of Capital Investment (MRP)	(2,648)	-	-	-	-	-	2,648

## SECTION 3 : Statement of Accounts

### Note 5: Adjustments between Accounting Basis and Funding Basis under Regulations

2023/24	Usable Reserves						Movement in Unusable Reserves
	Unearmarked General Fund Balance	Earmarked Revenue & Capital Reserves	Housing Revenue Account	Major Repairs Reserve	Capital Receipts Reserve	Capital Grants Unapplied	
	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s
<b>Adjustments primarily involving the Capital Grants Unapplied Account:</b>							
Application of grants to capital financing transferred to the Capital Adjustment Account	(10,921)	-	-	-	-	10,921	-
<b>Adjustments primarily involving the Capital Receipts Reserve:</b>							
Transfer of Cash Sale Proceeds Credited as part of the Gain/(Loss) on Disposal to the Comprehensive Income & Expenditure Statement	(647)	-	-	-	647	-	-
Use of Capital Receipts Reserve to finance new capital expenditure	-	-	-	-	(1,338)	-	1,338
Use of Capital Receipts to repay prudential borrowing	-	-	-	-	(350)	-	350
<b>Adjustments primarily involving the major Repairs Reserve:</b>							
Transfer to Major Repairs Reserve	-	-	(253)	253	-	-	-
Use of Major Repairs Reserve to finance new capital expenditure	-	-	-	(45)	-	-	45
<b>Adjustments primarily involving the Pensions Reserve:</b>							
Reversal of items relating to retirement benefits debited or credited to the Comprehensive Income & Expenditure Statement	8,097	-	-	24	-	-	(8,121)
Employer's Pension Contributions and Direct Payments to Pensioners payable in year	(8,186)	-	-	(24)	-	-	8,210
<b>Adjustments Primarily involving the Collection Fund Adjustment Account:</b>							
Amount by which council tax income credited to the Comprehensive Income & Expenditure Statement is different from council tax and income calculated for the year in accordance with statutory requirements	(871)	-	-	-	-	-	871
<b>Adjustments primarily involving the Accumulated Absences Adjustment Account:</b>							
Amount by which Officer Remuneration charged to the Comprehensive Income & Expenditure Statement on an accruals basis is different from Remuneration chargeable in the year in accordance with statutory requirements	1,866	-	-	-	-	-	(1,866)
<b>Adjustments Primarily involving the Dedicated Schools Grant Adjustment Account:</b>							
Amount transferred to the DSG Account under statute	1,589	-	-	-	-	-	(1,589)
<b>Total Adjustments</b>	<b>3,906</b>	<b>(25)</b>	<b>2,080</b>	<b>208</b>	<b>(1,041)</b>	<b>9,506</b>	<b>(14,634)</b>

## SECTION 3 : Statement of Accounts

### Note 6 : Transfers to / (from) Earmarked Reserves

This note sets out the amounts set aside from the General Fund balances in earmarked reserves to provide financing for future expenditure plans and the amounts posted back from earmarked reserves to meet General Fund expenditure in 2024/25.

	Balance at 31 March 2023	Transfer Between Reserves	Transfers Out 2023/24	Transfers In 2023/24	Balance at 31 March 2024	Transfer Between Reserves	Transfers Out 2024/25	Transfers In 2024/25	Balance at 31 March 2025
	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s
<b>General Fund Balance</b>									
Revenue Reserve	4,417	1,084	-	-	5,501	(1)	-	-	5,500
	4,417	1,084	-	-	5,501	(1)	-	-	5,500
<b>Earmarked Revenue Reserves</b>									
Budget Support Fund (BSF)	10,549	(537)	(3,084)	1,019	7,947	3,147	(3,422)	-	7,672
Revenue Grants Unapplied	6,852	(3,180)	(231)	2,858	6,299	(577)	(472)	3,856	9,106
Insurance Fund	2,406	516	(4)	47	2,965	-	(63)	-	2,902
BSF - Transformation Costs	-	2,000	-	-	2,000	-	-	-	2,000
Children in our Care Reserve	751	1,000	(521)	-	1,230	-	-	-	1,230
Treasury Management Income	-	1,150	-	-	1,150	-	(500)	-	650
BSF - Invest to Save	-	1,000	-	-	1,000	750	(350)	-	1,400
Earmarked Revenue Reserves under £1m	15,730	(3,033)	(2,594)	1,558	11,661	(3,337)	(2,260)	1,815	7,879
	36,288	(1,084)	(6,434)	5,482	34,252	(17)	(7,067)	5,671	32,839
<b>Earmarked Capital Reserves</b>									
Capital Grants Unapplied	6,706	-	(1,415)	10,921	16,212	-	(4,552)	20	11,680
Capital Funding Reserve	8,345	-	(378)	1,391	9,358	-	(6,215)	2,599	5,742
Capital Receipts Unapplied	1,291	-	(1,688)	646	249	-	(124)	436	561
	16,342	-	(3,481)	12,958	25,819	-	(10,891)	3,055	17,983
<b>School Balances</b>									
Balances Held by Schools under the Scheme of Delegation	2,344	-	(2,518)	1,864	1,690	-	(1,887)	1,557	1,360
Ringfenced Reserve - Held in Trust for Schools	83	-	(232)	197	48	-	(77)	51	22
Dedicated School Grant Reserve	735	-	(1,049)	315	1	19	(279)	261	2
	3,162	-	(3,799)	2,376	1,739	19	(2,243)	1,869	1,384
<b>Housing Revenue Account Balance</b>									
HRA Major Repairs Reserve	1,764	-	(45)	448	2,167	-	(264)	504	2,407
HRA Balance	500	-	-	-	500	-	-	-	500
	2,264	-	(45)	448	2,667	-	(264)	504	2,907
<b>Total Usable Reserves</b>	62,473	-	(13,759)	21,264	69,978	1	(20,465)	11,099	60,613

#### General Fund Balance

The General Fund Balance of £5.500m held at 31 March 2025 is held to meet unforeseen commitments not funded from Earmarked Reserves. Any use of this reserve will need to be repaid to ensure the Council can continue to manage unforeseen commitments.

#### Earmarked Revenue Reserves

##### Budget Support Fund

This reserve will be used to support the overall MTFS position.

##### Revenue Grants Unapplied

This reserve holds grant funding received to be spent in future years. Grants are only held in this reserve where there are no repayment conditions.

##### Insurance Fund

This reserve provides for all payments that fall within policy excesses or relate to self-insured risks. The reserve currently covers the estimated value of unpaid outstanding claims.

##### BSF – Transformation Costs

This reserve will be used to meet any one-off transformation costs.

##### Children in our Care Reserve

This reserve will be used to contribute towards financial pressures arising from increases in the number and costs of looked after children over and above the budgeted allocation.

##### Treasury Management Income

This reserve will use temporary treasury management income to support the budget over the years 2024/25 to 2026/27.

##### BSF - Invest to Save

This reserve will be used to invest in transformation initiatives to generate ongoing savings for the Council.

##### Earmarked Revenue Reserves under £1m

Numerous revenue reserves individually under £1m set aside for specific purposes.

#### Earmarked Capital Reserves

These reserves are earmarked for future capital commitments.

#### School Balances

These balances are held on behalf of schools.

#### Housing Revenue Account Balance

##### HRA Major Repairs Reserve

This reserve is ringfenced to the HRA and can only be used to fund major repairs or repayments of borrowing.

##### HRA Balance

This is a ringfenced reserve accumulated from surpluses in previous years and is held to fund pressures of the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) such as government rent restrictions, Right to Buy sales and increasing repairs costs.

## SECTION 3 : Statement of Accounts

### Note 7: Expenditure and Funding Analysis

The Expenditure and Funding Analysis shows how annual expenditure is used and funded from resources (government grants, rents, Council Tax and Business Rates) by local authorities in comparison with those resources consumed or earned by authorities in accordance with generally accepted accounting practices. It also shows how this expenditure is allocated for decision making purposes between the Council's directorates/services/departments. Income and expenditure accounted for under generally accepted accounting practices is presented more fully in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement.

RESTATED				2024/25		
Net Expenditure Chargeable to the General Fund and HRA	2023/24 Adjustments Between the General Fund and the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement	Net Expenditure in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement		Net Expenditure Chargeable to the General Fund and HRA	Adjustments Between the General Fund and the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement	Net Expenditure in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement
£000s	£000s	£000s		£000s	£000s	£000s
39,626	3,853	43,479	Adult & Community Based Services	43,052	4,309	<b>47,361</b>
35,010	1,455	36,465	Children's & Joint Commissioning Services	41,514	(1,378)	<b>40,136</b>
(17,305)	16,351	(955)	Corporate	(22,168)	17,297	<b>(4,871)</b>
21,829	4,743	26,572	Development, Neighbourhood and Regulatory	21,029	2,395	<b>23,424</b>
3,571	1,774	5,345	Finance, IT and Digital	3,869	1,565	<b>5,434</b>
2,088	334	2,422	Legal, Governance and HR	1,973	242	<b>2,215</b>
-	1,563	1,563	HRA	-	(117)	<b>(117)</b>
42,564	(42,564)	-	Schools	46,675	(46,675)	-
127,383	(12,491)	114,891	<b>Net Cost of Services</b>	<b>135,944</b>	<b>(22,362)</b>	<b>113,582</b>
(126,771)	19,008	(107,763)	Other Income and Expenditure	(135,688)	21,318	<b>(114,370)</b>
612	6,517	7,128	<b>(Surplus) or Deficit</b>	<b>256</b>	<b>(1,044)</b>	<b>(788)</b>
4,917			<b>Opening General Fund &amp; HRA Balance</b>	6,001		
(612)			<b>Less/Plus Surplus or (Deficit) on General Fund Balance in Year</b>	(256)		
1,696			<b>Transfer Between Earmarked &amp; General Fund Reserves</b>	255		
-			<b>Less/Plus Surplus or (Deficit) on HRA Balance in Year</b>	-		
-			<b>Transfer Between Earmarked &amp; HRA Reserves</b>	-		
6,001			<b>Closing General Fund &amp; HRA Balance at 31 March*</b>	<b>6,000</b>		

\* For a split of this balance between the General Fund and the HRA, see the Movement in Reserves Statement.

## SECTION 3 : Statement of Accounts

### Note 7A: Note to the Expenditure and Funding Analysis

Adjustments from the General Fund to arrive at the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement amounts:

Adjustments from General Fund to Arrive at the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement Amounts	2024/25				
	Adjustments for Capital Purposes (Note 1)	Net Change for the Pensions Adjustments (Note 2)	Other Statutory Differences (Note 3)	Other Non-Statutory Difference (Note 4)	Total Adjustments
	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s
Adult and Community Based Services	680	455	(201)	3,375	<b>4,309</b>
Children's and Joint Commissioning	1,462	634	(243)	(3,231)	<b>(1,378)</b>
Corporate	2,822	-	-	14,475	<b>17,297</b>
Development, Neighbourhood and Regulatory	5,057	499	(1,038)	(2,123)	<b>2,395</b>
Finance, IT and Digital	-	243	(40)	1,362	<b>1,565</b>
Legal, Governance and HR	-	59	(7)	190	<b>242</b>
HRA	402	8	-	(527)	<b>(117)</b>
Schools	-	-	-	(46,675)	<b>(46,675)</b>
<b>Net Cost of Services</b>	<b>10,423</b>	<b>1,898</b>	<b>(1,529)</b>	<b>(33,154)</b>	<b>(22,362)</b>
Other Income and Expenditure from the Expenditure and Funding Analysis	(16,203)	432	(144)	37,233	<b>21,318</b>
<b>Difference between General Fund Surplus or Deficit and Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services</b>	<b>(5,780)</b>	<b>2,330</b>	<b>(1,673)</b>	<b>4,079</b>	<b>(1,044)</b>

Adjustments from General Fund to Arrive at the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement Amounts	2023/24				
	Adjustments for Capital Purposes (Note 1)	Net Change for the Pensions Adjustments (Note 2)	Other Statutory Differences (Note 3)	Other Non-Statutory Difference (Note 4)	Total Adjustments
	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s
Adult and Community Based Services	462	789	292	2,310	3,853
Children's and Joint Commissioning	1,837	1,279	342	(2,003)	1,455
Corporate	4,460	-	-	11,890	16,350
Development, Neighbourhood and Regulatory	5,097	857	1,072	(2,283)	4,743
Finance, IT and Digital	-	387	97	1,290	1,774
Legal, Governance and HR	-	109	63	162	334
HRA	1,979	12	-	(428)	1,563
Schools	-	-	-	(42,564)	(42,564)
<b>Net Cost of Services</b>	<b>13,835</b>	<b>3,433</b>	<b>1,866</b>	<b>(31,626)</b>	<b>(12,492)</b>
Other Income and Expenditure from the Expenditure and Funding Analysis	(10,399)	(3,522)	(871)	33,801	19,009
<b>Difference between General Fund Surplus or Deficit and Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services</b>	<b>3,436</b>	<b>(89)</b>	<b>995</b>	<b>2,175</b>	<b>6,517</b>

Note 1 This is the net change for the removal of depreciation and impairment and other capital costs from services and the addition of other operating costs and capital grants received.

Note 2 This is the net change for the removal of employer pension contributions made by the authority as allowed by statute and the replacement with current and past service costs.

Note 3 This is the net change in relation to statutory adjustments for accumulated absences and in relation to the Collection Fund.

Note 4 This is the net change in relation to non-statutory adjustments for amounts included in the management accounts but not in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement.

## SECTION 3 : Statement of Accounts

### Note 7B: Expenditure and Income Analysed by Nature

The Council's income and expenditure is analysed as follows:

2023/24 £000s	<b>Expenditure/Income</b>	2024/25 £000s
	<b>Expenditure</b>	
117,422	Employee Benefits Expenses	124,012
198,278	Other Services Expenses	210,411
15,072	Depreciation, Impairment, Revaluation Losses	10,425
3,199	Interest Payments	2,774
196	Precepts and Levies	209
14,879	Gain/Loss on the disposal of assets	5,724
<u>349,046</u>	<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<u>353,555</u>
	<b>Income</b>	
(56,646)	Fees Charges and Other Service Income	(56,339)
(30,923)	Interest and Investment Income	(34,011)
(63,924)	Income from Council Tax and Non Domestic Rates	(66,715)
(190,424)	Government Grants and Contributions	(197,278)
<u>(341,917)</u>	<b>Total Income</b>	<u>(354,343)</u>
<u>7,129</u>	<b>Surplus or deficit on the provision of services</b>	<u>(788)</u>

### Note 7C: Segmental Income

Income received on a segmental basis is analysed below.

2023/24			2024/25	
Fees & Charges Restated	Interest & Investment Income Restated		Fees & Charges	Interest & Investment Income
£000s	£000s		£000s	£000s
(33,482)	-	Adult & Community Based Services	(32,862)	-
(44,312)	-	Children's & Joint Commissioning Services	(46,408)	-
(10,458)	(2,989)	Corporate	(10,685)	(2,976)
(36,418)	(363)	Development, Neighbourhood and Regulatory	(38,663)	(353)
(3,844)	(25)	Finance, IT and Digital	(4,187)	(25)
(431)	-	Legal, Governance and HR	(605)	-
(1,740)	(125)	HRA	(2,007)	(124)
<u>(130,685)</u>	<u>(3,502)</u>		<u>(135,417)</u>	<u>(3,478)</u>

## SECTION 3 : Statement of Accounts

### Note 8: Other Operating Expenditure

This note provides a breakdown of the various components included within the Other Operating Expenditure and Transfer of School Assets lines of the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement.

<u>2023/24</u> <u>£000s</u>		<u>2024/25</u> <u>£000s</u>
196	Parish council precepts and levies	209
(153)	Receipts from Sale of Former Council Houses	(45)
6,745	Loss resulting from Transfer of School Assets	5,224
<u>7,487</u>	(Gain) or loss on the disposal of non-current assets	<u>64</u>
<u><u>14,275</u></u>		<u><u>5,452</u></u>

### Note 9: Financing and Investment Income and Expenditure

This note provides a breakdown of the various components included within the Financing and Investment Income and Expenditure line of the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement.

<u>2023/24</u> <u>£000s</u>		<u>2024/25</u> <u>£000s</u>	Note
(461)	Net (Gain) / Loss on Investment Properties	(561)	19
323	Changes in fair values of investment properties	368	19
3,199	Interest payable and similar charges on borrowing	2,774	34
(3,076)	Interest Receivable and Similar Income	(3,006)	34
<u>(3,522)</u>	Pensions Interest Cost/(Income) & Expected Return on Pensions Assets	<u>432</u>	42
<u><u>(3,537)</u></u>		<u><u>7</u></u>	

### Note 10: Taxation and Non-Specific Grant Income

Taxation and Non-Specific Grant Income comprises of the following:

<u>2023/24</u> <u>£000s</u>		<u>2024/25</u> <u>£000s</u>	Note
49,333	Council Tax Income	51,593	
14,591	NNDR Distribution	15,122	
29,623	Non-Ringfenced Government Grants	31,240	
<u>24,953</u>	Capital Grants and Contributions	<u>21,874</u>	
<u><u>118,500</u></u>		<u><u>119,829</u></u>	27

## SECTION 3 : Statement of Accounts

### Note 11 - Councillors' Allowances & Expenses

The Council paid the following amounts to members of the Council during the year.

The value of the Basic Allowance paid by the Council is based on recommendations made by the Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP). Following a Council decision, Special Responsibility Allowances were suspended on 1 April 2024, therefore none were payable during 2024/25.

#### Councillors' Allowances & Expenses

Councillor	Basic Allowance £	Special Responsibility Allowance £	General Travel £	General Subsistence £	Total 2024/25 £
Allen G	8,330	-	-	-	8,330
Ashton H (01.04.24 - 07.05.24)	851	-	-	-	851
Bailey-Fleet Q (07.05.24 - 31.03.25)	7,502	-	-	-	7,502
Boddy M	8,330	-	-	-	8,330
Brash J (01.04.24 - 08.08.24)	2,956	-	-	-	2,956
Brown P (01.04.24 - 07.05.24)	851	-	-	-	851
Buchan B	8,330	-	-	-	8,330
Cassidy T (01.04.24 - 07.05.24)	851	-	-	-	851
Clayton B	8,330	-	-	-	8,330
Cook F (07.05.24 - 31.03.25)	7,502	-	-	-	7,502
Cowie B	851	-	-	-	851
Cranney G	8,330	-	-	-	8,330
Creevy R	8,330	-	-	-	8,330
Darby R	8,330	-	-	-	8,330
Dodds M	8,330	-	-	-	8,330
Dunbar M	8,330	-	-	-	8,330
Feeney T	8,330	-	-	-	8,330
Groves C (01.04.24 - 07.05.24)	851	-	-	-	851
Hall G	8,330	-	-	-	8,330
Hargreaves P	8,330	-	-	-	8,330
Harrison B	8,330	-	-	-	8,330
Holbrook P	8,330	-	-	-	8,330
Howson H (01.04.24 - 07.05.24)	812	-	-	-	812
Jorgeson M (07.05.24 - 31.03.25)	7,502	-	-	-	7,502
Leedham J	8,330	-	-	-	8,330
Lindridge J	8,330	-	-	-	8,330
Little S	8,330	-	-	-	8,330
Male C (07.05.24 - 31.03.25)	7,502	-	-	-	7,502
Martin-Wells A	8,330	-	-	-	8,330
Moore S	8,330	-	-	-	8,330
Morley M	8,330	-	-	-	8,330
Nelson J (07.05.24 - 31.03.25)	7,502	-	-	-	7,502
Nicholson D (01.04.24 - 07.05.25)	851	-	-	-	851
Nicholson V (01.04.24 - 07.05.25)	851	-	-	-	851
Oliver K	8,330	-	-	-	8,330
Reeve S	8,330	-	-	-	8,330
Riddle O (20.09.24 - 31.03.25)	4,420	-	-	-	4,420
Roy A (07.05.24 - 31.03.25)	7,502	-	-	-	7,502
Scarborough M (07.05.24 - 31.03.25)	7,502	-	-	-	7,502
Sharp C (01.04.24 - 19.03.25)	8,061	-	-	-	8,061
Smith L	8,330	-	-	-	8,330
Thompson C	8,330	-	-	-	8,330
Wallace C (07.05.24 - 31.03.25)	7,502	-	-	-	7,502
Wallace S	8,330	-	-	-	8,330
Young M	8,330	-	-	-	8,330
<b>Totals for 2024/25</b>	<b>298,802</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>298,802</b>
Totals for 2023/24	299,636	83,881	81	-	383,598

## SECTION 3 : Statement of Accounts

### Note 12 - Officers' Remuneration

In accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 the Council is required to disclose details of remuneration for Senior Employees and those earning more than £50,000. Senior Employees are defined as the Managing Director, statutory Chief Officers and all other senior managers reporting directly to the Managing Director. Details of the remuneration for these officers are provided below.

#### **Senior Officers with a salary of £150,000 or more per year**

The Council employed one senior officer, the Managing Director, with a salary above £150,000 during 2024/25.

The Managing Director is the senior officer who leads and takes responsibility for the work of the 2,168 (2,162 in 2023/24) full-time equivalent employees, including schools, and runs the Local Authority on a day to day basis. The role of Managing Director is a full time appointment.

Permanent post holders are selected on merit, against objective criteria and are appointed by the whole Council.

As Head of Paid Service, the Managing Director works closely with elected Councillors to deliver the following:

Leadership: working with elected Councillors to ensure strong and visible leadership and direction, encouraging and enabling managers to motivate and inspire their teams.

Strategic Direction: ensuring all staff understand and adhere to the strategic aims of the organisation and follow the direction set by the elected Councillors.

Policy Advice: acting as the principal policy adviser to elected Members of the Council to lead the development of workable strategies which will deliver the political objectives set by Members.

Partnerships: leading and developing strong partnerships across the local community to achieve improved outcomes and better public services for local people.

Operational Management: overseeing financial and performance management, risk management, people management and change management within the Council.

#### **Senior Officers reporting directly to the Chief Executive**

During 2024/25, the Council employed seven Senior Officers, including the Managing Director.

The Director of Public Health sits within the Children's and Joint Commissioning Service, and does not report directly to the Managing Director. The post is defined as a statutory chief officer under the Health and Social Care Act 2012 and is therefore included.

Executive Director of Children's and Joint Commissioning Services - responsible for a gross annual revenue budget of £125m (including Dedicated Schools Grant) and managing 583 full-time equivalent employees (excluding schools) who provide a diverse range of services, including public health, education and early years related services, services for vulnerable children and families including looking after children at risk, child protection services, young offenders, children's fostering and adoption services.

Executive Director of Adults and Community Based Services - responsible for a gross annual revenue budget of £86m and managing 420 full-time equivalent employees who provide a diverse range of services, including adult protection services, caring for older people, people with mental health issues, people with physical or learning disabilities, community hubs, sport and recreation and cultural services.

Executive Director of Development, Neighbourhoods & Regulatory Services - responsible for a gross annual revenue budget of £57m and managing 545 full-time equivalent employees who provide a diverse range of services, including economic development and regeneration, planning and building control, community safety, refuse collection, street cleansing, highways maintenance and car parks.

Director of Finance, IT and Digital - responsible for a gross annual revenue budget of £9m and managing 150 full-time equivalent employees who provide a diverse range of services including Corporate Finance, transactional services, Council Tax setting and collection, Business Rates, Benefits, Corporate IT and Digital Services. This post is designated the Council's statutory section 151 Chief Financial Officer.

The Director of Legal, Governance and HR is responsible for a gross annual revenue budget of £2m and management of 41 full-time equivalent employees. This post is designated the Council's statutory Monitoring Officer.

## SECTION 3 : Statement of Accounts

### Note 12 - Officers' Remuneration

#### 2024/25 - TABLE A

Post Holder Information (Post Title)	Salary (including fees and allowances)	Pension Contributions	Total Remuneration including Pension Contributions 2024/25	Note
	£	£	£	
Managing Director - Denise McGuckin	166,434	21,470	<b>187,904</b>	1
Executive Director of Children's and Joint Commissioning Services	131,207	16,926	<b>148,133</b>	2
Executive Director of Adults and Community Based Services	131,207	15,718	<b>146,925</b>	2
Executive Director of Development, Neighbourhood and Regulatory Services	127,842	14,758	<b>142,600</b>	2
Director of Finance, IT and Digital	102,772	13,102	<b>115,874</b>	3
Director of Legal, Governance and HR	104,229	12,120	<b>116,349</b>	4
Director of Public Health	99,132	12,788	<b>111,920</b>	5
	<b>862,823</b>	<b>106,882</b>	<b>969,705</b>	

#### 2023/24 - TABLE B

Post Holder Information (Post Title)	Salary (including fees and allowances)	Pension Contributions	Total Remuneration including Pension Contributions 2023/24
	£	£	£
Managing Director - Denise McGuckin	162,375	20,135	182,510
Executive Director of Children's and Joint Commissioning Services	128,007	15,873	143,880
Executive Director of Adults and Community Based Services	128,007	15,196	143,203
Executive Director of Development, Neighbourhood and Regulatory Services	122,465	14,071	136,536
Director of Resources and Development (left 31 May 2023)	21,335	2,645	23,980
Director of Finance, IT and Digital (appointed 1 Jun 2023)	81,938	10,160	92,098
Director of Legal, Governance and HR	100,049	12,223	112,272
Director of Public Health	96,714	11,993	108,707
	<b>840,890</b>	<b>102,296</b>	<b>943,186</b>

#### Notes to Table A & B

- The single point salary scale for the Managing Director for 2024/25 is £166,434 (£162,375 in 2023/24).
- The salary scale for the Executive Director posts for 2024/25 is £119,466 to £131,207 (£116,552 to £128,007 in 2023/24). Post holders are appointed at the bottom of the pay scale and receive annual increments until they reach the top of the pay scale.
- The salary scale for the Director of Finance, IT and Digital for 2024/25 is £100,783 to £105,558 (£98,325 to £102,983 in 2023/24).
- The salary scale for the Director of Legal, Governance and HR for 2024/25 is £100,783 to £105,558 (£98,325 to £102,983 in 2023/24).
- The salary scale for the Director of Public Health for 2024/25 is £92,658 to £99,132 (£90,398 to £96,714 in 2023/24).

## SECTION 3 : Statement of Accounts

### Note 12 - Officers' Remuneration

#### Employees with a salary of £50,000 or more

In accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, the number of employees including school employees employed by the Council whose remuneration was £50,000 or greater is detailed in the table below in bands of £5,000. This table excludes details of senior officers set out in the previous tables. The bandings have been used since 2002/03 and are not indexed and therefore do not make any adjustment for inflationary increases each year. If the starting banding had been indexed for cost of living increases for Council employees then it would be £78,336. As a result, the number of employees requiring disclosure has increased.

Remuneration is measured as gross pay (before deduction of employee pension contributions), plus compensation for loss of office and any other payments receivable on the termination of employment in line with the Code guidance.

**TABLE C - NON-SCHOOLS EMPLOYEES**

2023/24 No. of Non-School Employees			Remuneration Band (£)	2024/25 No. of Non-School Employees		
<i>Non School</i>	<i>Left in Year</i>	<i>Total</i>		<i>Non School</i>	<i>Left in Year</i>	<i>Total</i>
62	1	63	50,000 to 54,999	51	1	52
29	-	29	55,000 to 59,999	25	-	25
14	-	14	60,000 to 64,999	26	-	26
4	-	4	65,000 to 69,999	11	-	11
1	-	1	70,000 to 74,999	2	1	3
2	-	2	75,000 to 79,999	5	-	5
1	-	1	80,000 to 84,999	1	-	1
-	-	-	85,000 to 89,999	1	-	1
1	-	1	90,000 to 94,999	-	1	1
6	-	6	95,000 to 99,999	4	-	4
<b>120</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>121</b>		<b>126</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>129</b>

**TABLE D - SCHOOL EMPLOYEES**

2023/24 No. of School Employees			Remuneration Band (£)	2024/25 No. of School Employees		
<i>School</i>	<i>Left in Year</i>	<i>Total</i>		<i>School</i>	<i>Left in Year</i>	<i>Total</i>
10	2	12	50,000 to 54,999	15	-	15
7	1	8	55,000 to 59,999	7	-	7
4	-	4	60,000 to 64,999	6	-	6
-	-	-	65,000 to 69,999	3	-	3
3	-	3	70,000 to 74,999	-	-	-
-	-	-	75,000 to 79,999	1	-	1
1	1	2	80,000 to 84,999	1	-	1
3	-	3	85,000 to 89,999	-	-	-
-	-	-	90,000 to 95,000	3	-	3
<b>28</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>32</b>		<b>36</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>36</b>

## SECTION 3 : Statement of Accounts

### Note 13: Termination Costs

Termination Costs are employee benefits provided in exchange for the termination of an employee's employment as a result of either:

- an authority's decision to terminate an employee's employment before the normal retirement date, or
- an employee's decision to accept an offer of benefits in exchange for the termination of employment.

In 2024/25, there were no Compulsory Redundancies (3 in 2023/24). The 2024/25 termination costs were £0.042m (£0.100m in 2023/24) in payments to employees and nil (£0.060m in 2023/24) to the pension fund in respect of retirement benefits.

The following tables provide details by band and the number and total cost of Termination Costs for non-school and school employees. Termination Costs are analysed across Compulsory Redundancies and Other Terminations of Employment.

**TABLE E - NON-SCHOOLS EMPLOYEES**

RESTATED					2024/25				
2023/24									
No of Compulsory Redundancies	Other Terminations of Employment	Total no of Terminations of Employment by band	Total cost of Termination Payments by band £	Remuneration Band (£)	No of Compulsory Redundancies	No of Other Terminations of Employment	Total no of Terminations of Employment by band	Total cost of Termination Payments by band £	
1	10	11	52,506	0 to 40,000	-	5	5	31,743	
-	-	-	-	40,001 to 60,000	-	-	-	-	
1	-	1	69,983	60,001 to 80,000	-	-	-	-	
2	10	12	122,489		-	5	5	31,743	

**TABLE F - SCHOOLS EMPLOYEES**

RESTATED					2024/25				
2023/24									
No of Compulsory Redundancies	Other Terminations of Employment	Total no of Terminations of Employment by band	Total cost of Termination Payments by band £	Remuneration Band (£)	No of Compulsory Redundancies	No of Other Terminations of Employment	Total no of Terminations of Employment by band	Total cost of Termination Payments by band £	
1	4	5	37,992	0 to 40,000	-	2	2	10,340	
1	4	5	37,992		-	2	2	10,340	

Decisions in relation to school employees are made by individual School Governing Bodies and not by the Council. Foundation school employees are excluded from Table F as the Governing Body, not the Council, is the Employer.

## SECTION 3 : Statement of Accounts

### Note 14: Non-Current Assets - Property, Plant & Equipment

This note shows the movements in the value of Non-Current assets (Property, Plant and Equipment) during 2024/25. In accordance with the temporary relief offered by the update to the Code on infrastructure assets this note does not include disclosure of gross cost and accumulated depreciation for infrastructure assets because historical reporting practices and resultant information deficits mean that this would not faithfully represent the asset position to the users of the financial statements. The Council has chosen not to disclose this information as it would not provide the basis for the users of the financial statements to take economic or other decisions relating to infrastructure assets.

#### Movements in 2024/25

	Council Dwellings	Other Land & Buildings	Vehicles, Plant, Furniture & Equipment	Infrastructure Assets	Community Assets	Surplus Assets	PP&E Under Construction	Right-of-Use Assets	Total
	£000s	£000s	£000s	NBV £000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s
<b>Cost or Valuation</b>									
As at 1 April 2024	14,873	145,294	42,523	76,644	7,843	7,885	11,404	-	<b>306,466</b>
IFRS16 implementation recognition	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	542	<b>542</b>
Restated as at 1 April 2024	14,873	145,294	42,523	76,644	7,843	7,885	11,404	542	<b>307,008</b>
Additions	514	1,381	3,328	2,963	-	-	24,024	15	<b>32,225</b>
Accumulated Depreciation Written Off to Gross Carrying Amount	(189)	(3,724)	-		-	(6)	-	-	<b>(3,919)</b>
Accumulated Impairment Written Off to Gross Carrying Amount	(66)	(30)	-		-	-	-	-	<b>(96)</b>
Revaluation Increases/(decreases) recognised in the Revaluation Reserve	(86)	4,581	-		-	498	-	-	<b>4,993</b>
Revaluation Increases/(decreases) recognised in the Surplus/Deficit on Provision of Services	(355)	(279)	-		-	(382)	-	(38)	<b>(1,054)</b>
Derecognition-Disposals	(227)	(5,273)	(1,159)		-	(140)	(2)	-	<b>(6,801)</b>
Reclassified (to)/from Held for Sale	-	-	-		-	-	-	-	<b>-</b>
Reclassified (to)/from Investment Property	-	(245)	-		-	-	-	-	<b>(245)</b>
Other movements in Cost or Valuation	301	921	(1)	1,468	-	283	(3,258)	-	<b>(286)</b>
<b>At 31 March 2025</b>	<b>14,765</b>	<b>142,626</b>	<b>44,691</b>	<b>81,075</b>	<b>7,843</b>	<b>8,138</b>	<b>32,168</b>	<b>519</b>	<b>331,825</b>
<b>Accumulated Depreciation and Impairment</b>									
As at 1 April 2024	(509)	(2,842)	(31,151)		-	(27)	-	-	<b>(34,529)</b>
Depreciation Charge	(285)	(1,674)	(1,783)	(3,797)	-	(16)	-	(105)	<b>(7,660)</b>
Depreciation written out to the Revaluation Reserve	(25)	(1,258)	-		-	(15)	-	-	<b>(1,298)</b>
Accumulated Depreciation Written Off to Gross Carrying Amount	189	3,725	-		-	6	-	-	<b>3,920</b>
Accumulated Impairment Written Out to Gross Carrying Amount	18	-	-		-	-	-	-	<b>18</b>
Derecognition - Disposals	12	115	1,013		-	3	-	-	<b>1,143</b>
Reclassified (to)/from Held for Sale	-	-	-		-	-	-	-	<b>-</b>
Reclassified (to) / from Investment Property	-	16	-		-	-	-	-	<b>16</b>
Other movements in Depreciation and Impairment	-	-	-		-	-	-	-	<b>-</b>
<b>At 31 March 2025</b>	<b>(600)</b>	<b>(1,918)</b>	<b>(31,921)</b>	<b>(3,797)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>(49)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>(105)</b>	<b>(38,390)</b>
<b>Net Book Value</b>									
At 31 March 2025	<b>14,165</b>	<b>140,708</b>	<b>12,770</b>	<b>77,278</b>	<b>7,843</b>	<b>8,089</b>	<b>32,168</b>	<b>414</b>	<b>293,435</b>
<b>Nature of Asset Holding</b>									
Owned	14,165	140,708	12,770	77,278	7,843	8,089	32,168	-	<b>293,021</b>
Leased	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	414	<b>414</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>14,165</b>	<b>140,708</b>	<b>12,770</b>	<b>77,278</b>	<b>7,843</b>	<b>8,089</b>	<b>32,168</b>	<b>414</b>	<b>293,435</b>

## SECTION 3 : Statement of Accounts

### Note 14: Non-Current Assets - Property, Plant & Equipment

#### Movements in 2023/24

	Council Dwellings	Other Land & Buildings	Vehicles, Plant, Furniture & Equipment	Infrastructure Assets	Community Assets	Surplus Assets	PP&E Under Construction	Total
	£000s	£000s	£000s	NBV £000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s
Cost or Valuation								
As at 1 April 2023	12,330	151,291	43,209	77,404	7,843	8,778	10,696	311,551
Additions	3,391	635	1,811	2,843	-	2,266	6,717	17,663
Accumulated Depreciation								
Written Off to Gross Carrying Amount	(158)	(1,868)	-		-	(13)	-	(2,039)
Accumulated Impairment								
Written Off to Gross Carrying Amount	(45)	(182)	-		-	(2,863)	-	(3,090)
Revaluation								
Increases/(decreases) recognised in the Revaluation Reserve	108	5,855	-		-	443	-	6,406
Revaluation								
Increases/(decreases)	(1,950)	(607)	-		-	(60)	-	(2,617)
Derecognition-Disposals	-	(10,431)	(2,498)		-	(819)	(3,961)	(17,709)
Reclassified (to)/from Held for Sale	-	80	-		-	-	-	80
Reclassified (to)/from Investment Property	-	(10)	-		-	-	-	(10)
Other movements in Cost or Valuation	1,197	531	1	166	-	153	(2,048)	-
At 31 March 2024	14,873	145,294	42,523	80,413	7,843	7,885	11,404	310,235
Accumulated Depreciation and Impairment								
As at 1 April 2023	(430)	(2,171)	(31,125)		-	(16)	-	(33,742)
Depreciation Charge	(228)	(1,789)	(1,877)	(3,769)	-	(24)	-	(7,687)
Depreciation written out to the Revaluation Reserve	(24)	(1,211)	-		-	(13)	-	(1,248)
Accumulated Depreciation								
Written Off to Gross Carrying Amount	158	1,868	-		-	13	-	2,039
Accumulated Impairment								
Written Out to Gross Carrying Amount	15	2	-		-	-	-	17
Derecognition - Disposals	-	471	1,851		-	-	-	2,322
Reclassified (to)/from Held for Sale	-	-	-		-	-	-	-
Reclassified (to) / from Investment Property	-	-	-		-	-	-	-
Other movements in Depreciation and Impairment	-	(13)	-		-	13	-	-
At 31 March 2024	(509)	(2,843)	(31,151)	(3,769)	-	(27)	-	(38,299)
Net Book Value								
At 31 March 2024	14,364	142,451	11,372	76,644	7,843	7,858	11,404	271,936
Nature of Asset Holding								
Owned	14,364	142,451	11,372	76,644	7,843	7,858	11,404	271,936
Leased	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	14,364	142,451	11,372	76,644	7,843	7,858	11,404	271,936

The Council has determined in accordance with Regulation (30M) of the Local Authorities (Capital Finance and Accounting) (England and Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2022 that the carrying amounts to be recognised for infrastructure assets when there is replacement expenditure is nil.

## SECTION 3 : Statement of Accounts

### Note 14: Non-Current Assets - Property, Plant & Equipment

#### Depreciation

The following useful lives have been used in the calculation of depreciation:

- Council Dwellings - 50 years.
- Other Land and Buildings - straight-line allocation over the useful life of the property as estimated by the valuer, between 25 and 40 years.
- Vehicles, Plant, Furniture & Equipment - straight-line allocation over the useful life of the asset, up to 15 years.
- Infrastructure

Bus Shelters	15 years
Bridges	25 years
Car Parks / Traffic Calming	25 years
Classified Roads	25 years
Footpaths	25 years
General Improvement Areas	25 years
Greenways / Cycle Routes	25 years
Infrastructure	25 years
Misc Highways	25 years
Principal Roads	25 years
Street Lighting	25 years
Traffic Signals	25 years
Unclassified Roads	25 years
Roads and Sewers	25 years
Sea Walls	100 years

#### Revenue Expenditure Funded from Capital Under Statute

The cost of Revenue Expenditure Funded from Capital Under Statute is charged to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Account. An amount of £5.614m (£7.043m in 2023/24) has been charged to Services and is shown as a reconciling item within Note 5 (Adjustments between Accounting Basis and Funding Basis under Regulations). This was financed by corporate resources of £0.288m (nil in 2023/24), capital grants of £5.232m (£6.574m in 2023/24), capital receipts of nil (£0.373m in 2023/24) and prudential borrowing of £0.094m (£0.096m in 2023/24).

#### Capital Commitments

At 31 March 2025 the Council has entered into a number of contracts for the construction or enhancement of Property, Plant & Equipment in 2024/25 and future years. The commitments are:

Scheme	Total Project Budget	Expenditure over Years to 31 March 25	Commitment
	£000s	£000s	£000s
Highlight	34,650	21,585	13,065
Hill View, Greatham Housing Scheme	2,168	2,160	8
Crematorium Refurbishment	844	665	179
The Star Centre	700	666	34
Start - Substance Misuse Service	3,600	208	3,392

#### Surplus Assets - Fair Value Disclosures

Details of the Authority's surplus assets and information about the fair value hierarchy at 31 March 2025 are as follows:

Recurring fair value measurements using:	Quoted prices in active markets for identical assets (Level 1)	Other significant observable inputs (Level 2)	Significant unobservable inputs (Level 3)	Fair Value as at 31 March 2025
	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s
Surplus Assets	-	5,438	2,651	8,089
Total	-	<b>5,438</b>	<b>2,651</b>	<b>8,089</b>

No properties transferred between Level 3 and Level 2 during the year.

## SECTION 3 : Statement of Accounts

### Note 14: Non-Current Assets - Property, Plant & Equipment

#### Significant Observable Inputs – Level 2

The surplus assets within this input level are mainly measured using sales and valuations of comparable properties to establish market values. Market Conditions are such that there are similar properties that are actively purchased and sold and the level of observable inputs are significant, leading to the properties being categorised at Level 2 in the fair value hierarchy. Assets with development potential are measured to reflect potential development value.

#### Significant Unobservable Inputs – Level 3

The surplus assets within this input level are measured as in Level 2. However, they are categorised as Level 3 in the fair value hierarchy as the measurement technique uses significant unobservable inputs to determine the fair value measurements and there is no reasonably available information that indicates that market participants would use different assumptions.

#### Change in Valuation Method

There has been no change in the valuation method from 2023/24. In 2024/25 the estimation of the fair value of the Council's Surplus Assets is based on Fair Value Market Value.

#### Revaluations

The Council carries out a rolling programme that ensures that all Property, Plant and Equipment is revalued at least every five years. All valuations were carried out internally and valuations are based on certificates issued by the Council's Strategic Asset Manager, Mr T Wynn, a member of the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors. Valuations of land and buildings were carried out in accordance with the methodologies and bases for estimation set out in the professional standards of the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors. Valuations of vehicles, plant, furniture and equipment are based on depreciated historic cost.

The significant assumptions applied in estimating the fair values unless otherwise noted in the valuation reports are that properties:

- are in good condition and repair;
- are freehold and with vacant possession;
- will continue to be used by the Council into the foreseeable future;
- do not contravene planning and other statutory matters.

The following statement shows the progress of the Council's rolling programme for the revaluation of non-current assets. The basis for the valuation is set out in the Statement of Accounting Policies.

	Operational Assets					
	Council Dwellings £000s	Other Land & Buildings £000s	Vehicles, Plant, Furniture & Equipment £000s	Surplus Assets £000s	Right-of-Use £000s	Total £000s
<b>Valued at Historical Cost</b>	-	-	12,770	-	410	13,180
<b>Valued at fair value as at:</b>						
2024/2025	14,165	78,378	-	4,569	4	97,116
2023/2024	-	31,868	-	334	-	32,202
2022/2023	-	29,741	-	751	-	30,492
2021/2022	-	610	-	2,349	-	2,959
2020/2021	-	111	-	86	-	197
<b>Total</b>	<b>14,165</b>	<b>140,708</b>	<b>12,770</b>	<b>8,089</b>	<b>414</b>	<b>176,146</b>

## SECTION 3 : Statement of Accounts

### Note 15: Non-Current Assets - Property, Plant & Equipment - Revaluations

The following is an analysis of the Revaluation Reserve by asset type.

2023/24 £000s		2024/25 £000s
1,719	Council Dwellings	1,591
60,874	Other Land & Buildings	62,627
7	Community Assets	7
3,759	Surplus Assets	4,242
1,590	Investment Properties	1,649
8,487	Heritage Assets	9,040
<b>76,436</b>		<b>79,156</b>

### Note 16: Non-Current Assets - Right-Of-Use Assets

The Council adopted IFRS16 Leases with effect from 1 April 2024 and applied it retrospectively with the cumulative effect recognised as at that date. This means that the Right-Of-Use (ROU) assets and lease liabilities have been calculated as if IFRS16 had always been applied but recognised in 2024/25 and not by adjusting prior year figures. The main impact of the requirements of IFRS16 is that, for some arrangements previously accounted for as an operating lease, a ROU asset and lease liability are now included on the balance sheet.

The lease liability was measured at the present value of the lease payment, discounted at the rate uplift in the lease. If this was not readily determined, the Council applied an incremental borrowing rate specific to the term and start date of the lease using PWLB rates.

The Council has decided to apply recognition exemptions to short term leases that have a term of less than 12 months (including leases that expire within 12 months of 31 March 2025) and low value items of less than £0.010m. This expenditure continues to be expensed to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement.

Of the nine properties included in 2023/24 operating leases, eight are now classified ROU assets. Additionally, four printers and one franking machine are now classified as ROU assets. These are included within Note 14 - Non-Current Assets - Property, Plant & Equipment.

## SECTION 3 : Statement of Accounts

### Note 16: Non-Current Assets - Right-of-Use Assets

#### Council as Lessee

Change in value of ROU assets held under leases by the Council:

	<b>Land and Buildings £000s</b>	<b>Vehicle, Plant and Equipment £000s</b>	<b>Total £000s</b>
Balance at 1 April 2024	-	-	-
New ROU recognised	503	39	542
Balance at 1 April 2024	503	39	542
Additions	-	15	15
Revaluations	(38)	-	(38)
Depreciation and amortisation	(92)	(13)	(105)
Balance at 31 March 2025	<b>373</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>414</b>

#### **Transactions under leases**

The authority incurred the following expenses and cash flows in relation to leases:

	<b>2024/25 £000s</b>
<b>Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement</b>	
Interest expenses on lease liabilities	15
Expenses relating to exempt leases of low value items	6
<b>Cash Flow Statement</b>	
Minimum lease payments	136

#### **Maturity analysis of lease liabilities**

The lease liabilities are due to be settled over the following time bands (measured at the undiscounted amounts of expected cash payments):

	<b>2024/25 £000s</b>
Not later than one year	109
Later than one year & not later than five years	256
Later than five years	76
Finance costs payable in the future	289
<b>Total undiscounted liabilities</b>	<b>730</b>

## SECTION 3 : Statement of Accounts

### Note 17: Operating Leases

The Council accounted for a number of administrative buildings under operating leases as at 31 March 2024. These are now classified as ROU Assets and detailed in Note 16. Vehicles for staff are still classified as operating leases, with typical lives of five years. The future minimum lease payments due under non-cancellable leases in future years are:

#### Council as lessee

2023/24 £000s	<b>Future minimum lease payments due</b>	<b>2024/25 £000s</b>
220	Not later than one year	487
182	Later than one year & not later than five years	429
11	Later than five years	-
<u>413</u>		<u>916</u>

#### Council as lessor

2023/24 £000s	<b>Future minimum lease payments receivable</b>	<b>2024/25 £000s</b>
678	Not later than one year	1,136
1,758	Later than one year & not later than five years	1,884
2,008	Later than five years	1,752
<u>4,444</u>		<u>4,772</u>

The Council leases out property and equipment under operating leases for the following purposes:

- for the provision of community services, such as sports facilities, tourism services and community centres;
- for economic development purposes to provide suitable affordable accommodation for local businesses;
- for the provision of housing accommodation as a result of leasing 22 of its renovated former empty properties to Mears, 10 to Community Campus, three to Nacro and six to New Walk.

At 31 March 2025 the minimum payments expected to be received under non-cancellable sub-leases was nil (nil as at 31 March 2024).

The expenditure charged to the Comprehensive Expenditure Statement during the years in relation to these leases was:

2023/24 £000s		<b>2024/25 £000s</b>
	<b>Payments recognised as an expense</b>	
682	Minimum lease payments	471
(132)	Sub-lease payments	(471)
<u>550</u>	<b>Total</b>	<u>-</u>

## SECTION 3 : Statement of Accounts

### Note 18: Non-Current Assets - Heritage Assets

Reconciliation of the carrying value of Heritage Assets held by the Council:

2024/25	Museum Exhibits & Art Collection	Civic Collection	Sculptures, Monuments & War Memorials	Total
Cost or Valuation	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s
At 1 April 2024	16,938	461	1,411	18,810
Additions	3	-	-	3
Disposals	-	-	-	-
Revaluations	553	-	-	553
<b>At 31 March 2025</b>	<b>17,494</b>	<b>461</b>	<b>1,411</b>	<b>19,366</b>

2023/24	Museum Exhibits & Art Collection	Civic Collection	Sculptures, Monuments & War Memorials	Total
Cost or Valuation	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s
At 1 April 2023	16,002	354	1,411	17,767
Additions	7	-	-	7
Disposals	-	-	-	-
Revaluations	929	107	-	1,036
At 31 March 2024	16,938	461	1,411	18,810

#### Museum Exhibits & The Art Collection

The Council's Museum Service possesses a collection of historical objects, information and artworks. These are displayed within the Museum of Hartlepool, the Hartlepool Art Gallery and selected buildings such as the Civic Centre and Borough Buildings, either as part of the permanent historical displays or as changing exhibitions. When not on display they are held in secure storage.

The collections are used as a valuable reference collection for researching the history and cultural identity of the town.

Hartlepool has an impressive and important collection of over 1,000 pieces of fine art. The collection is mainly Victorian and Edwardian in period, largely as a result of the founding collection by Sir William Gray. With few exceptions, most subsequent collecting has been the work of artists living or working at least part of their lives in the Hartlepool area. In 2024/25, a collection of artwork by Peter Knox was acquired for £0.002m and a collection of artwork by Jonny Hannah was donated to the Council valued at £0.001m.

The Council also holds collections relating to Hartlepool's maritime heritage and social history. These include ship models, photographs, company records, ephemera and equipment. This also contains around 35,000 plans for the building of approximately 300 ships including the Wingfield Castle.

Almost all of the plans relate to ships built by Gray's shipyard from 1927 to the yards closure in 1961. When the shipyard closed, the plans were still of importance and often bought by other ship builders. In the mid 1980s many of the plans were returned to Hartlepool and now feature in the collection.

#### Civic Collection

The Civic Collection includes the Civic Regalia, ceremonial silverware, and a number of decorative artefacts. The Books of Remembrance have been included within the Civic Collection and are held at Historic Cost. The collection was revalued in 2023/24.

#### Valuation of the Collections

Although there is no requirement to have Heritage Assets externally valued, an external valuation was completed during 2024/25. The External Valuers Anderson & Garland Ltd carried out an insurance based valuation of the assets. Museum exhibits and Works of Art were valued at £17.494m.

#### Sculptures, Monuments & War Memorials

The Council has recorded eleven Public Works of Art, nine Sculptures and six War Memorials which are considered to principally contribute towards this category of asset.

#### Policy and Management

The Council has an Acquisitions & Disposals Policy in place which sets out the acquisition, preservation, management and disposal of Heritage Assets. This is available on request.

## SECTION 3 : Statement of Accounts

### Note 19: Non-Current Assets - Investment Property

The following items of income and expense have been accounted for in the Financing and Investment Income and Expenditure line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement:

2023/24 £000s		2024/25 £000s
(702)	Rental income from investment property	(754)
241	Direct operating expenses arising from investment property	193
<b>(461)</b>	<b>Net (gain)/loss</b>	<b>(561)</b>

There are no restrictions on the Council's ability to realise the value inherent in its investment property or on the Council's right to the remittance of income and the proceeds of disposal. The Council has no contractual obligations to purchase, construct or develop investment property or carry out repairs, maintenance or enhancement.

The Council leases a number of properties where it also acts as a lessor. These properties are classed as investment properties. The following table summarises the movement in the fair value of investment properties over the year:

2023/24 £000s		2024/25 £000s
9,828	Balance at the start of the year	9,515
-	Additions: Subsequent expenditure	-
-	Disposals	(36)
(323)	Net Gains/(Losses) from fair value adjustments	(368)
10	Transfers: (To)/from Property, Plant & Equipment	229
-	Transfer from assets under construction	285
<b>9,515</b>	<b>Balance at the end of the year</b>	<b>9,625</b>

## SECTION 3 : Statement of Accounts

### Note 19: Non-Current Assets - Investment Property

#### Investment Property - Fair Value Disclosures

Details of the Council's investment properties and information about the fair value hierarchy at 31 March 2025 are as follows:

<i>Recurring fair value measurements using:</i>	Quoted prices in active markets for identical assets (Level 1)	Other significant observable inputs (Level 2)	Significant unobservable inputs (Level 3)	Fair Value as at 31 March 2025
	<b>£000s</b>	<b>£000s</b>	<b>£000s</b>	<b>£000s</b>
Office Units	-	305	1,250	<b>1,555</b>
Commercial Units	-	7,291	779	<b>8,070</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>7,596</b>	<b>2,029</b>	<b>9,625</b>

One property was transferred from Level 3 to Level 2 during the year. This occurred because a greater degree of valuer judgement was employed in this valuation, owing to an increase in the comparable properties. There were no other transfers between levels during the year.

#### Valuation Techniques used to determine level 2 and 3 Fair Values for Investment Properties.

##### Significant Observable Inputs - Level 2

The office and commercial units located in the local authority area are measured using the income approach, by means of the discounted cash flow method, where the expected cash flows from the properties are discounted (using a market-derived discount rate) to establish the present value of the net income stream. The approach has been developed using the authority's own data requiring it to factor in assumptions such as the duration and timing of cash inflows and outflows, rent growth, occupancy level, bad debt levels and maintenance costs. Market conditions are such that similar properties are actively purchased and sold and the level of observable inputs are significant, leading to the properties being categorised at Level 2 in the fair value hierarchy. In the remaining cases the properties are measured directly to capital values by reference to their potential development value.

##### Significant Unobservable Inputs - Level 3

The valuation for office and commercial units within this input level are measured as above. However, they are categorised as Level 3 in the fair value hierarchy as the measurement technique uses significant unobservable inputs to determine the fair value measurements and there is no reasonably available information that indicates that market participants would use different assumptions.

#### Highest and Best Use of Investment Properties

In all cases, the Council's investment properties have been valued on the basis of market value. In many cases the current value of the property is the 'highest and best', most valuable use of the site. However, in some cases such as development sites, the current use is not the 'highest and best' use but the valuations reflect the potential to realise the value through sale or development.

## SECTION 3 : Statement of Accounts

### Note 20: Long Term Debtors

This note sets out the value of Long Term Debtors held by the Council at 31 March 2025.

2023/24 £000s		2024/25 £000s
1,031	Northern School of Art	962
561	NDC Trust	554
77	Trincomalee Trust Loan and Advances	77
39	Car Loans to Employees	40
6	Housing Advances	6
1,302	Other	1,198
<u>3,016</u>		<u>2,837</u>

### Note 21: Long Term Investments

The Council owns 1.1% of the shares in Teesside International Airport Ltd. The shares have been valued at nil for 2024/25 (nil 2023/24). Further details of the Council's long term investments are included in Note 30 Related Party Transactions.

### Note 22: Short Term Debtors

This note sets out amounts owed to the Council as at the 31 March 2025.

2023/24 £000s		2024/25 £000s
5,163	Central Government Bodies	4,033
6,477	Other Local Authorities	10,766
1,465	NHS Bodies	172
	<b>Bodies external to general government:</b>	
4,529	General and Other Debtors	5,820
7,685	Payments in Advance	4,635
10,832	Council Tax Payers	11,231
288	NNDR Payers	597
3,608	Trade Debtors	2,637
<u>40,047</u>		<u>39,891</u>

The above debtor figures are net of an impairment allowance of £9.876m (£9.283m as at 31 March 2024).

## SECTION 3 : Statement of Accounts

### Note 23: Debtors for Local Taxation

The past due but not impaired amount for local taxation (council tax and non-domestic rates) can be analysed by age as follows:

2023/24 £000s		2024/25 £000s
4,181	Less than 1 year	4,255
13,154	More than 1 year	14,664
<u>17,335</u>		<u>18,919</u>

The above analysis does not include impairment of expected credit losses of £7.090m (£6.215m in 2023/24).

### Note 24: Cash and Cash Equivalents

This note sets out details of the Council's cash in hand and instant access investment accounts in addition to the overdraft included in the Liabilities section of the Balance Sheet.

2023/24 £000s		2024/25 £000s
	<b>Assets</b>	
66	Bank and Imprests	65
9,849	Liquidity Investment Accounts	8,426
<u>9,915</u>		<u>8,491</u>
	<b>Liabilities</b>	
(6,273)	Bank Overdraft	(2,828)
<u>3,642</u>		<u>5,663</u>

## SECTION 3 : Statement of Accounts

### Note 25: Provisions

Total provisions at 31 March 2025 were £3.728m (£3.753m in 2023/2024), as detailed below.

#### Current Liabilities

2023/24 £000s		2024/25			Total £000s
		Other (Note 1) £000s	Rating Appeals (Note 2) £000s	MMI Insurance (Note 3) £000s	
2,086	<b>Balance at 1 April</b>	460	2,130	-	<b>2,590</b>
701	Additional provisions made in year	-	2,438	-	<b>2,438</b>
(198)	Amounts used in year	(13)	(2,329)	(16)	<b>(2,358)</b>
-	Transfer in Year	-	-	32	<b>32</b>
-	Unused amounts reversed in year	(105)	-	-	<b>(105)</b>
2,589	<b>Balance at 31 March</b>	342	2,239	16	<b>2,597</b>

#### Long Term Liabilities

2023/24 £000s		2024/25		Total £000s
		Contaminated Land (Note 4) £000s	MMI Insurance (Note 3) £000s	
1,164	<b>Balance at 1 April</b>	634	529	<b>1,163</b>
-	Additional provisions made in year	-	-	-
-	Amounts used in year	-	-	-
-	Transfers in Year	-	(32)	<b>(32)</b>
-	Unused amounts reversed in year	-	-	-
1,164	<b>Balance at 31 March</b>	634	497	<b>1,131</b>

Note 1 - Other - this provision has been created to cover planning appeals and other potential legal cost liabilities. The provision is based on a prudent estimate of the likely costs. However, the timing of these payments is uncertain.

Note 2 - Rating Appeals - following the implementation of the Business Rates Retention Scheme in 2013/14, this provision is earmarked to fund backdated appeals as a result of Rateable Value changes. These costs were previously met by Central Government.

Note 3 - In September 1992 Municipal Mutual Insurance (MMI), the Council's former insurers, ceased accepting new business. MMI and its policyholders, including local authorities, have established a Scheme of Arrangement for the orderly run down of the company. MMI do not have enough assets to meet the claims and liabilities currently outstanding. The Scheme of Arrangement provides that, if there is a likelihood of a shortfall, MMI can reclaim from the major policyholders part of the claims paid from 1 October 1992. The Scheme of Arrangement under section 899 of the Companies Act 2006 was triggered in November 2012. From April 2016, the Creditors Committee set a levy rate of 25% (previously 15%) based on a percentage share of the liabilities outstanding. Therefore the Council has recognised a £0.513m provision in the accounts for these liabilities.

Note 4 - Contaminated Land - in accordance with the Environmental Protection Act 1990, a provision for the Council's obligations arising from decontamination costs of areas of contaminated land where there is a significant possibility of causing significant harm to human health.

## SECTION 3 : Statement of Accounts

### Note 26: Short Term Creditors

This note sets out amounts owed by the Council as at 31 March 2025.

2023/24 £000s		2024/25 £000s
7,388	Central Government Bodies	7,985
1,750	Other Local Authorities	3,219
221	NHS Bodies	390
	<b>Bodies external to General Government:</b>	
7,957	General and Other Creditors	12,617
3,895	Trade Creditors	5,093
4,901	Employee Absences	3,372
1,048	Income in Advance	578
905	Council Tax Payers	965
328	NNDR Payers	765
<u>28,393</u>		<u>34,984</u>

### Note 27: Grant Income & Taxation

#### Credited to Taxation and Non Specific Grant Income

The Council credited the following grants, contributions and donations to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement in 2024/25.

2023/24 £000s		2024/25 £000s
49,333	Council Tax Income	51,593
14,591	Business Rates Income	15,122
11,910	NNDR - Top-Up	12,587
9,243	Revenue Support Grant	9,855
6,870	Business Rates Relief	7,375
447	New Homes Bonus Grant	1,224
1,152	Local Services Support Grant	199
6,371	Capital - Tees Valley Combined Authority	16,040
-	Capital - Sport England	2,425
2,853	Capital - Other Capital Grants & Contributions	1,671
781	Capital - Devolved Formula Capital Grant	946
-	Capital - Environment Agency	498
638	Capital - Section 106	204
4,430	Capital - Levelling Up	90
9,188	Capital - MHCLG	-
693	Capital - Homes England	-
<u>118,500</u>	<b>Total</b>	<u>119,829</u>

## SECTION 3 : Statement of Accounts

### Note 27: Grant Income & Taxation

#### Credited to Services

2023/24 £000s		2024/25 £000s
42,818	Dedicated Schools Grant	46,460
24,803	Housing Benefit Subsidy	25,412
9,001	Social Care Support Grant	11,696
10,044	Other Department for Education Grants	11,227
9,666	Public Health Grant	9,796
8,974	Better Care Fund	9,482
6,595	Other Grants	5,988
5,358	Improved Better Care Fund (iBCF)	5,358
1,885	Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government	2,791
2,090	Home Office	2,940
2,637	Pupil Premium	2,437
1,936	Adult Social Care - Market Sustainability and Improvement Fund	2,192
1,986	Household Support Fund	1,986
923	Department of Health Grants	1,736
1,651	Disabled Facility Grant	1,550
751	Adult Social Care - Discharge Grant	1,252
673	Supporting Families	721
471	Housing Benefit and Local Council Tax Support Administration Grants	434
2,684	Youth Employment Initiative	333
389	Other COVID-Related Grants	193
467	Department for Work & Pensions	135
37	Education and Skills Funding Agency	45
9	Contain Outbreak Management Fund	-
<b>135,848</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>144,164</b>

#### Current Liabilities

The Council has received a number of grants, contributions and donations that have yet to be recognised as income as they have conditions attached to them that will require the monies or property to be returned if the conditions are not met. The balances at the year-end are as follows:

#### Grant Receipts in Advance (Capital Grants)

2023/24 £000s		2024/25 £000s
2,150	Other Department for Education Grants	3,267
1,912	Section 106/278	2,838
2,339	Tees Valley Combined Authority	2,104
-	Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs	806
819	Other Capital Grants & Contributions	245
506	Environment Agency	450
103	Disabled Facilities Grant	-
<b>7,829</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>9,710</b>

## SECTION 3 : Statement of Accounts

### Note 27: Grant Income & Taxation

#### Grant Receipts in Advance (Revenue Grants)

2023/24 £000s		2024/25 £000s
1,334	Other Department for Education	1,156
-	Revenue Support Grant	913
905	Tees Valley Combined Authority	90
256	Other Grants	62
206	Education and Skills Funding Agency	-
<u>2,701</u>	<b>Total</b>	<u>2,221</u>

#### Long-Term Liabilities

#### Grant Receipts in Advance (Capital Grants)

2023/24 £000s		2024/25 £000s
7,658	Section 106	9,648
102	Devolved Formula Capital Grant (DfE)	-
1,195	Other Department for Education Grants	-
432	Other Capital Grants & Contributions	31
<u>9,387</u>	<b>Total</b>	<u>9,679</u>

### Note 28: Other Long Term Liabilities

The note below shows the Council's other long term liabilities as at 31 March 2025:

- the outstanding principal on the Council's ROU Assets;
- Section 38 agreements with developers;
- net pensions liability.

2023/24 £000s		2024/25 £000s	Note
-	Lease liability	333	16
923	Section 38 Liability	1,007	
7,770	Net Pensions Liability	6,938	42
<u>8,693</u>		<u>8,278</u>	

## SECTION 3 : Statement of Accounts

### Note 29: Unusable Reserves

The Unusable Reserves are shown below.

2023/24 £000s		2024/25 £000s	Table
76,436	Revaluation Reserve	<b>79,156</b>	1
112,891	Capital Adjustment Account	<b>129,868</b>	2
(7,770)	Pensions Reserve	<b>(6,938)</b>	3
366	Deferred Capital Receipts Reserve	<b>366</b>	4
984	Collection Fund Adjustment Account	<b>1,128</b>	5
(4,901)	Accumulated Absences Account	<b>(3,372)</b>	6
(1,589)	Dedicated Schools Grant Adjustment Account	<b>(4,932)</b>	7
176,417		<b>195,276</b>	

#### Table 1 - Revaluation Reserve

The Revaluation Reserve contains the gains made by the Council arising from increases in the value of its Property, Plant and Equipment. The balance is reduced when assets with accumulated gains are:

- revalued downwards or impaired and the gains are lost;
- used in the provision of services and the gains are consumed through depreciation;
- disposed of and the gains are realised.

The Reserve contains only revaluation gains accumulated since 1 April 2007, the date that the Reserve was created. Accumulated gains arising before that date are consolidated into the balance on the Capital Adjustment Account.

2023/24 £000s		2024/25 £000s
75,305	<b>Balance at 1 April</b>	76,436
10,766	Upward revaluation of assets	10,173
(3,325)	Downward revaluation of assets not charged to the Surplus/Deficit on the Provision of Services	(4,630)
7,441	Surplus or (Deficit) on revaluation of non-current assets not posted to the Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services	<b>5,543</b>
(1,290)	Difference between fair value depreciation and historical cost depreciation	(1,308)
-	Write off of Revaluation Reserve following Category Transfer	(54)
(5,020)	Accumulated gains/(losses) on assets sold, scrapped or decommissioned	(1,461)
(6,310)	Amount written off to the Capital Adjustment Account	<b>(2,823)</b>
76,436	<b>Balance at 31 March</b>	<b>79,156</b>

## SECTION 3 : Statement of Accounts

**Table 2 -Capital Adjustment Account**

The Capital Adjustment Account absorbs the timing differences arising from the different arrangements for accounting for the consumption of non-current assets and for financing the acquisition, construction or enhancement of those assets under statutory provisions. The Account is debited with the cost of acquisition, construction or enhancement as depreciation, impairment losses and amortisations are charged to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement (with reconciling postings from the Revaluation Reserve to convert fair value figures to a historical cost basis). The Account is credited with the amounts set aside by the Council as finance for the costs of acquisition, construction and enhancement.

The Account contains accumulated gains and losses on Investment Properties and gains recognised on donated assets that have yet to be consumed by the Council.

The Account also contains revaluation gains accumulated on Property, Plant and Equipment before 1 April 2007, the date that the Revaluation Reserve was created to hold such gains. Note 5 provides details of the source of all the transactions posted to the Account, apart from those involving the Revaluation Reserve.

2023/24 £000s		2024/25 £000s
118,721	<b>Balance at 1 April</b>	112,891
	Reversal of items relating to capital expenditure debited or credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement:	
(12,133)	- Charges for depreciation and impairment of non-current assets	(9,036)
(2,617)	- Revaluation gains/(losses) on Property, Plant and Equipment	(1,051)
(7,043)	- Revenue expenditure funded from capital under statute	(5,614)
(15,753)	- Amounts of non-current assets written off on disposal or sale as part of the gain/loss on disposal to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement	(5,694)
874	Reversal of Lease Liability	-
(36,672)		<b>(21,395)</b>
6,309	Adjusting amounts written out of the Revaluation Reserve	2,823
(30,363)	Net written out amount of the cost of non-current assets consumed in the year	<b>(18,572)</b>
	Capital financing applied in the year:	
1,338	- Use of the Capital Receipts Reserve to finance new capital expenditure	124
45	- Use of the Major Repairs Reserve to finance new capital expenditure	263
350	- Use of the Capital Receipts Reserve to repay prudential borrowing	-
-	- Use of Corporate Reserves to finance new capital expenditure	128
19,035	- Capital grants and contributions credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement that have been applied to capital financing	23,875
1,415	- Application of grants to capital financing from the Capital Grants Unapplied Account	4,622
2,648	- Statutory provision for the financing of capital investment charged against the General Fund	2,810
25	- Direct revenue funding credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement that have been applied to capital financing	4,095
24,856		<b>35,917</b>
(323)	Movements in the market value of Investment Properties debited or credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement	(368)
<u>112,891</u>	<b>Balance at 31 March</b>	<u><b>129,868</b></u>

## SECTION 3 : Statement of Accounts

**Table 3 - Pensions Reserve**

The Pensions Reserve absorbs the timing differences arising from the different arrangements for accounting for post employment benefits and for funding benefits in accordance with statutory provisions. The Council accounts for post employment benefits in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement as the benefits are earned by employees accruing years of service, updating the liabilities recognised to reflect inflation, changing assumptions and investment returns on any resources set aside to meet the costs. However, statutory arrangements require benefits earned to be financed as the Council makes employer's contributions to pension funds or eventually pays pensions for which it is directly responsible. The debit balance on the Pensions Reserve therefore shows a substantial shortfall in the benefits earned by past and current employees and the resources the Council has set aside to meet them. The statutory arrangements will ensure that funding will have been set aside by the time the benefits come to be paid.

2023/24 £000s		2024/25 £000s
75,745	<b>Balance at 1 April</b>	(7,770)
47,756	Remeasurement of defined liability on pensions assets and liabilities	74,580
	Net acquisition/(disposal) of pensions assets and liabilities	
(8,121)	Reversal of items relating to retirement benefits debited or credited to the Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement	(11,198)
8,210	Employer's pensions contributions and direct payments to pensioners payable in the year	8,868
(131,360)	Impact of Asset Ceiling	(71,418)
<u>(7,770)</u>	<b>Balance at 31 March</b>	<u><b>(6,938)</b></u>

**Table 4 - Deferred Capital Receipts Reserve**

The Deferred Capital Receipts Reserve holds the gains recognised on the disposal of non-current assets but for which cash settlement has yet to take place. Under statutory arrangements, the Council does not treat these gains as usable for financing new capital expenditure until they are backed by cash receipts. When the deferred cash settlement eventually takes place, amounts are transferred to the Capital Receipts Reserve.

2023/24 £000s		2024/25 £000s
366	<b>Balance at 1 April</b>	366
-	Transfers in Year	-
<u>366</u>	<b>Balance at 31 March</b>	<u><b>366</b></u>

**Table 5 - Collection Fund Adjustment Account**

The Collection Fund Adjustment Account manages the differences arising from the recognition of council tax and non-domestic rates income in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement as it falls due from council tax payers and business rates payers compared with the statutory arrangements for paying across amounts to the General Fund from the Collection Fund.

2023/24 £000s		2024/25 £000s
113	<b>Balance at 1 April</b>	984
871	Amount by which Council Tax and Non-Domestic Rates income credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement is different from Council Tax and Non-Domestic Rates income calculated for the year in accordance with statutory requirements	144
<u>984</u>	<b>Balance at 31 March</b>	<u><b>1,128</b></u>

## SECTION 3 : Statement of Accounts

### Table 6 - Accumulated Absences Account

The Accumulated Absences Account absorbs the differences that would otherwise arise on the General Fund Balance from accruing for compensated absences earned but not taken in the year, e.g. annual leave entitlement carried forward at 31 March 2025. Statutory arrangements require that the impact on the General Fund Balance is neutralised by transfers to or from the Account.

2023/24 £000s		2024/25 £000s
(3,035)	<b>Balance at 1 April</b>	(4,901)
3,035	Settlement or cancellation of accrual made at the end of the preceding year	4,901
<u>(4,901)</u>	Amounts accrued at the end of the current year	<u>(3,372)</u>
(1,866)	Amount by which officer remuneration charged to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement on an accruals basis is different from remuneration chargeable in the year in accordance with statutory requirements	1,529
<u><u>(4,901)</u></u>	<b>Balance at 31 March</b>	<u><u>(3,372)</u></u>

### Table 7 - Dedicated Schools Grant Adjustment Account

The Dedicated Schools Grant Adjustment Account is a statutory ringfenced unusable reserve required by the School and Early Years Finance Regulations. The regulations require that, where an authority has a deficit in respect of its Schools Budget, the authority:

- must not charge to a revenue account an amount in respect of that deficit;
- must charge the amount of that deficit to an account established, charged and used solely for the purpose of recognising deficits in respect of its Schools Budget.

The Council has recorded the deficit as an unusable reserve in line with the regulations.

2023/24 £000s		2024/25 £000s
-	<b>Balance at 1 April</b>	(1,589)
(1,589)	In year Dedicated Schools Grant Deficit	(3,343)
<u><u>(1,589)</u></u>	<b>Balance at 31 March</b>	<u><u>(4,932)</u></u>

### Note 30: Related Party Transactions

The Council is required to disclose material transactions with related parties – bodies or individuals that have the potential to control or influence the Council or to be controlled or influenced by the Council. Disclosure of these transactions allows readers to assess the extent to which the Council might have been constrained in its ability to operate independently or might have secured the ability to limit another party's ability to bargain freely with the Council.

#### Central Government

Central Government has significant influence over the general operations of the Council – it is responsible for providing the statutory framework within which the Council operates, provides the majority of its funding in the form of grants and prescribes the terms of many of the transactions that the Council has with other parties (e.g. council tax bills, housing benefits). Grants received from government departments, including grant receipts outstanding at 31 March 2025, are shown in Note 27.

#### Members

Members of the Council have direct control over the Council's Financial and Operating Policies. The total of Members' allowances paid in 2024/25 is shown in Note 11. Members are required to keep their declarations of interest up-to-date. These have been reviewed and there are no disclosures to report.

The Council pays grants and/or makes contractual payments to voluntary organisations/charities where an individual Councillor(s) may sit on the management board.

These payments are either funded from the Council's own resources, or specific grants secured by the Council. In many cases funding is allocated by officers under delegated budget management responsibility. Where the final funding decision is made by Councillors, which would either be individual policy committees or Council, this decision would be made on the basis of an officer report at a formal Committee / Council meeting. These reports, meetings and minutes are open to the public.

#### Officers

Members of the Executive Leadership Team are required to provide an annual declaration of interest and to keep this under review during the year. All declarations have been reviewed and there are no disclosures to report.

#### Other Public Bodies (subject to common control by Central Government)

In 2024/25 the Council provided services to Cleveland Fire Authority amounting to £0.255m. This included various support services, predominantly in relation to financial services, for which the Council received net income of £0.189m (£0.180m in 2023/2024).

The Council continues to provide a range of support services to Thirteen Group such as Legionella Management. The income from these services amounted to £0.087m (£0.093m in 2023/24) which represented the cost of the service provided.

The Council receives income from 'Right to Buy' receipts in relation to the sale of former Council dwellings under the terms of the Large Scale Voluntary Transfer (LSVT) of its council housing stock to Thirteen Group in 2004. Sales in 2024/25 amounted to £0.045m (£0.153m in 2023/24).

The Council provides a range of Support Services to Hartlepool Academies, including Property Services, Payroll Services, Building Cleaning and School Catering. The income from these services amounted to £4.899m (£5.105m in 2023/24).

The Council delivers 'The Children's Hub' on behalf of Stockton-On-Tees Borough Council. 'The Children's Hub' is an integrated single point of access across North Tees providing multi-agency triage and assessment of enquiries about children. Other integrated partners within 'The Children's Hub' include Cleveland Police, Harbour, Harrogate and District NHS Trust and Children and Adolescence Mental Health Services (CAMHS). Stockton Council contributed £0.879m, (£0.822m in 2023/24) towards the cost of this service.

The Hartlepool and Stockton Local Safeguarding Children Partnership (HSSCP) is a multi-agency partnership involving both local authorities, the Integrated Care Board (ICB) and Cleveland Police to co-ordinate their safeguarding services and act as a strategic leadership group. In 2024/25 Stockton Council contributed £0.091m (£0.091m in 2023/24), the ICB £0.065m (£0.065m 2023/24) and the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) £0.065m (£0.065m in 2023/24).

The Council provides cyclical maintenance and other construction services to Middlesbrough Council. The income from these services amounted to £0.062m (£0.077m in 2023/24).

As required by the Health and Social Care Act 2012, the Council has entered into a contract with Healthwatch Hartlepool for a value of £0.095m (£0.091m in 2023/24.)

## SECTION 3 : Statement of Accounts

### Note 30: Related Party Transactions

#### Other

The Council holds minority shares in Teesside International Airport Ltd.

The Council's shareholding in Teesside International Airport Ltd is 1.1%. The Council has assessed a number of factors in detail and determined the valuation of the shares at nil for 2024/25 (nil in 2023/24).

Issues of note include a deficit on the Profit and Loss Account of £6.625m (previous year deficit of £4.456m) and a net liability position of £21.121m (previous year net liability position of £14.496m). Further information and copies of their accounts are available from their Registered Office – Teesside International Airport Limited, Darlington, Durham, DL2 1LU.

The Council has not produced group accounts on the grounds of materiality.

### Note 31: External Audit Costs

The Council has incurred the following costs in relation to the audit of the Statement of Accounts, certification of grant claims and statutory inspections and to non-audit services provided by the Council's external auditors:

RESTATED 2023/24 £000s		2024/25 £000s
324	Fees payable in respect of external audit services carried out by the appointed auditor for the year	322
26	Fees payable for the certification of grant claims and returns for the year	28
<u>350</u>		<u>350</u>

The above shows fees payable in respect of external audit services carried out by the appointed auditor Forvis Mazars LLP. The 2023/24 figures have been updated to reflect the actual cost of the 2023/24 audit. The 2024/25 figures are based on an estimate. The Council received £0.041m from the Ministry of Housing, Communities, and Local Government (MHCLG) in relation to the Redmond Review in May 2024. This is not reflected above.

## SECTION 3 : Statement of Accounts

### Note 32: Dedicated Schools Grant

The Council's expenditure on schools is primarily funded by grant monies provided by the Department for Education (DfE), the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG). The DfE recouped the funding for all existing and new academies in the Borough. DSG is ringfenced and can only be applied to meet expenditure properly included in the Schools Budget, as defined in the School and Early Years Finance (England) Regulations 2025. The Schools Budget includes elements for a range of educational services provided on an authority-wide basis and for the Individual Schools Budget, which is divided into a budget share for each maintained school.

Details of the deployment of DSG receivable for 2024/25 are as follows:

	Central Expenditure £000s	Individual Schools Budget £000s	Total £000s
Final DSG for 2024/25 before academy and high needs recoupment			111,943
Academy and high needs figure recouped for 2024/25			65,027
Total DSG after academy and high needs recoupment for 2024/25			46,916
Plus: Brought Forward from 2023/24			-
Less: Carry forward to 2024/25 agreed in advance			-
Agreed Initial Budget Distribution in 2024/25	27,575	19,341	46,916
In Year Adjustments	(224)	(3)	(227)
Final Budget Distribution for 2024/25	27,351	19,337	46,688
Less: Actual Central Expenditure	(30,694)		(30,694)
Less Actual Individual Schools Budget Deployed to Schools		(19,337)	(19,337)
Plus Local authority contribution for 2024/25	-	-	-
In-year carry forward to 2025/26	-	-	(3,343)
Plus: Carry-Forward to 2025/26 agreed in advance	-	-	-
Carry forward to 2025/26	-	-	-
DSG unusable reserve at the end of 2023/24	-	-	(1,589)
Addition to DSG unusable reserve at the end of 2024/25	-	-	(3,343)
Total of DSG unusable reserve at the end of 2024/25	-	-	(4,932)
Net DSG position at the end of 2024/25	-	-	<b>(4,932)</b>

At 31 March 2025, the Authority has an overall deficit position on Dedicated School Grant reserves of £4.932m.

The total DSG for 2024/25 of £111.944m excludes the final adjusted allocation for the Early Years Block that is expected in June 2025. As per regulations, this amount is shown as an in-year adjustment for 2024/25.

Individual School Budgets were increased by £0.003m in 2024/25 to reflect permanently excluded pupils and the clawback of pupil funding permitted in the regulations. The increase is included within the value of in-year adjustments.

Schools' Forum approved a transfer of £0.097m from the Central School Services Block to the Schools Block in 2024/25 and a transfer of £0.334m from the Schools Block to the High Needs Block.

## SECTION 3 : Statement of Accounts

### Note 33: Capital Expenditure and Capital Financing

The total amount of capital expenditure incurred in the year is shown in the table below (including the recognition of Right-of-Use Assets), together with the resources that have been used to finance it. Where capital expenditure is to be financed in future years by charges to revenue as assets are used by the Council, the expenditure results in an increase in the Capital Financing Requirement (CFR), a measure of the capital expenditure incurred historically by the Council that has yet to be financed. The CFR is analysed in the second part of this note.

2023/24 £000s		2024/25 £000s
113,660	<b>Opening Capital Financing Requirement</b>	112,570
	<b>Capital investment</b>	
17,663	Property, Plant and Equipment	32,225
-	Right of Use Assets	542
7	Heritage Assets	3
7,043	Revenue Expenditure Funded from Capital under Statute	5,614
(73)	Long Term Debtors	(76)
	<b>Other Movements</b>	
(874)	Writing out lease Liability	-
	<b>Sources of Finance</b>	
(18,382)	Government Grants and Other Contributions	(23,875)
(343)	Grant to repay Borrowing	-
(1,415)	Application of Capital Grant from the Capital Grants Unapplied Account	(4,622)
(310)	Application of Capital Grant to fund HRA Appropriation	-
(350)	Application of Capital Receipts to Repay Borrowing	-
(1,338)	Capital receipts	(124)
-	Corporate Reserves	(128)
(45)	Major Repairs Reserve	(263)
	<i>Sums set aside from revenue:</i>	
(25)	Direct Revenue Contributions	(4,095)
(2,648)	Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP)	(2,810)
<u>112,570</u>	<b>Closing Capital Financing Requirement</b>	<u>114,961</u>
	<b>Explanation of movements in year</b>	
(350)	Application of Capital Receipts to Repay Borrowing	-
(310)	Application of Capital Grant to fund HRA Appropriation	-
(343)	Grant to repay Borrowing	-
(73)	Repayments by Long Term Debtors	(76)
(874)	Increase / (Decrease) in Lease Obligations	557
3,508	Increase / (Decrease) in borrowing unsupported by government financial assistance	4,720
(2,648)	Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP)	(2,810)
<u>(1,090)</u>	<b>Increase/(decrease) in Capital Financing Requirement</b>	<u>2,391</u>

## SECTION 3 : Statement of Accounts

### Note 34: Financial Instruments

#### Categories of Financial Instruments

The borrowings and investments disclosed in the Balance Sheet are made up of the following categories of financial instruments:

31 March 2024			31 March 2025	
Long Term £000s	Current £000s		Long Term £000s	Current £000s
		<b>Investments at Amortised Cost</b>		
-	43,873	Loans and receivables at Amortised Cost	-	36,199
-	9,849	Liquidity Accounts included in Cash Equivalents	-	8,426
-	53,722	<b>Total Investments at Amortised Cost</b>	-	44,625
-	-	Assets at Fair Value through Other Comprehensive Income (Note 1)	-	-
-	53,722	<b>Total Investments at Amortised Cost</b>	-	<b>44,625</b>
		<b>Debtors</b>		
3,016	11,205	Financial Assets (including Trade Debtors and General and Other Debtors and Long Term Debtors)	2,837	8,457
3,016	11,205	<b>Total debtors</b>	<b>2,837</b>	<b>8,457</b>
		<b>Borrowings at Amortised Cost</b>		
82,837	1,418	Financial liabilities at amortised cost (Note 2)	81,464	1,639
82,837	1,418	<b>Total Borrowings at Amortised Costs</b>	<b>81,464</b>	<b>1,639</b>
		<b>Other Long Term Liabilities</b>		
-	-	Lease liabilities	333	-
-	-	<b>Total Other Long Term Liabilities</b>	<b>333</b>	-
		<b>Creditors</b>		
-	11,851	Financial liabilities carried at contract amount (Trade Creditors and General and Other Creditors)	-	17,710
-	11,851	<b>Total Creditors</b>	-	<b>17,710</b>

Note 1 - The Council holds minority shares in Teesside International Airport Ltd. These share holdings originated through policy initiatives with other Local Authorities and are not held for trading or income generation. Therefore the Council have elected to designate the equity as Fair Value through Other Comprehensive Income.

Note 2 - As required accrued interest relating to long term borrowing is disclosed within the short term borrowing figure on the balance sheet.

## SECTION 3 : Statement of Accounts

### Note 34: Financial Instruments

#### Income, Expense, Gains and Losses

This note comprises details of income, expenses and revaluation losses that relate specifically to financial instruments. Interest expense, interest income and gains or losses on revaluations are included along with other non financial instrument related income and expenditure within the Financing and Investment Income and Expenditure line of the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement.

	2024/25			
	Financial Liabilities measured at amortised cost	Lease Payments	Financial Assets: Loans and receivables at amortised cost	Total
	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s
Interest expense	2,774	-	-	2,774
Interest income	-	-	(3,006)	(3,006)
<b>Net (gain)/loss for the year</b>	<b>2,774</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>(3,006)</b>	<b>(232)</b>

	2023/24			
	Financial Liabilities measured at amortised cost	Lease Payments	Financial Assets: Loans and receivables at amortised cost	Total
	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s
Interest expense	3,199	-	-	3,199
Interest income	-	-	(3,076)	(3,076)
<b>Net (gain)/loss for the year</b>	<b>3,199</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>(3,076)</b>	<b>123</b>

## SECTION 3 : Statement of Accounts

### Note 34: Financial Instruments

#### The Fair Values of Financial Assets and Financial Liabilities that are not measured at Fair Value (but for which Fair Value disclosures are required)

Except for financial assets carried at fair value, all other financial liabilities and financial assets represented by loans and receivables and long-term debtors and creditors are carried in the Balance Sheet at amortised cost. However disclosure of their value is required and is set out below.

Fair value is the price that would be received to sell an asset or paid to transfer a liability in an orderly transaction between market participants at the measurement date. Input to the valuation techniques in respect of assets and liabilities for which fair value is measured or disclosed in the financial statements are categorised within the "fair value hierarchy" as follows:

- Level 1 - Unadjusted quoted market prices for identical assets or liabilities;
- Level 2 - Inputs other than quoted market prices that are either directly or indirectly observable;
- Level 3 - Unobservable inputs.

The fair value of the below assets and liabilities has been assessed by calculating the present value of the cash flows that will take place over the remaining life of the instruments (Level 2 in the fair value hierarchy), using the following assumptions:

- For loans from the PWLB payable, premature repayment rates from the PWLB have been applied to provide the fair value under the PWLB debt redemption procedures;
- For non-PWLB loans payable, premature market rates have been applied to provide the fair value under PWLB debt redemption procedures;
- For loans receivable prevailing benchmark market rates have been used to provide the fair value;
- No early repayment or impairment is recognised;
- Where an instrument has a maturity of less than 12 months or is a trade or other receivable the fair value is taken to be the carrying amount or the billed amount;
- the fair value of trade and other receivables is taken to be the invoiced or billed amount.

The fair values are calculated as follows:

31 March 2024			31 March 2025	
Carrying Amount	Fair Value		Carrying Amount	Fair Value
£000s	£000s		£000s	£000s
<b>Financial Liabilities</b>				
56,672	53,900	Market Loans	56,390	53,153
27,134	25,256	Public Works Loan Board	26,215	22,630
449	142	Non-Market Loans	498	102
11,851	11,851	Trade Creditors and General and Other Creditors	17,710	17,710
-	-	Long Term Lease Liability	333	333
<u>96,106</u>	<u>91,149</u>		<u>101,146</u>	<u>93,928</u>

31 March 2024			31 March 2025	
Carrying Amount	Fair Value		Carrying Amount	Fair Value
£000s	£000s		£000s	£000s
<b>Financial Assets</b>				
53,722	53,722	Money market loans < 1 year	44,625	44,625
11,205	11,205	Short term debtors	8,457	8,457
3,015	3,015	Long term debtors	2,837	2,837
<u>67,942</u>	<u>67,942</u>		<u>55,919</u>	<u>55,919</u>

The fair value of Public Works Loan Board (PWLB) loans of £22.630m measures the economic effect of the terms agreed with the PWLB compared with estimates of the terms that would be offered for market transactions undertaken at the Balance Sheet date. The difference between the carrying amount and the fair value is calculated by applying the PWLB redemption interest rates, which are lower than the borrowing interest rates. The fair value therefore measures the additional interest that the Council will pay over the remaining terms of the loans under the agreements with the PWLB, against what would be paid if the loans were at prevailing market rates, taken to be these lower redemption interest rates. However, it should be noted that the borrowing interest rates on the debt drawn equated to the prevailing borrowing, as opposed to redemption rates at the Balance Sheet date.

## SECTION 3 : Statement of Accounts

### Note 34: Financial Instruments

The Council has a continuing ability to borrow at concessionary rates from the PWLB rather than from the markets. A supplementary measure of the additional interest that the Council will pay as a result of its PWLB commitments for fixed rate loans is to compare the terms of these loans with the new borrowing rates available from the PWLB. If a value is calculated on this basis, the carrying amount of £26.215m would be valued at £20.554m. But, if the Council were to seek to realise the projected gain by repaying the loans to the PWLB, the PWLB would give a discount for the reduced interest income that will be avoided. The exit price for the PWLB loans would be the outstanding loan debt and accrued interest of £26.215m less a discount for the reduced interest income of £3.585m totalling £22.630m.

The fair value of the liabilities is lower than the carrying amount because the Council's portfolio of loans includes a number of fixed rate loans where the interest rate payable is lower than the prevailing rates at the Balance Sheet date. This shows a notional gain (based on economic conditions at 31 March 2025) arising from a commitment to pay interest to lenders below current market rates.

Short term trade debtors and trade creditors are carried at cost as this is a fair approximation of their value.

#### Financial Assets Measured at Fair Value through Other Comprehensive Income

Some of the Authority's financial assets are measured in the Balance Sheet at fair value through Other Comprehensive Income. As these share holdings originated through policy initiatives with other Local Authorities and are not held for trading or income generation the Council have elected to designate the equity as Fair Value through Other Comprehensive Income. These assets are described in the following table which includes the valuation techniques used to measure them.

Recurring fair value measurements	Input level in fair value hierarchy	Valuation technique used to measure fair value	Fair Value	
			31 March 2024	31 March 2025
			£000s	£000s
Equity shareholdings in Teesside International Airport Ltd	Level 3	Based on various factors including reviewing the Business Plan, passenger numbers and historic performance (see below)	-	-
			-	-

#### Equity shareholdings in Teesside International Airport Ltd

The Authority's shareholding in Teesside International Airport Ltd - the shares in this company are not traded in an active market and the fair value has been based on valuation techniques that are not based on observable current market transactions or available market data. The Council has assessed a number of factors in detail to determine the valuation of these shares. At present the Council has determined to value these shares at nil.

#### Changes in Valuation Technique

There has been no change in the valuation technique used during the year for the financial instruments.

### Note 35: Nature and Extent of Risks Arising from Financial Instruments

The Council's activities expose it to a variety of financial risks:

- market risk – the possibility that financial loss might arise for the Council as a result of changes in such measures as interest rates and stock market movements;
- credit risk – the possibility that other parties might fail to pay amounts due to the Council;
- liquidity risk – the possibility that the Council might not have funds available to meet its commitments to make payments;
- re-financing risk - the possibility that the Council might be required to renew a financial instrument on maturity at disadvantageous interest rates or terms.

The Council's overall risk management procedures focus on the unpredictability of financial markets, and are structured to implement suitable controls to minimise these risks. The procedures for risk management are set out through a legal framework in the Local Government Act 2003 and associated regulations. These require the Council to comply with the CIPFA Prudential Code, the CIPFA Code of Practice on Treasury Management in the Public Services and Investment Guidance issued through the Act. Overall, these procedures require the Council to manage risk in the following ways:

- by formally adopting the requirements of the CIPFA Treasury Management Code of Practice;
- by the adoption of a Treasury Policy Statement and treasury management clauses within its financial regulations/standing orders/constitution;
- by approving annually in advance prudential and treasury indicators for the following three years limiting:
  - the Council's overall borrowing;
  - its maximum and minimum exposures to the maturity structure of its debt;
  - its maximum and minimum exposures to fixed and variable rates;
  - its management of interest rate exposure;
  - its maximum annual exposures to investments maturing beyond a year.
- by approving an investment strategy for the forthcoming year setting out its criteria for both investing and selecting investment counterparties in compliance with the Government Guidance.

The annual treasury management strategy which incorporates the prudential indicators was approved by Council on 22 February 2024 and is available on the Council website. The key issues within the strategy were:

- the Authorised Limit for 2024/25 was set at £158m (£146m in 2023/24). This is the maximum limit of external borrowings or other long term liabilities;
- the Operational Boundary was expected to be £148m (£153m in 2023/24). This is the expected level of debt and other long term liabilities during the year;
- the maximum amounts of gross fixed interest rate exposure for borrowing and investments was set at 100% and 100% respectively (100% and 100% respectively in 2023/24);
- the maximum amount of gross variable interest rate exposure for borrowing and investments was set at 75% and 100% respectively (75% and 100% respectively in 2023/24).

These items are reported with the annual Treasury Management strategy which outlines the detailed approach to managing risk in relation to the Council's financial instrument exposure. Actual performance is also reported quarterly to Members. The Audit and Governance Committee provide scrutiny of the Council's treasury activities.

**Note 35: Nature and Extent of Risks Arising from Financial Instruments****Credit Risk**

Credit risk arises from deposits with banks and financial institutions, as well as credit exposures to the Council's customers.

Credit risk is minimised through the Annual Investment Strategy, which requires that deposits are not made with financial institutions unless they meet identified minimum credit criteria, in accordance with the Fitch, Moody's and Standard & Poors Ratings Services. The Annual Investment Strategy also imposes a maximum amount and time to be invested with a financial institution located within each category. Deposits are not made with banks and financial institutions unless they meet the minimum requirements of the investment criteria outlined above. The Council now operates a very restricted counterparty list which is actively managed to reflect continued developments in the banking and financial sector.

The Investment Strategy for 2024/25 was approved by Full Council on 22 February 2024 and is available on the Council's website.

The Council's maximum exposure to credit risk in relation to its investments in banks and building societies of £43.426m cannot be assessed generally as the risk of any institution failing to make interest payments or repay the principal sum will be specific to each individual institution. Recent experience has shown that it is rare for such entities to be unable to meet their commitments. A risk of irrecoverability applies to all of the Council's deposits, however there was no evidence at 31 March 2025 that this was likely to crystallise.

No credit limits were exceeded during the reporting period and the Council does not expect any losses from non-performance by any of its counterparties in relation to deposits.

Customers for goods and services are assessed, taking into account their financial position, past experience and other factors, with individual credit limits being set in accordance with internal ratings in accordance with parameters set by the Council.

**Amounts Arising from Expected Credit Losses**

The following analysis summarises the Council's changes in loss allowances, i.e. bad debt provision for Debtors. The Council has made no loss allowance for other financial assets as the Council has assessed that any risk of default in relation to borrowers are not material.

	Asset Class: Debtors (Financial Assets) <b>£000s</b>
Opening balance	<u>(3,068)</u>
Amounts written off	292
Changes in Impairment of Financial Assets	<u>(9)</u>
Closing balance	<b><u><u>(2,785)</u></u></b>

## SECTION 3 : Statement of Accounts

### Note 35: Nature and Extent of Risks Arising from Financial Instruments

The Council does not generally allow credit for customers, such that £3.548m of the £11.294m Debtors (Financial Assets) balance is past its due date for payment. The past due but not impaired amount can be analysed by age as follows:

31 March 2024 £000s		31 March 2025 £000s
2,445	Less than three months	803
499	Three to six months	985
476	Six months to one year	514
<u>1,547</u>	More than one year	<u>1,246</u>
<u>4,967</u>		<u>3,548</u>

#### Liquidity Risk

The Council has a comprehensive cash flow management system that seeks to ensure that cash is available as needed. If unexpected movements happen, the Council has ready access to borrowings from the money markets and the Public Works Loans Board. There is no significant risk that it will be unable to raise finance to meet its commitments under financial instruments. Instead, the risk is that the Council will be bound to replenish a significant proportion of its borrowings at a time of unfavourable interest rates. The Council sets limits on the maturity structure of its fixed rate borrowing during specified periods. The limits have been set to enable maximum flexibility as experience has shown it is possible to move from 100% long term borrowing to 100% short term borrowing and then back to 100% long term borrowing over a period of two years. Therefore the lower limit was set to nil and the upper limit to £136m, equal to the operational boundary.

The maturity structure of financial liabilities at the year end was as follows:

31 March 2024 £000s		31 March 2025 £000s
1,113	Less than one year	1,144
5,122	Between one and five years	5,189
5,898	Between five and ten years	5,835
4,664	Between ten and fifteen years	4,368
4,328	Between fifteen and twenty years	4,401
4,913	Between twenty and twenty-five years	5,059
6,136	Between twenty-five and thirty years	9,727
9,518	Between thirty and thirty-five years	5,757
1,764	Between thirty-five and forty years	977
217	Between forty and forty-five years	151
<u>40,000</u>	More than forty-five years	<u>40,000</u>
<u>83,673</u>		<u>82,608</u>

All trade and other payables are due to be paid in less than one year.

#### Market Risk

##### Interest Rate Risk

The Council is exposed to risk in terms of its exposure to interest rate movements on its borrowings and investments. Movements in interest rates have a complex impact on the Council. For instance, a rise in interest rates would have the following effects:

- Borrowings at variable rates – the interest expense charged to the Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services will rise;
- Borrowings at fixed rates – the fair value of the liabilities borrowings will fall;
- Investments at variable rates – the interest income credited to the Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services will rise;
- Investments at fixed rates – the fair value of the assets will fall.

## SECTION 3 : Statement of Accounts

### Note 35: Nature and Extent of Risks Arising from Financial Instruments

Borrowings are not carried at fair value, so nominal gains and losses on fixed rate borrowings would not impact on the Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services or Other Comprehensive Income and Expenditure. However, changes in interest payable and receivable on variable rate borrowings and investments will be posted to the Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services and affect the General Fund Balance. Movements in the fair value of fixed rate investments that have a quoted market price will be reflected in Other Comprehensive Income and Expenditure.

A proportion of the Council's long term borrowing (£15m) is held in the form of LOBO (Lender Option Borrower Option) loans from the money markets. These loans are subject to periodic "calls" from the lender. Where the lender decides to "call" a loan, they increase the interest rate of the loan and the Council then has the opportunity to accept the increased rate or to repay the loan. In accordance with the Code of Practice, the Council's LOBOs are included in the maturity analysis according to the end date of the loan rather than when the next call date falls. The Council manages this risk of call in by the lender through the Treasury Management Strategy.

The intention is to move to fixed rate borrowing when rates are at an appropriate level and may require the use of variable rate borrowing in the interim. The Council has maximised the use of its balances to defer borrowing and avoid the risk of default on investments.

According to this assessment strategy, at 31 March 2025, if interest rates had been 1% higher with all other variables held constant, the financial effect would be:

	<b>£000s</b>
Increase in interest receivable on variable rate investments	(446)
Increase in interest payable on borrowings	831
Impact on Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services	<b>385</b>
<hr/>	
Decrease in fair value of fixed rate borrowings liabilities (no impact on the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement)	<b>(11,409)</b>

The impact of a 1% fall in interest rates would be as above but with the movements being reversed.

#### Price Risk

The Council, excluding the pension fund, does not invest in equity shares but does have shareholdings in Teesside International Airport Limited. These shares are all classified as Assets at Fair Value through Other Comprehensive Income, meaning that all movements in price will impact on gains and losses recognised in the Financial Instruments Revaluation Reserve.

#### Foreign Exchange Risk

The Council has no financial assets or liabilities denominated in foreign currencies and thus has no exposure to loss arising from movements in exchange rates.

#### Collateral Risk

During the reporting period the Council held no collateral as security and is therefore not exposed to losses arising from this risk.

## SECTION 3 : Statement of Accounts

### Note 36: Cash Flow Statement - Operating Activities

The cash flows for operating activities include the following items:

2023/24 £000s		2024/25 £000s
3,090	Interest Received	2,939
(2,911)	Interest Paid	(2,526)

### Note 37: Cash Flow Statement - Adjustments for non-cash movements

The surplus or deficit on the provision of services has been adjusted for the following non-cash movements:

2023/24 £000s		2024/25 £000s
9,060	Depreciation	8,958
5,690	Impairment and Downward Valuations	1,129
-	Downward / (Upward) Valuation of Investment Property	-
-	Increase / (Decrease) in Provisions	-
1,522	Increase / (Decrease) in Creditors	3,476
(4,621)	(Increase) / Decrease in Debtors	3,041
(62)	(Increase) / Decrease in Inventories	(8)
(89)	Pension Liability	2,330
1,847	Other non-cash items	424
14,879	Carrying amount of Non-Current Assets Sold	5,694
<b>28,226</b>		<b>25,044</b>

### Note 38: Cash Flow Statement - Adjustments for Investing and Financing Activities

The surplus or deficit on the provision of services has been adjusted for the following items that are investing and financing activities:

2023/24 £000s		2024/25 £000s
(29,956)	Capital Grants credited to surplus or deficit on the provision of services	(23,965)
(647)	Proceeds from the Sale of Property, Plant and Equipment and Investment Property	(436)
7,009	Proceeds from short-term (not considered to be cash equivalents) and long-term investments	7,741
<b>(23,594)</b>		<b>(16,660)</b>

## SECTION 3 : Statement of Accounts

### Note 39: Cash Flow Statement - Investing Activities

2023/24 £000s		2024/25 £000s
(17,750)	Purchase of Property, Plant and Equipment and Investment Property	(29,979)
-	Purchase of Short-term and Long-term Investments	-
-	Other Payments for Investing Activities	-
647	Proceeds from the sale of property, plant and equipment, investment property	436
-	Proceeds from the sale of Short-term and Long-term Investments	-
30,109	Other Receipts from Investing Activities	23,829
<u>13,006</u>	<b>Net cash flows from investing activities</b>	<u><b>(5,714)</b></u>

### Note 40: Cash Flow Statement - Financing Activities

2023/24 £000s		2024/25 £000s
203	Council Tax and NNDR adjustment	78
22	Other receipts from financing activities	-
(210)	Cash payments for the reduction of the outstanding liabilities relating to leases	(115)
(11,371)	Repayments of short and long-term borrowing	(1,400)
<u>(11,356)</u>	<b>Net cash flows from financing activities</b>	<u><b>(1,437)</b></u>

**Note 41: Pensions Schemes Accounted for as Defined Contribution Schemes**

Teachers employed by the Council are members of the Teachers' Pension Scheme, administered by Capita Business Services Ltd on behalf of the Department for Education. The current contract expires in September 2025. The Scheme provides teachers with specified benefits upon their retirement, and the Council contributes towards the costs by making contributions based on a percentage of members' pensionable salaries.

This is a defined benefit scheme. Although the scheme is unfunded, Teachers' Pensions use a notional fund as the basis for calculating employers' contribution rate paid by local authorities. The last valuation was effective from 1 April 2024.

The scheme has in excess of 12,600 participating employers and consequently the Council is not able to identify its share of the underlying financial position and performance of the scheme with sufficient reliability for accounting purposes. For the purposes of this Statement of Accounts, it is therefore accounted for on the same basis as a defined contribution scheme. As a proportion of the total contributions into the Teachers' Pension Scheme during the year ending 31 March 2025, the Council's own contributions equate to approximately 0.03%.

The Council's contribution to the Teacher's Pension Scheme in 2024/25 amounted to £3.063m (£2.597m in 2023/24) which represented 28.68% of pensionable pay (including a 0.08% administration levy). There were no contributions remaining payable at the year-end. The contributions due to be paid in the next financial year are estimated to be £3.063m, this is based on 28.68% of pensionable pay (including a 0.08% administration levy).

The Council is responsible for the costs of any additional benefits awarded upon early retirement outside of the terms of the teachers' scheme. These benefits are fully accrued in the Pensions Liability relating to the Local Government Pension Scheme.

The Council is not liable to the scheme for any other entities obligations under the plan.

Public Health staff employed by the Council are members of the NHS Pensions Scheme, administered by the NHS Business Services Authority. The Scheme provides employees with specified benefits upon their retirement, and the Council contributes towards the costs by making contributions based on a percentage of members' pensionable salaries.

This is a defined benefit scheme. Although the scheme is unfunded, it is subject to a full actuarial valuation. The latest valuation was undertaken as at 31 March 2020 and determined current contribution rates for employers and scheme members. The scheme has over 7,800 employing bodies and it is not possible for the Council to identify a share of underlying liabilities in the scheme attributable to its own employees. For the purposes of this Statement of Accounts, it is therefore accounted for on the same basis as a defined contribution scheme. As a proportion of the total contributions into the NHS Pension Scheme during the year ending 31 March 2025, the Council's own contributions equate to approximately 0.001%.

The Council's contribution to the NHS Pension Scheme in 2024/25 amounted to £0.240m (£0.214m in 2023/24). This represented 16.88% of pensionable pay (including a 0.08% administration levy). The actual contribution rate is 23.78% - the balance of 6.90% is funded directly by NHS England in line with national policy. The Council's contributions due to be paid in the next financial year are estimated to be £0.240m. There were no contributions remaining payable at the year-end.

The Council is responsible for the costs of any additional benefits awarded upon early retirement outside of the terms of the NHS scheme. These benefits are fully accrued in the Pensions Liability relating to the Local Government Pension Scheme.

## SECTION 3 : Statement of Accounts

### Note 42: Defined Benefit Pension Schemes

#### Participation in Pension Schemes

As part of the terms and conditions of employment of its officers, the Council makes contributions towards the cost of post employment benefits. Although these benefits will not actually be payable until employees retire, the Council has a commitment to make the payments and to disclose them at the time that employees earn their future entitlement.

The Council participates in The Local Government Pension Scheme, administered locally by Middlesbrough Council. This is a funded defined benefit final salary scheme, meaning that the Council and employees pay contributions into a fund, calculated at a level intended to balance the pensions liabilities with investment assets.

The Pension Scheme is operated under the regulatory framework for the Local Government Pension Scheme and the governance of the scheme is the responsibility of the pensions committee of the Pensions and Investments Panel. This panel has plenary powers to make decisions without reference to Middlesbrough Council and acts in a similar manner to the Board of Trustees of a private sector pension fund. Policy is determined in accordance with the Pension Fund Regulations.

The Panel consists of representatives from the councils in the former Cleveland County area as well as representatives from the Trades Unions.

The principal risks to the Council of the scheme are the longevity assumptions, statutory changes to the scheme, structural changes to the scheme (i.e. large-scale withdrawals from the scheme), changes to inflation, bond yields and the performance of the equity investments held by the scheme. These are mitigated to a certain extent by the statutory requirements to charge to the General Fund and HRA the amounts required by statute as described in the accounting policies note.

Discretionary post-retirement benefits on early retirement are an unfunded defined benefit arrangement, under which liabilities are recognised when awards are made. There are no plan assets built up to meet these pension liabilities.

#### Transactions Relating to Post-employment Benefits

The Council recognise the cost of retirement benefits in the reported cost of services when they are earned by employees, rather than when the benefits are eventually paid as pensions. However, the charge the Council is required to make against council tax is based on the cash payable in the year, so the real cost of post employment/retirement benefits is reversed out of the General Fund and Housing Revenue Account via the Movement in Reserves Statement. The following transactions have been made in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement and the General Fund Balance via the Movement in Reserves Statement during the year:

	Local Government Pension Scheme		Discretionary Benefit Arrangements		Total	
	2023/24 £000s	2024/25 £000s	2023/24 £000s	2024/25 £000s	2023/24 £000s	2024/25 £000s
<b>Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement</b>						
Cost of Services:						
· Current Service cost	11,689	10,969	-	-	11,689	10,969
· Past Service Costs (inc. curtailments)	116	-	-	-	116	-
(Gain) / Loss from Settlements	(162)	(203)	-	-	(162)	(203)
Financing and Investment Income and Expenditure:						
· Net Interest Expense	( 3,874)	( 6,296)	352	357	(3,522)	(5,939)
· Interest on effect of the asset ceiling	-	6,371	-	-	-	6,371
<b>Total Post Employment Benefit Charged to the Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services</b>	<b>7,769</b>	<b>10,841</b>	<b>352</b>	<b>357</b>	<b>8,121</b>	<b>11,198</b>
Other Post Employment Benefit Charged to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement:						
Remeasurement of the net defined benefit liability:						
· Return on plan assets (excluding amount in net interest expense)	(32,275)	12,654	-	-	(32,275)	12,654
· Actuarial (gains) and losses arising from changes in financial assumptions	(28,212)	(74,657)	(30)	(655)	(28,242)	(75,312)
· Actuarial (gains) and losses arising from changes in demographic assumptions	(2,902)	(871)	(65)	(14)	(2,967)	(885)
· Actuarial (gains) and losses owing to liability experience	15,229	(4,973)	498	308	15,727	(4,665)
· Asset Ceiling Adjustment	131,361	65,046	-	-	131,361	65,046
<b>Total Post Employment Benefit Charged to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement</b>	<b>90,970</b>	<b>8,040</b>	<b>755</b>	<b>(4)</b>	<b>91,725</b>	<b>8,036</b>

## SECTION 3 : Statement of Accounts

### Note 42: Defined Benefit Pension Schemes

	Local Government Pension Scheme		Discretionary Benefit Arrangements		Total	
	2023/24 £000s	2024/25 £000s	2023/24 £000s	2024/25 £000s	2023/24 £000s	2024/25 £000s
<b>Movement in Reserves Statement</b>						
Reversal of net charges made to the Surplus or Deficit for the Provision of Services for post employment benefits in accordance with the Code	(7,769)	(10,841)	(352)	(357)	(8,121)	(11,198)
<b>Actual amount charged against the General Fund Balance for pensions in the year:</b>						
· Employers' contribution payable to scheme	7,425	8,040	-	-	7,425	8,040
· Retirement Benefits payable to pensioners	-	-	785	828	785	828
<b>Transfer from Pension Reserve</b>	<b>(344)</b>	<b>(2,801)</b>	<b>433</b>	<b>471</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>(2,330)</b>

#### Pension Assets and Liabilities Recognised in the Balance Sheet

The amount included in the Balance Sheet arising from the Council's obligation in respect of its defined benefit plans is as follows:

	Local Government Pension Scheme		Discretionary Benefit Arrangements		Total	
	2023/24 £000s	2024/25 £000s	2023/24 £000s	2024/25 £000s	2023/24 £000s	2024/25 £000s
Present value of the defined benefit obligation	496,889	434,826	7,770	6,938	504,659	441,764
Fair value of plan assets	(628,250)	(637,604)	-	-	(628,250)	(637,604)
Asset Ceiling Adjustment	131,361	202,778	-	-	131,361	202,778
<b>Net liability arising from defined benefit obligation</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>7,770</b>	<b>6,938</b>	<b>7,770</b>	<b>6,938</b>

#### Reconciliation of Movements in the Fair Value of Scheme (Plan) Assets

	Local Government Pension Scheme		Discretionary Benefit Arrangements		Total	
	2023/24 £000s	2024/25 £000s	2023/24 £000s	2024/25 £000s	2023/24 £000s	2024/25 £000s
Opening fair value of assets	576,695	628,249	-	-	576,695	628,249
Interest Income on assets	27,145	30,251	-	-	27,145	30,251
Remeasurement gains/(losses):						
· Return on plan assets (excl amount in net interest)	32,275	(12,654)	-	-	32,275	(12,654)
· Other experience	-	-	-	-	-	-
Effect of Settlement	(430)	(521)	-	-	(430)	(521)
Contributions by the employer	7,425	8,040	785	828	8,210	8,868
Contributions by participants	3,746	3,975	-	-	3,746	3,975
Net benefits paid out	(18,606)	(19,737)	(785)	(828)	(19,391)	(20,565)
<b>Closing fair value of assets</b>	<b>628,250</b>	<b>637,603</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>628,250</b>	<b>637,603</b>

#### Reconciliation of Present Value of the Scheme Liabilities (Defined Benefit Obligation)

	Local Government Pension Scheme		Discretionary Benefit Arrangements		Total	
	2023/24 £000s	2024/25 £000s	2023/24 £000s	2024/25 £000s	2023/24 £000s	2024/25 £000s
Opening balance at 1 April	493,151	496,889	7,800	7,770	500,951	504,659
Current Service Cost	11,689	10,969	-	-	11,689	10,969
Interest Cost	23,271	23,955	352	357	23,623	24,312
Contributions from scheme participants	3,746	3,975	-	-	3,746	3,975
Remeasurement (gains)/losses:						
· Actuarial (gains) and losses on liabilities - financial assumptions	(28,212)	(74,657)	(30)	(655)	(28,242)	(75,312)
· Actuarial (gains) and losses on liabilities - demographic assumptions	(2,902)	(871)	(65)	(14)	(2,967)	(885)
· Actuarial (gains) and losses on liabilities - experience	15,229	(4,973)	498	308	15,727	(4,665)
Past Service Costs (inc. curtailments)	116	-	-	-	116	-
Liabilities extinguished on settlements	(593)	(724)	-	-	(593)	(724)
Benefits paid	(18,606)	(19,737)	(785)	(828)	(19,391)	(20,565)
<b>Closing present value of assets</b>	<b>496,889</b>	<b>434,826</b>	<b>7,770</b>	<b>6,938</b>	<b>504,659</b>	<b>441,764</b>

### Note 42: Defined Benefit Pension Schemes

#### Asset Ceiling

Following the pensions valuation by the Council's actuary, Hymans Robertson LLP, the Council determined that the fair value of its pension plan assets outweighed the present value of the plan obligations at 31 March 2025 resulting in a pension plan asset. IAS 19 Employee Benefits requires that, where a pension plan asset exists, it is measured at the lower of:

- the surplus in the defined benefit plan;
- the asset ceiling calculation.

The asset ceiling is the present value of any economic benefits available in the form of refunds from the plan or reductions in future contributions to the plan. The Council's actuary calculated the asset ceiling as the net present value of future service costs less net present value of future contributions. The Council has therefore limited the pension asset recognised in its Balance Sheet to the asset ceiling, which was nil in 2023/24. The remaining represents the unfunded liabilities which are not included in the asset ceiling adjustment and any liabilities as a result of past contributions. The adjustment has been recognised within the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement under Other Comprehensive Income and Expenditure.

Therefore, based on the actuary's calculation the asset ceiling is negative the net pension asset has been limited to nil as the calculation indicates that no pension asset should be recognised. The adjustment taken through the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement and Movement in Reserves Statement to reflect the asset ceiling adjustment in the pension reserve is £202.778m.

#### High Court Ruling

In June 2023 the High Court ruled in the case of Virgin Media Limited v NTL Pension Trustees. The ruling was that certain pension scheme rule amendments were invalid if they were not accompanied by the correct actuarial confirmation. This ruling has potential implications for the local government pension scheme liabilities. Scheme actuaries are in the process of considering scheme rule amendments and locating actuarial confirmations. There remains uncertainty on the applicability of the case to the local government pension scheme schemes and the impact cannot be reliably estimated. There are also further legal actions that may be taken regarding the case. Management will continue to monitor this case and any potential impact on the local government pension scheme liabilities. No adjustments have been made to the accounts to reflect the ruling.

#### Local Government Pension Scheme Assets

The Local Government Pension Scheme's assets comprised:

	2023/24 £000s	<b>2024/25 £000s</b>
Equity investments	446,792	<b>419,580</b>
Property	62,217	<b>69,849</b>
Cash	22,820	<b>52,052</b>
Other Investments	96,421	<b>96,122</b>
	<u>628,250</u>	<u><b>637,603</b></u>

#### Basis for Estimating Assets and Liabilities

Liabilities have been assessed on an actuarial basis using the projected unit credit method, an estimate of the pensions that will be payable in future years dependent on assumptions about mortality rates, salary levels, etc. Both the Local Government Pension Scheme and discretionary benefits liabilities have been assessed by Hymans Robertson LLP, an independent firm of actuaries, estimates for the Council Fund being based on the latest full valuation of the scheme as at 31 March 2022.

## SECTION 3 : Statement of Accounts

### Note 42: Defined Benefit Pension Schemes

Principal assumptions used by the actuary have been:

	Local Government Pension Scheme		Discretionary Benefit Arrangements	
	2023/24	2024/25	2023/24	2024/25
Long-term expected rate of return on assets in the scheme:				
Equities	4.85%	<b>5.80%</b>	-	-
Property	4.85%	<b>5.80%</b>	-	-
Government Bonds	4.85%	<b>5.80%</b>	-	-
Corporate Bonds	4.85%	<b>5.80%</b>	-	-
Cash	4.85%	<b>5.80%</b>	-	-
Other	4.85%	<b>5.80%</b>	-	-
Mortality assumptions:				
Longevity at 65 for current pensioners:				
Men	20.5	<b>20.4</b>	20.5	<b>20.4</b>
Women	23.5	<b>23.4</b>	23.5	<b>23.4</b>
Longevity at 65 for future pensioners:				
Men	21.3	<b>21.2</b>	-	<b>21.2</b>
Women	25.0	<b>24.9</b>	-	<b>24.9</b>
Other assumptions:				
Rate of inflation - CPI	2.75%	<b>2.75%</b>	2.75%	<b>2.75%</b>
Rate of general increase in salaries	3.75%	<b>3.75%</b>	-	-
Rate of increase in pensions - deferred and pensions in payment	2.75%	<b>2.75%</b>	2.75%	<b>2.75%</b>
Rate for discounting scheme liabilities	4.85%	<b>5.80%</b>	4.85%	<b>5.80%</b>

### Sensitivity Analysis

The estimation of the defined benefit obligations is sensitive to the actuarial assumptions set out in the table above.

The sensitivity analysis below has been determined based on reasonably possible changes of the assumptions occurring at the end of the reporting period and assumes for each change that the assumption analysed changes while all other assumptions remain constant.

The assumptions in longevity, for example, assume that life expectancy increases or decreases for men and women. In practice, this is unlikely to occur, and changes in some of the assumptions may be interrelated. The estimations in the sensitivity analysis have followed the accounting policies for the scheme, i.e. on an actuarial basis using the projected unit credit method. The methods and types of assumptions used in preparing the sensitivity analysis below did not change from those used in the previous period.

LGPS Funded Benefits Only	Impact on Defined Benefit Obligation in the Scheme	
	Increase in Assumption £000s	Decrease in Assumption £000s
Adjustment to Discount rate (+/- 0.1%)	(7,511)	7,511
Adjustment to Salary increase rate (+/- 0.1%)	401	(401)
Adjustment to Pension increase rate (+/- 0.1%)	7,316	(7,316)
Adjustment to Longevity (decrease/increase 1 year)	17,671	(17,671)

### Note 42: Defined Benefit Pension Schemes

The objectives of the scheme are to keep employers' contributions at as constant a rate as possible. The current funding level of the scheme at the last triennial valuation is 116%. Funding levels are monitored on an annual basis. The next triennial valuation is due to be completed on 31 March 2025.

The scheme will need to take account of the national changes to the scheme under the Public Pensions Services Act 2013. Under the Act, Local Government Pension Scheme in England and Wales and the other main existing public service schemes may not provide benefits in relation to service after 31 March 2014. The Act provides for scheme regulations to be made within a common framework, to establish new career average revalued earnings schemes to pay pensions and other benefits to certain public servants.

The Council anticipates to pay £9.506m expected contributions to the scheme in 2025/2026.

The weighted average duration of the defined benefit obligation for scheme members is 18 years in 2024/25 (18 years in 2023/24).

### Note 43: Contingent Liabilities

These refer to either; a possible obligation arising from past events whose existence will be confirmed only by the occurrence of one or more uncertain future events not wholly within the Council's control, or; a present obligation arising from past events where it is not probable that a transfer of economic benefits will be required or the amount of the obligation cannot be measured with sufficient reliability.

The Council is responsible for the Claxton Site which is a closed landfill. There is a possible obligation arising relating to de-contamination of the site; it is not possible at this stage to quantify the potential liability or when the works may be required. The site is regularly tested to ensure compliance with the Environment Protection Act 1990.

### Note 44: Financial Guarantees

In 1989 the Council gave a loan guarantee of £3m to North Housing Association (now Home Housing Association) for sums borrowed on the money markets that would come into operation should the housing association default on the loan terms. Provision is included in the agreement for any such payments to be secured on North Housing Association property. It is anticipated that this guarantee will exist until the loan is repaid in 2049. The likelihood of this guarantee being called upon is remote and therefore no amounts have been recognised in the Balance Sheet in respect of this guarantee.

A guarantee was given to the Teesside Pension Scheme for the staff transferred to Housing Hartlepool in 2004 in the event that Housing Hartlepool had financial difficulties. The likelihood of this guarantee being called upon is remote and therefore no amounts have been recognised in the Balance Sheet in respect of this guarantee.

## SECTION 3 : Statement of Accounts

### Note 45: Pooled Budgets

The Better Care Fund (BCF) was established by the Government in 2015 to support the introduction of a fully integrated health and social care system.

The Council entered into a pooled budget arrangement with NHS North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board (ICB) - the Better Care Fund - for the commissioning of health and social care services for the residents of the Borough of Hartlepool. The arrangement was with NHS Tees Valley Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) until the establishment of the ICB from 1 July 2022.

The Council and the ICB have an agreement in place for funding these services with the partners contributing to the pooled fund. The pooled budget is hosted by the Council on behalf of both partners.

The pooled budget is made up of ICB funding as well as local government grants, including the Improved Better Care Fund (iBCF) and the Adult Social Care Discharge Grant.

#### Revenue Pooled Budget

2023/24 £000s		2024/25 £000s
	<b>Revenue Funding provided to the Pooled Budget:</b>	
(501)	Balance brought forward	(645)
(5,358)	Hartlepool Borough Council - Improved Better Care Fund (iBCF)	(5,358)
(751)	Adult Social Care Discharge Grant	(1,252)
(483)	ICB Discharge Grant	(965)
<u>(8,974)</u>	NHS North East and North Cumbria ICB	<u>(9,482)</u>
(16,067)		<b><u>(17,702)</u></b>
	<b>Expenditure met from the Pooled Budget:</b>	
7,496	Hartlepool Borough Council	7,990
1,333	NHS North East and North Cumbria ICB	1,543
964	Hartlepool Borough Council - Discharge	1,882
271	NHS North East and North Cumbria ICB - Discharge	335
5,250	Hartlepool Borough Council - Improved Better Care Fund (iBCF)	5,250
<u>108</u>	NHS North East and North Cumbria ICB (iBCF)	<u>108</u>
<u>15,422</u>		<b><u>17,108</u></b>
<u>(645)</u>	<b>Balance carried forward</b>	<b><u>(594)</u></b>

#### Capital Pooled Budget

2023/24 £000s		2024/25 £000s
	<b>Capital Funding provided to the Pooled Budget:</b>	
(428)	Balance brought forward	(22)
<u>(1,328)</u>	Hartlepool Borough Council	<u>(1,580)</u>
<u>(1,756)</u>		<b><u>(1,602)</u></b>
	<b>Expenditure met from the Pooled Budget:</b>	
<u>1,734</u>	Hartlepool Borough Council	<u>1,602</u>
<u>1,734</u>		<b><u>1,602</u></b>
<u>(22)</u>	<b>Balance carried forward</b>	<b><u>-</u></b>

## SECTION 3 : Statement of Accounts

### HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT (HRA)

The HRA Income and Expenditure Statement shows the economic cost in the year of providing housing services in accordance with generally accepted accounting practices, rather than the amount to be funded from rents and government grants. Authorities charge rents to cover expenditure in accordance with the legislative framework; this may be different from the accounting cost. The increase or decrease in the year, on the basis upon which rents are raised, is shown in the Movement on the Housing Revenue Account Statement.

2023/24 £000s		2024/25 £000s
	<b>Expenditure</b>	
506	Repairs and maintenance	662
529	Supervision and management	460
24	Rents, rates, taxes and other charges	19
1	Discretionary Housing Payments	2
(87)	Movement in the allowance for bad debts	-
10	Debt Management Expenses	13
2,333	Depreciation, impairment and revaluation losses of non-current assets	713
<b>3,316</b>	<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>1,869</b>
	<b>Income</b>	
(1,637)	Dwelling Rents	(1,914)
(3)	Charges for services and facilities (net of voids)	(7)
-	Income from Insurance Claims	(42)
(13)	Other Income	(24)
<b>(1,653)</b>	<b>Total Income</b>	<b>(1,987)</b>
<b>1,663</b>	<b>Net Expenditure or (Income) of HRA Services as included in the whole authority Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement</b>	<b>(118)</b>
360	Interest payable	458
(125)	Interest and investment income	(124)
(13)	Net interest on the net defined benefit liability	(23)
-	Loss on disposal of fixed assets	132
<b>1,885</b>	<b>Deficit/(Surplus) for the year on HRA services</b>	<b>325</b>

### MOVEMENT ON THE HRA STATEMENT

2023/24 £000s		2024/25 £000s
(500)	<b>Balance on the HRA at the end of the previous reporting period</b>	<b>(500)</b>
1,885	(Surplus) or Deficit for the year on the HRA Income and Expenditure Statement	<b>325</b>
	<b>Adjustments between accounting basis and funding basis under statute :</b>	
(2,049)	Revaluations (losses) / gain	(355)
(30)	Impairment losses	(48)
-	Fixed Asset Disposal	(132)
-	IAS19 Pensions Adjustment	17
(253)	Depreciation	(311)
253	Transfer to Major Repairs Reserve	311
<b>(194)</b>	<b>Net (increase) or decrease before transfers to or from reserves</b>	<b>(193)</b>
194	Transfers to or (from) earmarked reserves	193
<b>-</b>	<b>(Increase) or decrease in the year on the HRA</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>(500)</b>	<b>Closing balance on the HRA</b>	<b>(500)</b>

## SECTION 3 : Statement of Accounts

### NOTES TO THE HRA

#### Note 1: Depreciation, Major Repairs Reserve and Revaluation

Included within the HRA is a total depreciation charge of £0.311m (2023/24 £0.253m) which transfers funding into the Major Repairs Reserve (MRR) to meet the cost of future major repairs. There was a loss on revaluation for the year of £0.099m (2023/24 loss of £2.049m). In previous years a "proxy" charge was applied however from 2017/18 a "true" depreciation charge was required to be calculated and transferred to the MRR. This represents an amount equivalent to the total depreciation charges for all HRA assets. Under statute an adjustment between accounting basis and funding basis on the 'Movement on the HRA MRR' allows any difference between the depreciation credit on the reserve and the amount required for the major repairs for the year to be transferred back to the HRA.

#### Note 2: Capital Expenditure and Financing

2023/24 £000s		2024/25 £000s
12,166	<b>Brought Forward Opening Capital Financing Requirement</b>	<b>12,898</b>
	<b>Capital Investment</b>	
3,346	Acquisition and renovation of Council Dwellings	462
747	Appropriations	-
128	Major Repairs	110
	<b>Sources of Finance</b>	
(28)	Corporate Resources	(211)
(693)	Homes England Grant	-
(83)	Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund	(39)
(632)	Local Authority Housing Fund	-
(232)	Brownfield Homes Grant	-
(461)	S.106 contributions	(59)
(1,315)	Recognition of value of properties in exchange for land	-
(45)	Major Repairs Reserve	(263)
<u>12,898</u>	<b>Closing Capital Financing Requirement</b>	<u><b>12,898</b></u>
	<b>Explanation of Movements in Year</b>	
1,076	Increase / (Decrease) in Borrowing Unsupported by Government Assistance	-
(344)	Application of S.106 Grant to repay borrowing	-
<u>732</u>		<u>-</u>

#### Note 3: Number and Value of Council Dwellings

There were 356 Council Dwellings held as at 31 March 2025 (358 in 2023/24); note there were two properties disposed of through 'Right To Buy' sales. The number of empty properties included in the above figures is 14, of which some are undergoing repairs as part of the general housing stock and others are standard voids awaiting re-let. This includes two fire damaged properties undergoing significant refurbishment works and one property on hold due to disrepair. The table below shows the vacant possession value and the balance sheet value based on social housing use. The difference represents the economic cost of providing council housing.

31 March 2024 £000s		31 March 2025 £000s
14,364	Balance Sheet Value (reflects the council dwellings status as social housing)	14,420

The vacant possession value of HRA dwellings as at 1 April 2025 is £32.773m (01/04/2024 £32.645m) therefore recognising an economic cost to the government of providing Council Housing at less than open market rents. (£32.773m less £14.420m = £18.353m)

#### Note 4: Rent Arrears

	31 March 2025 £000s
The level of rent arrears as at 31 March 2025 was £0.091m (31 March 2024 £0.127m), these figures include rent, service charge and rechargeable repair arrears	91
The Bad Debt provision required in respect of these uncollectable debts is £0.032m (2023/24 £0.039m)	( 32)

## SECTION 3 : Statement of Accounts

### COLLECTION FUND

The Collection Fund is an agent's statement that reflects the statutory obligation for billing authorities to maintain a separate Collection Fund. The statement shows the transactions of the billing authority in relation to the collection from taxpayers and distribution to local authorities and the Government of council tax and non-domestic rates.

2023/24			2024/25		
Council Tax	Non-Domestic Rates	Total	Council Tax	Non-Domestic Rates	Total
£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s
<b>Income</b>					
(59,736)	-	(59,736)	(62,922)	-	(62,922)
-	(31,970)	(31,970)	-	(32,435)	(32,435)
-	(743)	(743)	-	(170)	(170)
<b>Contributions (to previous year's deficit)</b>					
-	(380)	(380)	-	-	-
-	(388)	(388)	-	-	-
-	-	-	-	-	-
-	(8)	(8)	-	-	-
<b>(59,736)</b>	<b>(33,489)</b>	<b>(93,225)</b>	<b>(62,922)</b>	<b>(32,605)</b>	<b>(95,527)</b>
<b>Total Income</b>					
<b>Expenditure</b>					
<b>Apportionment of Previous Years' Surplus</b>					
28	-	28	125	-	125
-	-	-	-	-	-
5	-	5	19	-	19
1	-	1	6	-	6
<b>Precepts and demands</b>					
48,895	14,510	63,405	51,229	15,218	66,447
-	14,806	14,806	-	15,528	15,528
7,368	-	7,368	7,830	-	7,830
2,201	296	2,497	2,306	311	2,617
<b>Business Rates</b>					
-	111	111	-	112	112
-	9	9	-	49	49
-	631	631	-	773	773
<b>Impairment of Bad/Doubtful Debts &amp; Appeals</b>					
151	422	573	287	221	508
598	441	1,039	833	366	1,199
-	1,320	1,320	-	221	221
<b>59,247</b>	<b>32,546</b>	<b>91,793</b>	<b>62,635</b>	<b>32,799</b>	<b>95,434</b>
<b>(489)</b>	<b>(943)</b>	<b>(1,432)</b>	<b>(287)</b>	<b>194</b>	<b>(93)</b>
<b>Deficit / (surplus) for the year</b>					
348	(798)	(450)	(141)	(1,741)	(1,882)
(489)	(943)	(1,432)	(287)	194	(93)
<b>(141)</b>	<b>(1,741)</b>	<b>(1,882)</b>	<b>(428)</b>	<b>(1,547)</b>	<b>(1,975)</b>
<b>Fund balance carried forward as at 31 March</b>					
<b>Fund allocated to:</b>					
(118)	(853)	(971)	(357)	(758)	(1,115)
-	(871)	(871)	-	(773)	(773)
(18)	-	(18)	(55)	-	(55)
(5)	(17)	(22)	(16)	(16)	(32)
<b>(141)</b>	<b>(1,741)</b>	<b>(1,882)</b>	<b>(428)</b>	<b>(1,547)</b>	<b>(1,975)</b>

## SECTION 3 : Statement of Accounts

### NOTES TO THE COLLECTION FUND

#### Note 1 - Council Tax

Council Tax income comes from a charge made on residential properties. The income is used to support the Council's General Fund revenue expenditure, as detailed in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Account. It is also used to finance Hartlepool's share of the Police and Crime Commissioner's and Cleveland Fire Authority's expenditure, through precepts made on the Council's Collection Fund. The level of Council Tax in any year is determined by estimating the income required by the Council and the Police and Fire Authorities, and dividing this by the Council Tax base, which comprises residential properties banded by value and charged accordingly.

To allow for comparison between years and authorities the tax base is expressed as the number of Band D properties in the borough, which is calculated by multiplying the number of properties in a band by an appropriate weighting, ranging from 5/9 to 18/9.

There were 35,455 Band D equivalents in 2024/25 (34,983 for 2023/24) and the basic amount of Council Tax for a Band D property was £2,377.61 (£2,304.40 in 2023/24).

Set out in the table below are the Band D weightings, property numbers and income from each band level.

Band	Weighting to Band D	No. of properties in each band	Equivalent no. of Band D Properties	Hartlepool BC demand per property ( Ex Parishes) £	Police & Crime Commissioner demand per property £	Fire Authority demand per property £	Total demand per property £	Total Income per band £000s
(A)	5/9	130	72	1,102.46	168.74	49.70	1,320.90	172
A	6/9	23,261	15,507	1,322.95	202.49	59.64	1,585.08	36,871
B	7/9	7,508	5,840	1,543.44	236.23	69.58	1,849.25	13,884
C	8/9	6,465	5,747	1,763.93	269.98	79.52	2,113.43	13,663
D	9/9	3,451	3,451	1,984.42	303.73	89.46	2,377.61	8,205
E	11/9	1,889	2,309	2,425.40	371.23	109.34	2,905.97	5,489
F	13/9	862	1,245	2,866.38	438.72	129.22	3,434.32	2,960
G	15/9	660	1,100	3,307.37	506.22	149.10	3,962.69	2,615
H	18/9	92	184	3,968.84	607.46	178.92	4,755.22	437
<b>TOTALS</b>		<b>44,318</b>	<b>35,455</b>					<b>84,296</b>

The income of £62.922m for 2024/25 (£59.736m for 2023/24) is receivable from the following sources:

2023/24 £000s		2024/25 £000s
80,615	Opening Liability	84,296
3,273	Net increase/(decrease) in liability	3,581
(137)	Disabled Relief	(144)
(8,120)	Discounts	(7,800)
(2,164)	Exemptions	(2,246)
(13,731)	Council Tax Support Scheme	(14,765)
<u>59,736</u>		<u>62,922</u>

#### Note 2 - Non Domestic Rates

Non Domestic Rates (NDR) is organised on a national basis. The Government specifies two amounts, the Small Business Non Domestic Rate Multiplier which was 49.9p in 2024/25 (49.9p in 2023/24) and, the Non Domestic Rate Multiplier which was 54.6p in 2024/25 (51.2p in 2023/24). Subject to the effects of transitional arrangements, local businesses pay rates calculated by multiplying their rateable value by that amount.

The total non-domestic rateable value at the year end was £80.909m.

The NNDR income collectable from Ratepayers is shown below.

2023/24 £000s		2024/25 £000s
40,397	Gross Rates payable	41,017
(7,684)	Reliefs	(8,412)
(743)	Transitional Relief	(170)
<u>31,970</u>		<u>32,435</u>

## SECTION 4 : Annual Governance Statement

### **Scope of Responsibility**

Hartlepool Borough Council is responsible for ensuring that:

- Its business is conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards,
- Public money is safeguarded and properly accounted for, and used economically, efficiently and effectively.

The Council also has a duty under the Local Government Act 1999 to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness.

In discharging these overall responsibilities, Hartlepool Borough Council is also responsible for putting in place proper arrangements for the governance of its affairs and facilitating the effective exercise of its functions, which includes arrangements for the management of risk.

The Council has approved and adopted a code of corporate governance, which is consistent with the principles of the CIPFA/SOLACE Delivering Good Governance in Local Government Framework 2016. This statement explains how the Council has complied with the code and also meets the requirements of the Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2015, Part 2 6(1) (a), which requires the Council to conduct a review at least once a year of the effectiveness of its system of internal control and include a statement reporting on the review with the statement of accounts. Regulation 6(1) (b) of the Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2015, require that for a local authority that statement is an Annual Governance Statement (AGS).

### **The Purpose of the Governance Framework**

The governance framework comprises the systems and processes, and culture and values, by which the Council is directed and controlled and its activities through which it accounts to, engages with and leads the community. It enables the Council to monitor the achievement of its strategic objectives and to consider whether those objectives have led to the delivery of appropriate services and value for money.

The system of internal control is a significant part of that framework and is designed to manage risk to a reasonable level. It cannot eliminate all risk of failure to achieve policies, aims and objectives and can, therefore, only provide reasonable and not absolute assurance of effectiveness. The system of internal control is based on an ongoing process designed to identify and prioritise the risks to the achievement of the Council's policies, aims and objectives, to evaluate the likelihood of those risks being realised and to manage them efficiently, effectively and economically. The governance framework has been in place at the Council for the year ended 31 March 2025 and up to the date of approval of the statement of accounts.

### **Significant Governance Issues Update from 2023/24 Statement**

Progress has been made over the course of 2024/25 to actively manage and address issues identified as part of the 2023/24 process. This approach ensures the Council actively manages these issues. The table below identifies action that has been taken to mitigate the areas identified.

<b>Issue Raised</b>	<b>Action Undertaken</b>
Delivery of Council Plan, revised Performance Management Framework and Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS). The sustainability of services, level of performance and the continuing need to achieve housing growth.	<p>The MTFS is an iterative process with regular reports being presented to Finance and Policy Committee during the year culminating in recommendations to Council in the February proceeding the financial year. The financial environment facing councils remains challenging. Through increased government and local funding, coupled with spending reductions and efficiencies, the Council was able to set a balanced budget for 2025/26, with significantly reduced reliance on one-off balances.</p> <p>During 2024/25 work focused on the development of a new Council Plan for the Borough beginning with analysis of the Big Conversation which had taken place over 12 weeks between November 2023 and February 2024.</p> <p>A change in the political leadership of the Council took place in May 2024 and whilst focus was on delivering on the new administration's election pledges work continued developing the new Council Plan.</p> <p>The Council Plan 2030 was approved by Finance and Policy Committee in April 2025. The final Annual Report for the Council Plan 2021/22 – 2023/24 was produced in summer 2024 and shared on the Council's website.</p>
Delivery of Regeneration/ Capital Programme on time and budget in line with key Council objectives.	Responsibility for delivery of schemes are allocated to senior officers. Project Management Boards for major projects are embedded and are providing strategic oversight of progress and budget position. Regular updates are provided to the Capital Programme Group which enables bi-monthly reporting to the Executive Leadership Team (ELT). Regular updates are provided to members via quarterly update reports to Finance and Policy Committee. A refreshed Capital Strategy and Capital Programme were approved at Council on the 20 February 2025.
Potential for Cyber Security attack/breach of IT defences leading to service disruption and potentially serious financial implications	HBC use the National Cyber Security Centre's Event Logging solution, which tracks a range of network events including staff who have clicked on links in suspicious emails. HBC have implemented a new firewall that provides additional protection including blocking access to our network from outside the UK and 24/7 analysis of Internet access with auto blocking where activity falls outside of normal working patterns.

## SECTION 4 : Annual Governance Statement

Multifactor authentication has been rolled out to all staff with network access during the year to further safeguard access.

Mandatory annual training for all staff in respect of cyber security and regular all staff emails give instruction on what to do with suspicious emails.

Change in political environment.	New member training provided as well as refresher training for existing members. Constitution refreshed in a number of areas in order to streamline processes and meetings, and the reestablishment of Group leader meetings.
Increase in Limited/No assurance internal audit reports	Internal Audit procedures strengthened to ensure actions are implemented within agreed timescales and non-implementation to be reported to ELT and Audit and Governance Committee. Assistant Directors attended Audit and Governance Committee and gave member briefing on progress made in addressing risks identified.

### **The Governance Framework**

The key elements of the Council's Governance Framework are as follows:

Hartlepool Borough Council's Constitution sets out how the Council operates, how decisions are made, the procedures that are followed to ensure that these decisions are efficient and transparent and sets out the terms of reference for the Committee structure. The Constitution was developed in accordance with the Local Government Act 2000 and it sets out the delegated responsibilities to key officers such as the Monitoring Officer and Section 151 Officer.

In accordance with the Council's Constitution at Article 13, the Monitoring Officer continues to monitor and review the operation of the Constitution to ensure that the aims and principles of the Constitution are given full effect.

A series of reviews and updates to the Council's Constitution were carried out by the Constitution Committee between May 2024 and May 2025. Key outcomes are summarised below:

#### **May 2024**

- Transfer of Communications & Marketing, Strategic Procurement, Capital Programme Delivery, Estate Management, Business Growth and related grant schemes from Finance and Policy Committee to Economic Growth and Regeneration Committee;
- Culture and Events, Learning and Skills to Adult and Community Services Committee;
- That the Chair of the Safer Hartlepool Partnership is no longer required to be the Leader of the Council; and
- That Parish Councils were invited to nominate non-voting representatives to be appointed to each Policy Committee.

#### **July 2024**

- Forward Plan removed from the Constitution as it's no longer a statutory requirement; now an internal document for Chief Officers.
- Grant Oversight Clause added to each Policy Committee's remit to clarify responsibility over grant usage and monitoring.

#### **September 2024**

- Reinstated the Local Joint Consultative Committee with updated terms of reference.
- Personnel Sub-Committee renamed to Appeals Committee.
- Tree Felling Decisions delegated to Executive Director of Development, Neighbourhood and Regulatory Services (in consultation with Chair of Neighbourhood Services) in line with the Environment Act 2021.

#### **January 2025 - May 2025**

- New wording inserted into the Council Procedure Rules to clarify the purpose and notice requirements for calling Extraordinary Council Meetings.
- Finance and Policy Committee renamed to Finance and Corporate Affairs Committee.
- Responsibilities for Facilities Management and Safer Hartlepool Partnership transferred to Neighbourhood Services Committee.

These changes were all approved by Full Council following the recommendation of the Constitution Committee and collectively modernised committee responsibilities, improved clarity in governance processes, and enhanced stakeholder engagement.

Officer Decision Records (ODRs) continue to be published on the internet and the process for producing and getting an Officer Delegated Decisions has changed to an online process using a new system available on the Intranet. The change has resulted in a more efficient and consistent approach to processing ODRs.

Members' Seminars are held bi-monthly to ensure Members are updated/briefed on key strategic issues.

## SECTION 4 : Annual Governance Statement

Effective procedures to identify, evaluate, communicate, implement, comply with and monitor legislative change exist and are used. Legal Division procedures exist for monitoring new legislation, advising relevant departments, and members where appropriate. Workforce Services policies identify suitable recruitment methods and ensure appropriate job descriptions exist for legal staff.

Hartlepool Borough Council effectively deploy their staff resources through good people management, compliance with legislation, and best practice by ensuring a full complement of employment policies, guidance, toolkits, and procedures are in place. These are regularly reviewed, refreshed, and promoted so that they remain relevant and are utilised effectively by managers and staff.

Committee terms of reference are included in the constitution. A procedure is in place to ensure that all Committee agendas, minutes and supporting material are available to all staff and to the public on the Council's Internet site.

The constitution contains financial and contract procedure rules, and code of conduct for Members, which have been formally approved. Financial procedure rules have been updated and agreed by Council and contract procedure rules have also been updated to take into account new procurement procedures and legislative requirements. The constitution is available to all employees on the intranet and to the public on the Internet. A register of gifts and hospitality is maintained for Members and Officers. The Authority has a Treasury Management Strategy that was approved by Audit and Governance Committee on 28 January 2025 and referred to Council for approval on 20 February 2025 for the financial year 2025/26. The approved Treasury Management Strategy includes the Investment and Borrowing strategies in compliance with revised CIPFA Prudential Code, CIPFA Treasury Management Code of Practice and Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) guidance. The Audit and Governance Committee is responsible for ensuring effective scrutiny of the Treasury Management Strategy and policies before making any necessary recommendations to Council. The Section 151 Officer reports to the Audit and Governance Committee how the Council's financial arrangements conform to the governance requirements of the CIPFA Statement on the Role of the Chief Financial Officer in Local Government (2010).

The full range of Member committees regularly meet to review specific policy areas, to consider plans, reports and progress of the Council.

An updated Code of Conduct for Employees has been approved, published and communicated to all employees. Health and Safety Policy Statement reviewed, signed and rolled out in July 2024. Health and Safety training is now a mandatory element of the induction process. All managers are required to undertake Health and Safety training on Skill Gate and are automatically signed up for IOSH Managing Safety.

The Workforce Strategy (2023-2026) and the introduction of a Council wide Values (CARING) and Behaviour Framework in 2024 continues to be promoted. This includes through revised HR policies aimed to bring these into everyday workplace practices and encounters, such as the Annual Review and 1:1 policy, our Bullying and Harassment including Sexual Harassment Policy, our Workforce Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Policy with two year action plan, our new Jobs and Careers Website, to ensure our employees are treated fairly, with respect and dignity, and our new mandatory induction training for new managers to shape our culture into the future. An employee survey across the Council was undertaken in 2024, with a 37% response, and provides a benchmark to evaluate the success of the strategy during the 3 years.

Employee Wellbeing and Engagement has been a key focus in 2024/25 with the Council successfully retaining the North East Better Health at Work Award Maintaining Excellence and Ambassador status and engaging employees through surveys and focus groups. There is a strategic structure in place and the Council approved the revised Employee Wellbeing Strategy to 2026 which was successfully launched with a series of staff roadshows across various Council buildings across the town to maximise engagement. There is a health and wellbeing and an EDI campaign calendar to engage the workforce has been agreed for 2025. Qualitative interviews have been set up to explore practical ways to understand and support employee's mental wellbeing and focus groups are taking place across May 2025. Information from this consultation will feed into the new policy development.

A new workforce planning framework was agreed and rollout commenced in late 2024 fulfilling a key aim of the Workforce Strategy, to ensure we have the right people, with the right skills, in the right place, at the right time. This is a longer-term project to complete and a policy framework to ensure the work is continually updated will be agreed later in 2025. This is essential considering the demographic cliff-edge of older workers, the recruitment and retention difficulties in key services and the need to ensure we have effective talent pipelines for the future.

The Council has invested to improve its current Council wide and Manager Induction experiences through extending its licence agreements for eLearning and a new authoring tool. The Council continues to provide a comprehensive learning and development offer, and full utilisation of its Apprentice Levy in recent years. A new Council e-induction was launched in 2024 for all employees to undertake prior to starting their employment and a new manager e-induction programme has been implemented. This has been strengthened with an investment for all new managers to go through a Managing People bespoke training that will help them to shape positive work environments and teams. New Work Experience and Apprenticeship Policies have been agreed that both prioritise the Council's commitment to support care leavers into work. There is an ongoing commitment to develop a leadership and management development framework across the Council. This will further embed our values and behaviours and support our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion commitments.

The ResourceLink HR and Payroll Information System continues to be developed. Establishment control mechanisms are in place within the departments through the restructure process to enable staffing budgets to be closely monitored. This ensures that vacancies and employment changes are scrutinised with HR and Finance input before recruitment or contractual changes can be undertaken. The HR Dashboard provides managers with direct access to a comprehensive suite of staffing data reports when fully implemented. Data driven decisions are essential and the opportunity for a new reporting tool will enable the Council to review workforce monitoring data and information for operational and strategic decision making and improved performance.

## SECTION 4 : Annual Governance Statement

The Council has an ongoing programme of monitoring and reviewing arrangements in place in respect of the operation of its key partnerships. A framework of reporting by exception to Executive Leadership Team operates and Internal Audit provides audit coverage of partnership arrangements.

During 2024/25 work focused on the development of a new Council Plan for the Borough beginning with analysis of the Big Conversation which had taken place over 12 weeks between November 2023 and February 2024. During the Big Conversation the Council sought to engage as many people as possible including residents, employees and partners from the public, private, voluntary, community and social enterprise sectors. During the Big Conversation there were over 1,600 engagements including:

- 662 public survey responses (including paper, online and easy read versions)

- 48 business survey responses

- 149 responses to the quick poll

- 522 postcard responses

- 266 attendances registered at face-to-face sessions supported by officers from the Council

- 18 face-to-face sessions held by the Council or other public, voluntary, community and social enterprise partner organisations

A change in the political leadership of the Council took place in May 2024 and whilst focus was on delivering on the new administration's election pledges work continued developing the new Council Plan. The Council Plan 2030 was approved by Finance and Policy Committee in April 2025. The Plan establishes a clear vision for Hartlepool and outlines the Council's priorities for the next five years.

The Council's Performance Assurance Framework brings together all the strategies and plans that the Council has in place across the whole organisation. The Council Plan sits at the top of the Framework because it sets out the top strategic priorities for the Council. This is underpinned by the Strategic Framework. These are the other corporate-level strategies that provide greater detail for key themes such as transformation, economic growth, community safety, health and wellbeing or finance. It includes strategies that are shared with strategic partners and those that are only relevant to the Council. The Council's aim is to ensure that we have a streamlined process where performance information is shared in the right place, with the most appropriate audience. Progress reports on the Council Plan go to Finance and Policy Committee but other performance information may be more appropriate to go to a different Policy Committee, a Partnership Board such as the Safer Hartlepool Partnership or the Health and Wellbeing Board, Audit and Governance Committee, or an officer group such as Departmental Management Teams. The Council ensures that the information presented to the identified audience is relevant and sufficient to enable oversight of our work whilst upholding the principle of openness and transparency. As a Council we monitor our performance through our Performance Assurance Framework using performance indicators (PIs), actions and risks.

Key policies such as the Corporate Complaints, Comments and Compliments Procedure, Proceeds of Crime (Money Laundering), Whistle Blowing Policy and Counter Fraud and Corruption Policy have been developed and approved for use across the whole Authority. The policies are available to employees via the intranet. The Council is a member of the National Anti-Fraud Network and takes part in regular National Fraud Initiative reviews and the North East Corporate Fraud Forum. The Council has updated its Fraud and Corruption Strategy in line with CIPFA Code of Practice on Managing the Risk of Fraud and Corruption.

The Council agreed an updated Risk Management Framework in November 2024 following a Limited Assurance finding by Internal Audit. There were no fundamental changes to the Framework however improvements were made to ensure that it was more robust including:

- An explanation of the Council's risk appetite.

- Updates to the section on roles and responsibilities to provide greater clarity.

- Reference to Departmental Management Teams considering departmental and operational risk registers at least annually.

Changes to the Risk Capture Form so that officers are required to identify the risk category (type of risk), how they intend to deal with the identified risk (Transfer, Tolerate, Terminate or Treat) and the addition of a risk review section with a checklist and space to record the evidence from the review.

The updated Risk Management Framework and an updated Officer Toolkit are available to all staff via the intranet. As part of the roll out of the updated Framework all managers within the Council have completed mandatory risk management training. Going forward all new managers will be required to complete the training within their first three months in post and mandatory refresher training will be completed by all managers every two years.

The Finance and Policy Committee is responsible for ensuring the consideration of risk across the Council and for reviewing the progress made in the management of strategic risks. The Audit and Governance Committee is responsible for reviewing the effectiveness of risk management arrangements and providing comment and challenge on risk management activity and progress. Risks and control measures relating to the Council Plan are analysed within performance reports to help ensure that risk and performance reporting are linked. The Council Plan and performance assurance framework are considered as part of the preparation of the AGS.

The Council's Corporate Strategy and Performance Team hold information on the Council's Strategic Risks. Risk registers are also maintained for significant projects. Officers that manage risks are notified that risks need to be reviewed, and progress is monitored on a regular basis through the service planning process. Work is underway to develop a new central repository for the storing of risks. This will ensure that risks across the Council can be easily accessed, updated, compared and escalated for consideration by Departmental Management Teams and the Executive Leadership Team as appropriate. This will include review schedules and where possible automated prompts for updates.

## SECTION 4 : Annual Governance Statement

In the UK, data protection law is made up of the GDPR and the DPA 2018. Together, they regulate the collection and use of personal data – information about identified or identifiable individuals. To ensure compliance the Council has completed information audits identifying all personal data held, including a lawful basis for processing the data. Privacy notices have been developed and are available on the Council's website. All policies and procedures have been updated to ensure GDPR compliance and staff have received specific GDPR training. The Information Governance Group meets regularly to discuss GDPR compliance.

The Council has long-standing, nationally and regionally recognised emergency planning arrangements through the Cleveland Emergency Planning Unit (CEPU). The Council's Emergency Management Response Team (EMRT) meets bi-monthly and contributes to the makeup of the Council's Major Incident Plan which is tested annually.

Responsibility for updating and implementing Corporate Business Continuity has transferred to the Assistant Director (Regulatory Services). A significant amount of work has been progressed to address the concerns highlighted by internal audit with arrangements having been reviewed to reflect current best practice. These revised arrangements have been rolled out across each Council department to ensure that accurate up to date information is held to assist in the recovery of services, should it be necessary. Tests are planned to ensure that these plans are fit for purpose and any lessons learnt from these exercises will be incorporated into future plans.

The Equality Act 2010 came into force on 1 October 2010 and brought together over 116 separate pieces of legislation into one single Act. The Act provides a legal framework to protect the rights of individuals and advance equality of opportunity for all. The Act covers the nine protected characteristics – age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage/civil partnership, pregnancy/maternity, race, religion/belief, gender and sexual orientation.

The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) is supported by "specific duties" to assist public bodies to achieve the aims of the general duty. Under the specific duties, the Council must:

- Publish equalities information to demonstrate its compliance with the Equality Duty by the 31 January each year; and

- Develop and publish equality objectives every four years.

In order to demonstrate our compliance with the above requirements, we have produced a 2023-2024 Equality Report to demonstrate the progress that the Council has made to date. We are aware that there are gaps in our data and are working to provide more information in an accessible format. On that basis the report is regularly updated. Since the first equality objectives were published in April 2012 the Council has based them on the strategic objectives set out in our Council Plan. By doing this the Council demonstrates that equality and diversity is a core part of what we do as an organisation and not an add on activity. The Council's vision as set out in the Council Plan 2021/22 – 2023/24 sets out our equality objectives. The EDI Policy was agreed by Finance and Policy Committee on 13 March 2023 to set out the Council's commitment to EDI.

Equality issues must influence the decisions reached by public bodies - in how they act as employers; how they develop, evaluate and review policy; how they design, deliver and evaluate services, and how they commission and procure from others. We do this by considering impacts on equality as an integral part of our decision-making process and this is reflected in reports to Committees in the Equality & Diversity Considerations section and through our use of Equality Impact Assessments.

Internal Audit reports on a regular basis to the Audit and Governance Committee on the effectiveness of the organisation's system of internal control. Recommendations for improvement are also made and reported on. Internal Audits performance is measured against standards agreed by management and Members. Internal Audit reporting arrangements have been formalised and strengthened as part of the review of financial procedure rules. Internal Audit were externally assessed in line with Public Sector Internal Audit Standards in December 2024. In delivering its assessment, CIPFA stated "It is our opinion that the self-assessment for the Internal Audit Service is accurate, and we therefore conclude that they GENERALLY CONFORM to the requirements of the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards and the CIPFA Local Government Application Note". This is the highest level of conformance that can be achieved and is a positive outcome, reflecting the high standards that Internal Audit adhere to when carrying out their duties.

Ofsted has rated the overall effectiveness of the Council's Children's Services as 'Outstanding' in its most recent ILACS inspection which took place in March 2024. The Local Area Inspection of Services for Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) took place in March 2023. The inspection judged that the local area partnerships arrangements typically lead to positive experiences and outcomes for children and young people with SEND. The Council runs five children's homes all of which are judged as good or outstanding by OFSTED.

## SECTION 4 : Annual Governance Statement

The Continuous Improvement Group within Adult Social Care continues to oversee all assurance related activity and an Annual Quality Assurance Report summarises progress on a wide range of issues including the safeguarding adult's quality assurance framework, performance benchmarking, compliments and complaints, audit activity and continuous professional development. As part of the national Adult Social Care Outcomes Framework there is an annual survey of people who use adult social care services in each Local Authority area and a survey every two years of people who are carers. Feedback from these surveys continues to be positive and the satisfaction rates of people in Hartlepool compare very favourably regionally and nationally. Over 95% of services commissioned by the Council for adults with care and support needs are rated good by the Care Quality Commission (CQC) with no services rated inadequate. The Council is actively engaged with Sector Led Improvement via NE ADASS (the North East branch of the Association of Directors of Adult Social Services), which has had a particular focus on preparation for CQC assessment of Local Authority Adult Social Care Services over the last two years. Adult Social Care services delivered by the Council were rated 'Good' by the CQC following an inspection in November 2024. The CQC described 'an organisation which had strong leaders, who were committed to making improvements' and stated that 'staff at the authority were passionate about serving local people and had a good understanding of how to meet their needs'. The CQC found that there were governance, management and accountability arrangements at all levels in the local authority which provided visibility and assurance on quality, sustainability and risks to carry out Care Act duties and commented that 'Hartlepool Borough Council should be pleased with the many positive findings in our report and are already building on this with further improvement plans'.

### **Review of Effectiveness**

The Council has responsibility for conducting, at least annually, a review of the effectiveness of its governance framework including the system of internal control. The review of effectiveness is informed by the work of the executive managers within the Council who have responsibility for the development and maintenance of the governance environment, the Head of Audit and Governance's annual report, and also by comments made by the external auditors and other review agencies and inspectorates.

The process that has been applied in maintaining and reviewing the effectiveness of the system of internal control includes:

- Executive Leadership Team agreed process for the review of the internal control environment. The risk inherent in meeting departmental objectives and the controls to mitigate those risks are recorded as part of the corporate service planning process at a departmental level. This has brought together risk management, control identification and the process for compiling the evidence needed to produce the AGS. This enables managers to provide documented evidence regarding the controls within their service units as part of the service planning process. The controls in place are designed to negate the identified and recorded risks of not achieving service, departmental or corporate objectives. In order to ensure adequate controls are in place the procedures, processes and management arrangements in place to mitigate identified risks and the officers responsible for them are also documented. Gaps in controls can be addressed as part of the regular reviews of departmental risks and control measures.
- Section 151 Officer – reports to the Audit and Governance Committee how the Council's financial arrangements conform to the governance requirements of the CIPFA Statement on the Role of the Chief Financial Officer in Local Government (2010).
- Internal Audit – the Council has the responsibility for maintaining and reviewing the system of internal control and reviewing annually Internal Audit. In practice, the Council, and its External Auditors, takes assurance from the work of Internal Audit. In fulfilling this responsibility:
  - Internal Audit were externally assessed in line with Public Sector Internal Audit Standards in December 2024. In delivering its assessment, CIPFA stated "It is our opinion that the self-assessment for the Internal Audit Service is accurate, and we therefore conclude that they GENERALLY CONFORM to the requirements of the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards and the CIPFA Local Government Application Note". This is the highest level of conformance that can be achieved.
  - Internal Audit reports to the Section 151 Officer and Audit and Governance Committee.
  - The Head of Audit and Governance reports to the Audit and Governance Committee how the Council's financial arrangements conform to the governance requirements of the CIPFA Statement on the Role of the Head of Internal Audit (2019).
  - The Head of Audit and Governance provides an independent opinion on the adequacy and effectiveness of the system of internal control, quarterly update reports and an annual internal audit performance report to the Audit and Governance Committee.
  - Internal audit plans are formulated from an approved risk assessment package and Internal Audit continues to provide assurance across a broad range of Council activities and functions through the audits it completes.
- External Audit – in their auditors' annual report, comment on their overall assessment of the Council. It draws on the findings and conclusions from the audit of the Council.
- Other review and assurance mechanisms: for example, Department of Education, Care Quality Commission, Ofsted, HMI Probation and Service Excellence.

## SECTION 4 : Annual Governance Statement

### Significant Governance Issues

The following significant governance issues have been identified:

No	Issue	Action	Timescale	Responsible Officer
1	Delivery of Council Plan, revised Performance Assurance Framework and Medium Term Financial Strategy. The sustainability of services, level of performance and the continuing need to achieve housing growth. (Include transformation programme)	<p>The MTFS approved in February 2025 forecast a cumulative break-even position over the 3-year period. This position included a number of budget assumptions including on pressures, government and local funding, and the potential for savings to be delivered via the Council's transformation programme.</p> <p>The Council agreed at its June 2024 Finance and Policy Committee an overarching transformation plan. This plan was embedded as part of the Budget Strategy, with delivery targets being included within the MTFS. On-going monitoring of the programme will be reported, together with any other budget changes, to Finance and Policy Committee as part of the MTFS updates during 2025/26.</p> <p>During 2025/26 work to embed the Council Plan 2030 and Performance Assurance Framework will be undertaken with new style Council Plan progress reports being developed and taken quarterly to Finance and Policy Committee.</p>	2025/26	ELT
2	Delivery of Regeneration/Capital Programme on time and budget in line with key Council objectives.	Arrangements previously adopted will continue to be followed as projects move from design to construction phase.	2024/25 Onwards	Capital Programme Board
3	Potential for Cyber Security attack/breach of IT defences leading to service disruption and potentially serious financial implications	<p>Cyberattacks against local government are a real and persistent threat. While cyber threats have been around for a while, the increasing sophistication of attacks and the greater reliance on technology have made the threat more severe and impactful. HBC continues to use the National Cyber Security Centre's Event Logging solution, which tracks a range of network events including staff who have clicked on links in suspicious emails.</p> <p>Mandatory annual training for all staff in respect of cyber security and regular all staff emails give instruction on what to do with suspicious emails as well as phishing campaigns to alert staff to the dangers of clicking links in unsolicited emails.</p> <p>More measures are being considered such as 24/7 monitoring of the HBC network. The regular cyber security meetings allow HBC to understand the evolving threat landscape and consider suitable mitigation and weigh up options based on cost and risk.</p>	2024 Onwards	ELT
4	Changes to Senior Leadership Team and restructures	The Council will lose two experienced Executive Directors in early 2025/26, taking up job opportunities elsewhere. Consideration of structure opportunities has been discussed both within the Executive Leadership Team and with Members in order to ensure the officer leadership team are best placed to meet the on-going challenges facing local government and drive forward the Council's priorities.	2025/26	ELT

## SECTION 4 : Annual Governance Statement

5	Impact of new government legislative requirements	The Council will ensure it is able to respond to new government legislation introduced in the coming year and embed those changes recently enacted. We will work with partners, including the Tees Valley Combined Authority, to support actions arising from the English Devolution White Paper, and will proactively engage with the associated funding reform and long-term financial stability sought by government.	2025/26	ELT
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No other significant governance issues have been identified, however, in the interests of improving and developing governance arrangements we propose over the coming year to take steps to address the above matters to further enhance our governance arrangements. We are satisfied that these steps will address the need for improvements that were identified in our review of effectiveness and will monitor their implementation and operation as part of our next annual review.

The Head of Internal Audit reported in their Annual Opinion Report that "based on the work undertaken during the year 2024/25, my opinion on the overall adequacy and effectiveness of the organisation's framework of governance, risk management and control is that reliance can be placed on the adequacy and effectiveness of internal controls operating across the Council in 2024/25."

**Signed on behalf of Hartlepool Borough Council:**

**Chief Executive**

**Chair of Audit and Governance Committee**

## **SECTION 5 : Independent Auditor's Report**

### **INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF HARTLEPOOL BOROUGH COUNCIL**

#### **Report on the audit of the financial statements**

##### **Opinion on the financial statements**

We have audited the financial statements of Hartlepool Borough Council ('the Council') for the year ended 31 March 2025, which comprise the Movement in Reserves Statement, the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement, the Balance Sheet, the Statement of Cash Flows, the Housing Revenue Account, the Collection Fund and notes to the financial statements, including material accounting policy information.

The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2024/25.

In our opinion, the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the financial position of the Council as at 31st March 2025 and of its expenditure and income for the year then ended; and
- have been properly prepared in accordance with the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2024/25.

##### **Basis for opinion**

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the "Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements" section of our report. We are independent of the Council in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

##### **Conclusions relating to going concern**

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the Director of Finance, IT and Digital's use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, and taking into account the requirements of the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2024/25, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the Council's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the Director of Finance, IT and Digital with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

##### **Other information**

The other information comprises the information included in the Statement of Accounts, other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. The Director of Finance, IT and Digital is responsible for the other information. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

Our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements, or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether there is a material misstatement in the financial statements or a material misstatement of the other information. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

##### **Responsibilities of the Director of Finance, IT and Digital for the financial statements**

As explained more fully in the Statement of the Director of Finance, IT and Digital's Responsibilities, the Director of Finance, IT and Digital is responsible for the preparation of the Statement of Accounts, which includes the financial statements, in accordance with proper practices as set out in the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2024/25, and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view. The Director of Finance, IT and Digital is also responsible for such internal control as the Director of Finance, IT and Digital determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

## SECTION 5 : Independent Auditor's Report

### INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF HARTLEPOOL BOROUGH COUNCIL

The Director of Finance, IT and Digital is required to comply with the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2024/25 and prepare the financial statements on a going concern basis on the assumption that the functions of the Council will continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. The Director of Finance, IT and Digital is responsible for assessing each year whether or not it is appropriate for the Council to prepare its accounts on the going concern basis and disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern.

#### Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud is detailed below.

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud.

Based on our understanding of the Council, we considered that non-compliance with the following laws and regulations might have a material effect on the financial statements: employment regulation, health and safety regulation, anti-money laundering regulation, data protection, environmental protection, corruption and anti-bribery, non-compliance with implementation of government support schemes relating to COVID-19.

To help us identify instances of non-compliance with these laws and regulations, and in identifying and assessing the risks of material misstatement in respect to non-compliance, our procedures included, but were not limited to:

- gaining an understanding of the legal and regulatory framework applicable to the Council, the environment in which it operates, and the structure of the Council, and considering the risk of acts by the Council which were contrary to the applicable laws and regulations, including fraud;
- inquiring with management and the Audit and Governance Committee, as to whether the Council is in compliance with laws and regulations, and discussing their policies and procedures regarding compliance with laws and regulations;
- inspecting correspondence, if any, with relevant licensing or regulatory authorities;
- reviewing relevant meeting minutes in the year;
- communicating identified laws and regulations throughout our engagement team and remaining alert to any indications of non-compliance throughout our audit; and
- considering the risk of acts by the Council which were contrary to applicable laws and regulations, including fraud.

We also considered those laws and regulations that have a direct effect on the preparation of the financial statements, such as the Local Government Act 2003 (and associated regulations made under section 21), the Local Government Finance Acts of 1988, 1992 and 2012, and the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014.

In addition, we evaluated the Director of Finance, IT and Digital's incentives and opportunities for fraudulent manipulation of the financial statements (including the risk of override of controls) and determined that the principal risks were related to posting manual journal entries to manipulate financial performance, management bias through judgements and assumptions in significant accounting estimates, and significant one-off or unusual transactions.

Our audit procedures in relation to fraud included but were not limited to:

- making enquiries of management, and the Audit and Governance Committee on whether they had knowledge of any actual, suspected or alleged fraud;
- gaining an understanding of the internal controls established to mitigate risks related to fraud;
- discussing amongst the engagement team the risks of fraud; and
- addressing the risks of fraud through management override of controls by performing journal entry testing.

## **SECTION 5 : Independent Auditor's Report**

### **INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF HARTLEPOOL BOROUGH COUNCIL**

There are inherent limitations in the audit procedures described above and the primary responsibility for the prevention and detection of irregularities including fraud, rests with both management and the Audit and Governance Committee. As with any audit, there remained a risk of non-detection of irregularities, as these may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal controls.

We are also required to conclude on whether the Director of Finance, IT and Digital's use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate. We performed our work in accordance with Practice Note 10: Audit of financial statements and regularity of public sector bodies in the United Kingdom, (Revised 2024) and Supplementary Guidance Note 01, issued by the National Audit Office in November 2024.

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the Financial Reporting Council's website at [www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities](http://www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities). This description forms part of our auditor's report.

#### **Report on the Council's arrangements for securing economy, efficiency, and effectiveness in its use of resources**

##### **Matter on which we are required to report by exception**

We are required to report to you if, in our view we are not satisfied that the Council has made proper arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources for the year ended 31 March 2025.

We have nothing to report in this respect.

##### **Responsibilities of the Council**

The Council is responsible for putting in place proper arrangements to secure economy, efficiency, and effectiveness in its use of resources, to ensure proper stewardship and governance, and to review regularly the adequacy and effectiveness of these arrangements.

##### **Auditor's responsibilities for the review of arrangements for securing economy, efficiency, and effectiveness in the use of resources**

We are required under Section 20(1)(c) of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 to satisfy ourselves that the Council has made proper arrangements for securing economy, efficiency, and effectiveness in its use of resources. We are not required to consider, nor have we considered, whether all aspects of the Council's arrangements for securing economy, efficiency, and effectiveness in its use of resources are operating effectively.

We have undertaken our work in accordance with the Code of Audit Practice, having regard to the guidance issued by the Comptroller and Auditor General in November 2024.

##### **Matters on which we are required to report by exception under the Code of Audit Practice**

We are required by the Code of Audit Practice to report to you if:

- we issue a report in the public interest under section 24 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014;
- we make a recommendation under section 24 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014; or
- we exercise any other special powers of the auditor under sections 28, 29 or 31 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014.

We have nothing to report in these respects.

##### **Use of the audit report**

This report is made solely to the members of Hartlepool Borough Council, as a body, in accordance with part 5 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 and the Statement of Responsibilities of Auditors and Audited Bodies published by Public Sector Audit Appointments Limited. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the members of the Council those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the members of the Council, as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

## SECTION 5 : Independent Auditor's Report

### INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF HARTLEPOOL BOROUGH COUNCIL

#### Delay in certification of completion of the audit

We cannot formally conclude the audit and issue an audit certificate until we have completed the work required in relation to consolidation returns and received confirmation from the NAO that the group audit of the Whole of Government Accounts has been completed and that no further work is required to be completed by us.

James Collins, Key Audit Partner  
For and on behalf of Forvis Mazars LLP (Local Auditor)

The Corner  
Bank Chambers  
26 Mosley Street  
Newcastle Upon Tyne  
NE1 1DF

Date:

## SECTION 6 : Summary of Material Accounting Policies

### Summary of Material Accounting Policies

#### 1. General Principles

The Statement of Accounts summarises the Council's transactions for the 2024/25 financial year and its position at the year-end of 31 March 2025. The Council is required to prepare an annual Statement of Accounts in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 and to comply with proper accounting practices. These practices primarily comprise the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2024/25, supported by International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) and statutory guidance issued under section 12 of the Local Government Act 2003.

The statements reflect the requirements of general accounting principals and concepts of:

**Relevance** - the financial statements provide information about the Council's performance and position that is useful to the users of the accounts to assess the stewardship of public funds and for making economic decisions.

**Reliability** - the financial information faithfully represents the substance of the transactions, the activities underlying them and other events that have taken place, are free from deliberate or systematic bias and material error and have been prudently prepared.

**Comparability** - the information has been prepared consistently and with adequate disclosures so that it can be compared with prior years and other Local Authorities.

**Understandability** - the statements have been prepared to ensure they are as easy to understand as possible.

**Materiality** - the statements disclose items of a certain size and nature such that they provide a fair presentation of the financial position and transactions of the Council.

**Faithful Representation** - the financial statements faithfully represent economic activity in words and numbers. They have been prepared on the basis that they are complete, neutral and free from error.

**Accruals** - other than the cash flow statement, the financial statements report transactions that have been recorded in the accounting period for which the goods and services were received or supplied rather than in which the cash was received or paid. No accrual has been made where the accounting period includes a representative number of transactions, i.e. four quarterly or twelve monthly payments or receipts.

**Going Concern** - the financial statements have been prepared on the assumption that the Council will continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future.

**Legality** - where the accounting principles and specific legislation requirements are in conflict, the financial statements have been prepared to reflect legislative requirements.

The accounting policies are the principles, bases, conventions, rules and practices that specify how the effects of transactions and other events are reflected in the financial statements of the Council. Consistent accounting policies have been applied both within the year and between years. Where accounting policies are changed, this has been disclosed separately.

Where estimating techniques are required to enable the accounting practices adopted to be applied, then the techniques which have been used are, in the Council's view, appropriate and consistently applied. Where the effect of a change to an estimation technique is material, a description of the change and, if practicable, the effect on the results for the current period is separately disclosed.

The accounting convention adopted in the Statement of Accounts is principally historical cost, modified by the revaluation of certain categories of non-current assets and financial instruments.

## SECTION 6 : Summary of Material Accounting Policies

### 2. Accruals of Income and Expenditure

Activity is accounted for in the year that it takes place, not simply when cash payments are made or received. In particular:

- Fees, charges and rents due from customers are accounted for as income at the date the Council provides the relevant goods or services.
- Employees' costs are charged to the accounts of the period in which the employees worked which includes 12 monthly payments.
- Supplies and services are recorded as expenditure when they are consumed. Where there is a gap between the date supplies are received and their consumption, they are carried as stocks on the Balance Sheet.
- Works are charged as expenditure when they are completed, before which they are carried as Works in Progress on the Balance Sheet.
- Where income and expenditure has been recognised but cash has not been received or paid, a debtor or creditor for the relevant amount is recorded in the Balance Sheet. Where it is doubtful that debts will be settled the debtor balance is written down and a charge made to revenue for the income that might not be collected.
- Where payments are made or received in advance of a service being provided or received, a payment or receipt in advance is recognised as a debtor or creditor in the Balance Sheet.
- Income and expenditure are credited and debited to the relevant revenue account, unless it relates to capital receipts or capital expenditure.
- Revenue from the sale of goods is recognised when the Council transfers the significant risks and rewards of ownership to the purchaser and it is probable that economic benefits or service potential associated with the transaction will flow to the Council.
- Revenue from the provision of services is recognised when the Council can measure reliably the percentage of completion of the transaction and it is probable that economic benefits or service potential associated with the transaction will flow to the Council.
- Expenses in relation to services received (including services provided by employees) are recorded as expenditure when the services are received rather than when payments are made.
- Interest receivable on investments and payable on borrowings is accounted for respectively as income and expenditure on the basis of the effective interest rate for the relevant financial instrument rather than the cash flows fixed or determined by the contract.
- General revenue debtors and creditors of less than £5,000 have only been accrued at the discretion of individual departments. All amounts in excess of £5,000 have been accrued.

### 3. Cash and Cash Equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents is represented by cash in hand and deposits with financial institutions repayable without penalty on notice of not more than 24 hours.

In the Cash Flow Statement, cash and cash equivalents are shown net of bank overdrafts that are repayable on demand and form an integral part of the Council's cash management.

### 4. Exceptional Items

When items of income and expenditure are material, their nature and amount is disclosed separately, either on the face of the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement or in the notes to the accounts, depending on how significant the items are to an understanding of the Council's financial performance.

## SECTION 6 : Summary of Material Accounting Policies

### 5. Prior Period Adjustments, Changes in Accounting Policies, Estimates and Errors

Prior period adjustments may arise as a result of a change in accounting policies or to correct a material error. Changes in accounting estimates are accounted for prospectively, i.e. in the current and future years affected by the change and do not give rise to a prior period adjustment.

Changes in accounting policies are only made when required by proper accounting practices or the change provides more reliable or relevant information about the effect of transactions, other events and conditions on the Council's financial position or financial performance. Where a change is made, it is applied retrospectively (unless stated otherwise) by adjusting opening balances and comparative amounts for the prior period as if the new policy had always been applied.

Material errors discovered in prior period figures are corrected retrospectively by amending opening balances and comparative amounts for the prior period.

### 6. Charges to Revenue for Non-current Assets

Services, support services and trading accounts are debited with the following amounts to record the cost of holding non-current assets during the year:

- Depreciation attributable to the assets used by the relevant service; and,
- Revaluation and impairment losses on assets used by the service where there are no accumulated gains in the Revaluation Reserve against which the losses can be written off.

The Council is not required to raise Council Tax to fund depreciation, revaluation and impairment losses or amortisations. However, it is required to make an annual contribution from revenue towards the reduction in its overall borrowing requirement equal to an amount calculated on a prudent basis determined by the Council in accordance with statutory guidance. Depreciation, revaluation and impairment losses and amortisations are therefore replaced by the contribution in the General Fund Balance (Minimum Revenue Provision), by way of an adjusting transaction with the Capital Adjustment Account in the Movement in Reserves Statement for the difference between the two.

### 7. Employee Benefits

#### Benefits Payable During Employment

Short-term employee benefits are those due to be settled within 12 months of the year-end. They include such benefits as wages and salaries, paid annual leave and paid sick leave, and non-monetary benefits for current employees and are recognised as an expense for services in the year in which employees render service to the Council. An accrual is made for the cost of holiday entitlements (or any form of leave, e.g. time off in lieu) earned by employees but not taken before the year-end which employees can carry forward into the next financial year. The accrual is made at the wage and salary rates applicable in the following accounting year, being the period in which the employee takes the benefit. The accrual is charged to Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services, but then reversed out through the Movement in Reserves Statement so that holiday benefits are charged to revenue in the financial year in which the holiday absence occurs.

#### Termination Costs

Termination costs are amounts payable as a result of a decision by the Council to terminate an officer's employment before the normal retirement date or an officer's decision to accept voluntary redundancy. They are charged on an accruals basis to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement at the earlier of when the Council can no longer withdraw the offer of those costs or when the Council recognises costs for a restructuring.

Where termination costs involve the enhancement of pensions, statutory provisions require the General Fund balance to be charged with the amount payable by the Council to the pension fund or pensioner in the year, not the amount calculated according to the relevant accounting standards. In the Movement in Reserves Statement, appropriations are required to and from the Pensions Reserve to remove the notional debits and credits for pension enhancement termination costs and replace them with debits for the cash paid to the pension fund and pensioners and any such amounts payable but unpaid at the year-end.

## SECTION 6 : Summary of Material Accounting Policies

### Post Employment Benefits

Employees of the Council are members of three separate pension schemes:

- The Teachers' Pension Scheme, administered by Capita Teachers' Pensions on behalf of the Department for Education (DfE).
- The NHS Pensions Scheme, administered by the NHS Business Services Authority.
- The Local Government Pensions Scheme, administered by XPS Pensions Group in partnership with Middlesbrough Council.

All schemes provide defined benefits to members (retirement lump sums and pensions), earned as employees whilst working for the Council.

The arrangements for the Teachers' and NHS schemes mean that liabilities for these benefits cannot ordinarily be identified specifically to the Council. The schemes are therefore accounted for as if they were a defined contribution scheme and no liability for future payments of benefits is recognised in the Balance Sheet. The Children's and Joint Commissioning Department line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement is charged with the employer's contributions payable to Teachers' Pensions in the year and the employer's contributions payable to NHS Pensions in the year.

#### The Local Government Pension Scheme

The Local Government Scheme is accounted for as a defined benefits scheme.

The liabilities of the Teesside Pension Fund attributable to the Council are included in the Balance Sheet on an actuarial basis using the projected unit method – i.e. an assessment of the future payments that will be made in relation to retirement benefits earned to date by employees, based on assumptions about mortality rates, employee turnover rates etc, and projections of projected earnings for current employees.

The assets of the Teesside Pension Fund attributable to the Council are included in the Balance Sheet at their fair value:

- Quoted securities – current bid price,
- Unquoted securities – professional estimate,
- Unitised securities – current bid price,
- Property – market value.

The change in the net pensions liability is analysed into the following components:

**Service cost**, comprising:

- **Current service cost** – the increase in liabilities as a result of years of service earned this year – allocated in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement to the services for which the employees worked.
- **Past service cost** – the increase in liabilities as a result of a scheme amendment or curtailment whose effect relates to years of service earned in earlier years – debited to the Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement and apportioned based on direct departmental pension costs.
- **Net interest on the defined benefit liability/(asset) i.e. net interest expense for the Council** – the change during the period in the net defined benefit liability/(asset) that arises from the passage of time charged to the Financing and Investment Income and Expenditure line of the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement. This is calculated by applying the discount rate used to measure the defined benefit obligation at the beginning of the period to the net defined benefit liability/(asset) at the beginning of the period, taking into account any changes in the net defined benefit liability/(asset) during the period as a result of contribution and benefit payments.

**Remeasurements**, comprising:

- **The return on plan assets** – excluding amounts included in net interest on the net defined benefit liability/(asset) - charged to the Pensions Reserve as Other Comprehensive Income and Expenditure.
- **Actuarial gains and losses** – changes in the net pensions liability that arise because events have not coincided with assumptions made at the last actuarial valuation or because the actuaries have updated their assumptions - charged to the Pensions Reserve as Other Comprehensive Income and Expenditure.

## SECTION 6 : Summary of Material Accounting Policies

**Contributions paid to the Teesside Pension Fund** – cash paid as employer’s contributions to the pension fund in settlement of liabilities; not accounted for as an expense.

In relation to retirement benefits, statutory provisions require the General Fund balance to be charged with the amount payable by the Council to the pension fund or directly to pensioners in the year, not the amount calculated according to the relevant accounting standards. In the Movement in Reserves Statement, this means that there are appropriations to and from the Pensions Reserve to remove the notional debits and credits for retirement benefits and replace them with debits for the cash paid to the pension fund and pensioners and any such amounts payable but unpaid at the year-end. The positive balance that arises on the Pensions Reserve means that the resources set aside to fund pension benefits for post and current employees currently exceed the estimated cost.

### Discretionary Benefits

The Council also has restricted powers to make discretionary awards of retirement benefits in the event of early retirements. Any liabilities estimated to arise as a result of an award to any member of staff (including teachers) are accrued in the year of the decision to make the award and accounted for using the same policies as are applied to the Local Government Pension Scheme.

### **8. Events After the Balance Sheet Date**

Events after the Balance Sheet date are those events, both favourable and unfavourable, that occur between the end of the reporting period and the date when the Statement of Accounts is authorised for issue. Two types of events can be identified:

- Those that provide evidence of conditions that existed at the end of the reporting period – the Statement of Accounts is adjusted to reflect such events; and,
- Those that are indicative of conditions that arose after the reporting period – the Statement of Accounts is not adjusted to reflect such events, but where a category of events would have a material effect, disclosure is made in the notes of the nature of the events and their estimated financial effect.

### **9. Government Grants and Contributions**

Whether paid on account, by instalments or in arrears, government grants and third party contributions and donations are recognised as due to the Council when there is reasonable assurance that:

- The Council will comply with the conditions attached to the payments; and
- The grants or contributions will be received.

Amounts recognised as due to the Council are not credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement until conditions attached to the grant or contribution have been satisfied. Conditions are stipulations that specify that the future economic benefits or service potential embodied in the asset acquired using the grant or contribution are required to be consumed by the recipient as specified, or future economic benefits or service potential must be returned to the transferor.

Monies advanced as grants and contributions for which conditions have not been satisfied are carried in the Balance Sheet as either Capital or Revenue Grant Receipts in Advance. When conditions are satisfied, the grant or contribution is credited to the relevant department line (attributable revenue grants and contributions) or Taxation and Non-Specific Grant Income (non-ringfenced revenue grants and all capital grants) in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement.

Where capital grants are credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement, they are reversed out of the General Fund Balance in the Movement in Reserves Statement. Where the grant has yet to be used to finance capital expenditure, it is posted to the Capital Grants Unapplied Reserve. Where it has been applied, it is posted to the Capital Adjustment Account. Amounts in the Capital Grants Unapplied Reserve are transferred to the Capital Adjustment Account once they have been applied to fund capital expenditure.

## SECTION 6 : Summary of Material Accounting Policies

### 10. Interests in Companies and Other Entities

Under Local Government Reorganisation the Council was allocated 2.47% of the shares in Teesside International Airport, which has reduced to 1% upon the sale of the airport to Goosepool 2019 Ltd (jointly owned by the Tees Valley Combined Authority (75%) and Stobart Holding Limited (25%)).

These share holdings originated through policy initiatives with other Local Authorities and are not held for trading or income generation. Therefore the Council have elected to designate the equity as Fair Value through other Comprehensive Income.

### 11. Inventories and Long Term Contracts

Inventories are included in the Balance Sheet at the lower of cost and net realisable value. The cost of inventories is assigned using a weighted average costing formula.

Items with a residual value have been disposed of at maximum benefit to the Council. The Director of Finance, IT and Digital is advised of obsolete stock prior to disposal for items in excess of £500 in value. Items having no residual value have been disposed of by being either:

- Advertised internally,
- Donated to charitable organisations,
- Scrapped (within legislative parameters),
- Specialist removal.

Obsolete or damaged stock has been written off, otherwise an allowance has been made for obsolescence.

Work in Progress on uncompleted jobs is valued at cost, including an allocation of overheads.

### 12. Investment Property

Investment properties are those that are used solely to earn rental income and/or for capital appreciation. The definition is not met if the property is used in any way to facilitate the delivery of services or production of goods or is held for sale.

Investment properties are measured initially at cost and subsequently at fair value (i.e. market value), based on the amount at which the asset could be exchanged between knowledgeable parties at arm's-length. Properties are not depreciated but are reviewed annually according to market conditions at the year-end. Gains and losses on revaluation are posted to the Financing and Investment Income and Expenditure line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement. The same treatment is applied to gains and losses on disposal.

Rentals received in relation to investment properties are credited to the Financing and Investment Income and Expenditure line and result in a gain for the General Fund Balance. However, revaluation and disposal gains and losses are not permitted by statutory arrangements to have an impact on the General Fund Balance. The gains and losses are therefore reversed out of the General Fund Balance in the Movement in Reserves Statement and posted to the Capital Adjustment Account and (for any sale proceeds greater than £10,000) the Capital Receipts Reserve.

### 13. Leases

Leases are classified as Right-of-Use Assets where the terms of the lease substantially transfer all the risks and rewards incidental to ownership of the property, plant or equipment from the lessor to the lessee. All other leases are classified as Operating Leases.

Where a lease covers both land and buildings, the land and buildings elements are considered separately for classification.

Arrangements that do not have the legal status of a lease but convey a right to use an asset in return for payment are accounted for under this policy where fulfilment of the arrangement is dependent on the use of specific assets.

## SECTION 6 : Summary of Material Accounting Policies

### The Council as Lessee

Property, Plant and Equipment held under Right-of-Use Assets are recognised on the Balance Sheet at the commencement of the lease. The asset recognised is matched by a liability for the obligation to pay the lessor.

Lease payments are apportioned between:

- A charge for the acquisition of the interest in the property, plant or equipment – applied to write down the lease liability; and,
- A finance charge (debited to the Financing and Investment Income and Expenditure line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement).

Property, Plant and Equipment recognised under Right-of-Use Assets are accounted for using the policies applied generally to such assets, subject to depreciation being charged over the lease term if this is shorter than the asset's estimated useful life (where ownership of the asset does not transfer to the Authority at the end of the lease period).

Where leases are at nil consideration, or a peppercorn, then no lease liability is recorded and instead are treated as donated assets and included within Taxation and Non-Specific Grant Income line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement.

There are four properties that have previously been included on the Balance Sheet under the IAS 17 – Leases standard. Two properties are freehold subject to lease and the Council sub-lease part of the asset at nil rent. Two were considered finance leases under IAS17, one with peppercorn and the other below market rent. Leases previously classified as finance lease under IAS17 continue to be accounted for as such. The Council has applied the practical expedient to not reclassify these leases as Right-of-Use Assets.

The Authority is not required to raise Council Tax to cover depreciation or revaluation and impairment losses arising on leased assets. Instead, a prudent annual contribution is made from revenue funds towards the deemed capital investment in accordance with statutory requirements. Depreciation and revaluation and impairment losses are therefore substituted by a revenue contribution in the General Fund Balance, by way of an adjusting transaction with the Capital Adjustment Account in the Movement in Reserves Statement for the difference between the two.

#### Operating Leases

Rentals paid under operating leases are charged to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement as an expense of the services benefiting from use of the leased property, plant or equipment. Charges are made on a straight-line basis over the life of the lease, even if this does not match the pattern of payments (e.g. there is a rent-free period at the commencement of the lease).

### The Council as Lessor

#### Finance Leases

Where the Council grants a finance lease over a property or an item of plant or equipment, the relevant asset is written out of the Balance Sheet as a disposal. At the commencement of the lease, the carrying amount of the asset in the Balance Sheet (whether Property, Plant and Equipment or Assets Held for Sale) is written off to the Other Operating Expenditure line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement as part of the gain or loss on disposal. A gain, representing the Council's net investment in the lease, is credited to the same line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement also as part of the gain or loss on disposal (i.e. netted off against the carrying value of the asset at the time of disposal), matched by a lease (long-term debtor) asset in the Balance Sheet.

Lease rentals receivable are apportioned between:

- A charge for the acquisition of the interest in the property – applied to write down the lease debtor (together with any premiums received); and,
- Finance income (credited to the Financing and Investment Income and Expenditure line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement).

The gain credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement on disposal is not permitted by statute to increase the General Fund Balance and is required to be treated as a capital receipt. Where a premium has been received, this is posted out of the General Fund Balance to the Capital Receipts Reserve in the Movement in Reserves Statement. Where the amount due in relation to the lease asset is to be settled by the payment of rentals in future financial years, this is posted out of the General Fund Balance to the Deferred Capital Receipts Reserve in the Movement in Reserves Statement. When the future rentals are received, the element for the capital receipt for the disposal of the asset is used to write down the lease debtor. At this point, the deferred capital receipts are transferred to the Capital Receipts Reserve.

The written-off value of disposals is not a charge against council tax, as the cost of non-current assets is fully provided for under separate arrangements for capital financing. Amounts are therefore appropriated to the Capital Adjustment Account from the General Fund Balance in the Movement in Reserves Statement.

## SECTION 6 : Summary of Material Accounting Policies

### Operating Leases

Where the Council grants an operating lease over a property or an item of plant or equipment, the asset is retained in the Balance Sheet. Rental income is credited to the Other Operating Expenditure line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement. Credits are made on a straight-line basis over the life of the lease, even if this does not match the pattern of payments (e.g. there is a premium paid at the commencement of the lease). Initial direct costs incurred in negotiating and arranging the lease are added to the carrying amount of the relevant asset and charged as an expense over the lease term on the same basis as rental income.

### **14. Council Tax and Non-Domestic Rates**

Billing authorities act as agents, collecting council tax and non-domestic rates (NDR) on behalf of the major preceptors (including government for NDR) and, as principals, collecting council tax and NDR for themselves. Billing authorities are required by statute to maintain a separate fund (i.e. the Collection Fund) for the collection and distribution of amounts due in respect of council tax and NDR. Under the legislative framework for the Collection Fund, billing authorities, major preceptors and central government share proportionately the risks and rewards that the amount of council tax and NDR collected could be less or more than predicted.

### **15. Accounting for Council Tax and NDR**

The council tax and NDR income included in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement is the Council's share of accrued income for the year. However, regulations determine the amount of council tax and NDR that must be included in the Council's General Fund. Therefore, the difference between the income included in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement and the amount required by regulation to be credited to the General Fund is taken to the Collection Fund Adjustment Account and included as a reconciling item in the Movement in Reserves Statement.

The Balance Sheet includes the Council's share of the end of year balances in respect of council tax and NDR relating to arrears, impairment allowances for doubtful debts, overpayments and prepayments and appeals.

### **16. Property, Plant and Equipment**

Property, Plant and Equipment are valued on a five-year rolling programme, although material changes to asset values will be adjusted in the interim period as they occur. The current asset values are based upon certificates issued by the Council's Property Management Division. The valuations are prepared in accordance with the Statements and UK Practice Statements contained in the RICS Appraisal and Valuation Standards. From 1 April 2007, increases in asset valuations are credited to the Revaluation Reserve.

The asset valuations have been prepared using the following assumptions:

- The Council has good marketable title, free from any onerous or restrictive covenants.
- There are no hazardous substances or latent defects in the properties and there is no contamination present.
- Details of tenure, planning consents and other relevant information are assumed to be correct.
- That properties and their value are unaffected by any matters that would be revealed by a local search, replies to usual enquiries or by any statutory notice.
- It is assumed that the present use is lawful and that there are no adverse conditions attached. It is further assumed that there are no adverse planning proposals in existence that may affect the property in the future.
- No allowance has been made for any taxation, acquisition, realisation or disposal costs or other expenses.
- No soil surveys have been carried out or services tested.

## SECTION 6 : Summary of Material Accounting Policies

Not all properties were specifically inspected for the purposes of asset valuations. This was neither practicable, nor considered by the Valuer to be necessary, for the purpose of the valuation. However, regular inspections are made by officers of the Property Section of all the Council's property assets. As allowable under the Code depreciated historical cost is used as a proxy for some non-property assets that have short useful lives and/or low values.

Where a non-current asset is included in the Balance Sheet at current value, the increase over the previous carrying amount at which that asset was included in the Balance Sheet immediately prior to the latest revaluation is credited to a revaluation account, except to the extent that it reverses a revaluation loss on the same asset previously recognised in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement, when the revaluation gain is recognised in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement.

Where an item of Property, Plant or Equipment is acquired under a Right-of-Use Asset, at the inception of the lease the amount to be recorded both as an asset and as a liability would be the present value of the minimum lease payments derived by discounting them at the interest rate implicit in the lease.

The lease liability is subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest rate method. It is remeasured, with a corresponding adjustment to the Right-of-Use Asset, when there is a change in future lease payments resulting from a rent review, change in an index or rate such as inflation, or change in the Council's assessment of whether it is reasonably certain to exercise a purchase, extension or break option.

Assets that have physical substance and are held for use in the production or supply of goods or services, for rental to others, or for administrative purposes and that are expected to be used during more than one financial year are classified as Property, Plant and Equipment.

### Recognition

Expenditure on the acquisition, creation or enhancement of Property, Plant and Equipment is capitalised on an accruals basis, provided that it is probable that the future economic benefits or service potential associated with the item will flow to the Council and the cost of the item can be measured reliably. Expenditure that maintains but does not add to an asset's potential to deliver future economic benefits or service potential (i.e. repairs and maintenance) is charged as an expense when it is incurred.

### Measurement

Assets are initially measured at cost, comprising:

- The purchase price; and,
- Any costs attributable to bringing the asset to the location and condition necessary for it to be capable of operating in the manner intended by management.

The Council does not capitalise borrowing costs incurred whilst assets are under construction.

The cost of assets acquired other than by purchase is deemed to be its current value, unless the acquisition does not have commercial substance (i.e. it will not lead to a variation in the cash flows of the Council). In the latter case, where an asset is acquired via an exchange, the cost of the acquisition is the carrying amount of the asset given up by the Council.

Assets are then carried in the Balance Sheet using the following measurement bases:

- Community assets and assets under construction – historical cost.
- Infrastructure – the authority has decided not to disclose gross cost and accumulated depreciation of infrastructure in the financial statements and instead maintain this information as memorandum information. The basis and rationale for this decision is Note 14 together with the determination that the carrying amount of derecognised infrastructure is nil. Note 14 also sets out the useful lives of various classes of infrastructure that have been determined through discussion with the Authority's engineers.
- Dwellings – current value, determined using the basis of existing use value for social housing (EUV-SH).
- Surplus and Investment assets - fair value, determined using the basis of market value (FV-MV).
- All other assets – current value, determined as the amount that would be paid for the asset in its existing use (existing use value – EUV).

Where there is no market-based evidence of current value because of the specialist nature of an asset, depreciated replacement cost (DRC) is used as an estimate of current value.

## SECTION 6 : Summary of Material Accounting Policies

Assets included in the Balance Sheet at current value are revalued sufficiently regularly to ensure that their carrying amount is not materially different from their current value at the year-end, but as a minimum every five years. Increases in valuations are matched by credits to the Revaluation Reserve to recognise unrealised gains. Exceptionally, gains might be credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement where they arise from the reversal of a loss previously charged to a service.

Where decreases in value are identified, they are accounted for as follows:

- Where there is a balance of revaluation gains for the asset in the Revaluation Reserve, the carrying amount of the asset is written down against that balance (up to the amount of the accumulated gains).
- Where there is no balance in the Revaluation Reserve or an insufficient balance, the carrying amount of the asset is written down against the relevant department line(s) in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement.

The Revaluation Reserve contains revaluation gains recognised since 1 April 2007 only, the date of its formal implementation. Gains arising before that date have been consolidated into the Capital Adjustment Account.

### Impairment

Assets are assessed at each year-end as to whether there is any indication that an asset may be impaired. Where indications exist and any possible differences are estimated to be material, the recoverable amount of the asset is estimated and, where this is less than the carrying amount of the asset, an impairment loss is recognised for the shortfall.

Where impairment losses are identified, they are accounted for as follows:

- Where there is a balance of revaluation gains for the asset in the Revaluation Reserve, the carrying amount of the asset is written down against that balance (up to the amount of the accumulated gains).
- Where there is no balance in the Revaluation Reserve or an insufficient balance, the carrying amount of the asset is written down against the relevant department line(s) in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement.

Where an impairment loss is reversed subsequently, the reversal is credited to the relevant department line(s) in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement, up to the amount of the original loss, adjusted for depreciation that would have been charged if the loss had not been recognised.

### Depreciation

Depreciation is provided for on all Property, Plant and Equipment assets by the systematic allocation of their depreciable amounts over their useful lives. An exception is made for assets without a determinable finite useful life (i.e. freehold land and Community Assets) and assets that are not yet available for use (i.e. assets under construction). Depreciation has been charged using the straight line method on the closing balances over the asset's estimated useful life.

The useful lives of assets are estimated on a realistic basis and are reviewed regularly and, where necessary, revised. Where the useful life of an item of Property, Plant or Equipment is revised, the carrying amount of the item is depreciated over the revised remaining useful life. Depreciation is not charged in the year of acquisition but is charged in the year of disposal.

Where an item of Property, Plant and Equipment has major components whose cost is significant in relation to the total cost of the item, or has a significantly different useful life, the components are recognised separately and depreciated based on the components useful economic life.

Revaluation gains are also depreciated, with an amount equal to the difference between current value depreciation charged on assets and the depreciation that would have been chargeable based on their historical cost being transferred each year from the Revaluation Reserve to the Capital Adjustment Account.

### Disposals and Assets Held for Sale

When it becomes probable that the carrying amount of an asset will be recovered principally through a sale transaction rather than through its continuing use, it is reclassified as an Asset Held for Sale. The asset is revalued immediately before reclassification and then carried at the lower of this amount and current value less costs to sell. Where there is a subsequent decrease to current value less costs to sell, the loss is posted to the Other Operating Expenditure line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement. Gains in current value are recognised only up to the amount of any previously recognised losses in the Surplus or Deficit on Provision of Services. Depreciation is not charged on Assets Held for Sale.

## SECTION 6 : Summary of Material Accounting Policies

If assets no longer meet the criteria to be classified as Assets Held for Sale, they are reclassified back to non-current assets and valued at the lower of their carrying amount before they were classified as held for sale; adjusted for depreciation, amortisation or revaluations that would have been recognised had they not been classified as Held for Sale, and their recoverable amount at the date of the decision not to sell.

Assets that are to be abandoned or scrapped are not reclassified as Assets Held for Sale but remain in Property, Plant and Equipment. When an asset is disposed of or decommissioned, the carrying amount of the asset in the Balance Sheet (whether Property, Plant and Equipment or Assets Held for Sale) is written off to the Other Operating Expenditure line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement as part of the gain or loss on disposal. Receipts from disposals (if any) are credited to the same line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement also as part of the gain or loss on disposal (i.e. netted off against the carrying value of the asset at the time of disposal). Any revaluation gains accumulated for the asset in the Revaluation Reserve are transferred to the Capital Adjustment Account.

Amounts received for a disposal in excess of £10,000 are categorised as capital receipts. A proportion of receipts relating to housing disposals (75% for dwellings, 50% for land and other assets, net of statutory deductions and allowances) is payable to the Government. The balance of receipts is required to be credited to the Capital Receipts Reserve, and can then only be used for new capital investment or set aside to reduce the Council's underlying need to borrow (the Capital Financing Requirement). Receipts are appropriated to the Reserve from the General Fund Balance in the Movement in Reserves Statement.

The written-off value of disposals is not a charge against Council Tax, as the cost of Property, Plant and Equipment is fully provided for under separate arrangements for capital financing. Amounts are appropriated to the Capital Adjustment Account from the General Fund Balance in the Movement in Reserves Statement.

### 17. Heritage Assets

Heritage Assets are held in support of the primary objective of increasing the knowledge, understanding and appreciation of the Council's history and local area. The items in the Museum Exhibit and Art Collection and the Civic Collection are held on the Balance Sheet at insurance value, and will be reviewed every five years. The assets within these collections are deemed to have indeterminate lives and a high residual value; hence the Council does not consider it appropriate to charge depreciation.

The collection is relatively static and acquisitions and donations are rare. Where they do occur acquisitions will be recognised at cost until the collection is revalued by the external valuer. Donations will only be recognised where the value is deemed to exceed £10,000, and will be valued by the external valuer.

The Council has an Acquisitions and Disposals Policy in place which sets out the acquisition, preservation, management and disposal of Heritage Assets. This is available to view on the Council's website.

The Council does not consider that reliable cost of valuation information can be obtained for many of the items held under the Sculptures, Monuments and War Memorial category. This is because of the diverse nature of the assets held and lack of comparable market values.

### 18. Intangible Assets

Expenditure on assets that do not have physical substance and are identifiable and controlled by the Council (e.g. Software Licences) is capitalised when it will bring benefits to the Council for more than one financial year. The cost is charged to the relevant expenditure category over the economic life to reflect the pattern of consumption of benefits.

### 19. Provisions and Contingent Liabilities

#### Provisions

Provisions are made where an event has taken place that gives the Council a legal or constructive obligation that probably requires settlement by a transfer of economic benefits or service potential, and a reliable estimate can be made of the amount of the obligation. For instance, the Council may be involved in a court case that could eventually result in the making of a settlement or the payment of compensation.

Provisions are charged as an expense to the appropriate department line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement in the year that the Council becomes aware of the obligation, and are measured at the best estimate at the Balance Sheet date of the expenditure required to settle the obligation, taking into account relevant risks and uncertainties.

## SECTION 6 : Summary of Material Accounting Policies

When payments are eventually made, they are charged to the provision carried in the Balance Sheet. Estimated settlements are reviewed at the end of each financial year – where it becomes less than probable that a transfer of economic benefits will now be required (or a lower settlement than anticipated is made), the provision is reversed and credited back to the relevant service.

Where some or all of the payment required to settle a provision is expected to be recovered from another party (e.g. from an insurance claim), this is only recognised as income for the relevant service if it is virtually certain that reimbursement will be received if the Council settles the obligation.

### Contingent Liabilities

A contingent liability arises where an event has taken place that gives the Council a possible obligation whose existence will only be confirmed by the occurrence or otherwise of uncertain future events not wholly within the control of the Council. Contingent liabilities also arise in circumstances where a provision would otherwise be made but either it is not probable that an outflow of resources will be required or the amount of the obligation cannot be measured reliably.

Contingent liabilities are not recognised in the Balance Sheet but disclosed in a note to the accounts.

### **20. Financial Guarantees**

The Council entered into a number of financial guarantees that are not required to be accounted for as financial instruments and are disclosed in the Financial Guarantees note.

### **21. Reserves**

The Council sets aside specific amounts as reserves for future policy purposes or to cover contingencies. Reserves are created by appropriating amounts out of the General Fund Balance in the Movement in Reserves Statement. When expenditure to be financed from a reserve is incurred, it is charged to the Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement. The reserve is then appropriated back into the General Fund Balance in the Movement in Reserves Statement so that there is no net charge against Council Tax for the expenditure.

Certain reserves are kept to manage the accounting processes for non-current assets, financial instruments, retirement and employee benefits and do not represent usable resources for the Council. These reserves are explained in the relevant policies.

### **22. Revenue Expenditure Funded from Capital under Statute**

Expenditure incurred during the year that may be capitalised under statutory provisions but that does not result in the creation of a non-current asset has been charged as expenditure to the relevant service in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement in the year. Where the Council has determined to meet the cost of this expenditure from existing capital resources or by borrowing, a transfer in the Movement in Reserves Statement from the General Fund Balance to the Capital Adjustment Account then reverses out the amounts charged so that there is no impact on the level of Council Tax.

### **23. VAT**

VAT payable is included as an expense only to the extent that it is not recoverable from His Majesty's Revenue and Customs. VAT receivable is excluded from income.

## SECTION 6 : Summary of Material Accounting Policies

### 24. Financial Instruments

#### Financial Liabilities

Financial liabilities are recognised on the Balance Sheet when the Council becomes a party to the contractual provisions of a financial instrument and are initially measured at fair value and are carried at their amortised cost. Annual charges to the Financing and Investment Income and Expenditure line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement for interest payable are based on the carrying amount of the liability, multiplied by the effective rate of interest for the instrument. The effective interest rate is the rate that exactly discounts estimated future cash payments over the life of the instrument to the amount at which it was originally recognised. For existing borrowings this means that the amount presented in the Balance Sheet is the outstanding principal repayable (plus accrued interest) and interest charged to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement is the amount payable for the year according to the loan agreement.

For Public Works Loans Board (PWLB) loans, the fair value of each loan has been determined by information supplied by the PWLB. For market loans, the redemption rules of the PWLB have been used to approximate the fair value of loans held. The comparator market rates prevailing have been taken from indicative investment rates at each Balance Sheet date.

#### Financial Assets

Financial assets are classified based on classification and measurement approach that reflects the business model for holding the financial assets and their cash flow characteristics. There are three main classes of financial assets measured at:

- Amortised cost,
- Fair value through profit or loss (FVPL), and
- Fair value through other comprehensive income (FVOCI).

The Council's business model is to hold investments to collect contractual cash flows, i.e. payments of interest and principal. Most of the Council's financial assets are therefore classified as amortised cost, except for those whose contractual payments are not solely payment of principal and interest (i.e. where the cash flows do not take the form of a basic debt instrument).

#### Financial Assets Measured at Amortised Cost

Financial assets measured at amortised cost are recognised on the Balance Sheet when the Council becomes a party to the contractual provision of a financial instrument and are initially measured at fair value. They are subsequently measured at their amortised cost. Annual credits to the Financing and Investment Income and Expenditure line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement (CIES) for the interest receivable are based on the carrying amount of the asset multiplied by the effective rate of the interest for the instrument. For most of the financial assets held by the Council, this means that the amount presented in the Balance Sheet is the outstanding principal receivable (plus accrued interest) and interest credited to the CIES is the amount receivable for the year in the loan agreement.

Any gains and losses that arise on the derecognition of an asset are credited or debited to the Financing and Investment Income and Expenditure line in the CIES.

#### Financial Assets Measured at Fair Value through Profit or Loss (FVPL)

Financial assets that are measured at FVPL are recognised on the Balance Sheet when the Council becomes a party to the contractual provisions of a financial instrument and are initially measured and carried at fair value. Fair value gains and losses are recognised as they arrive in the Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services.

Any gains and losses that arise on the derecognition of the asset are credited or debited to the Financing and Investment Income and Expenditure line in the CIES.

IFRS 9 Financial Instruments sets out that investments in equity should be classified as fair value through profit and loss unless there is an irrevocable election to recognise changes in the fair value through other comprehensive income. The Council will assess each investment on an individual basis and assign an IFRS 9 category. The assessment will be based on the underlying purpose for holding the financial instrument.

Any changes in the fair value of instruments held at fair value through profit or loss will be recognised in the net cost of service in the CIES and will have a General Fund impact.

The Council currently holds no assets at FVPL.

## SECTION 6 : Summary of Material Accounting Policies

### Financial Assets measured at Fair Value through other Comprehensive Income (FVOCI)

The Council has equity instruments designated at fair value through other Comprehensive Income (FVOCI). This was previously classified as an Available For Sale asset at 31 March 2018.

The Council has made an irrevocable election to designate one of its equity instruments as FVOCI on the basis that they are held for non-contractual benefits, they are not held for strategic purposes. The assets were transferred to the new asset category on 1 April 2018. The asset is initially measured and carried at fair value.

Changes in fair value are posted to Other Comprehensive Income and Expenditure and are balanced by an entry in the Financial Instruments Revaluation Reserve.

When the asset is de-recognised, the cumulative gain or loss previously recognised in the financial instruments revaluation reserve is credited/debited to the surplus or deficit on the provision of services.

The same accounting treatment was adopted in the prior year when the assets were classified as Available for Sale, except that accumulated gains and losses on the available for sale asset were previously held in the Available for Sale Financial Instruments Reserve at 31 March 2018. The balance on this reserve was transferred to the new Financial Instruments Revaluation Reserves as at 1 April 2018.

### Expected Credit Loss Model

The Council recognises expected credit losses on all of its financial assets held at amortised cost (or where relevant FVOCI), either on a 12-month or lifetime basis. The expected credit loss model also applies to lease receivables and contract assets. Only lifetime losses are recognised for trade receivables (debtors) held by the Council.

Impairment losses are calculated to reflect the expectation that the future cash flows might not take place because the borrower could default on their obligations. Credit risk plays a crucial part in assessing losses. Where risk has increased significantly since an instrument was initially recognised, losses are assessed on a lifetime basis. Where risk has not increased significantly or remains low, losses are assessed on a basis of 12-month expected losses.

## **25. Fair Value Measurements**

The Council measures some of its non-financial assets such as surplus assets and investment properties and some of its financial instruments such as equity shareholdings at fair value at each reporting date. Fair value is the price that would be received from selling an asset or paid to transfer a liability in an orderly transaction between market participants at the measurement date. The fair value measurement assumes that the transaction to sell the asset or transfer the liability takes place either:

- In the principal market for the asset or liability, or
- In the absence of a principal market, in the most advantageous market for the asset or liability.

The Council measures the fair value of an asset or liability using the assumptions that market participants would use when pricing an asset or liability, assuming that market participants act in their economic best interest.

When measuring the fair value of a non-financial asset, the Council takes into account a market participant's ability to generate economic benefits by using the asset in its highest and best use by selling it to another market participant that would use the asset in its highest and best use.

The Council uses valuation techniques that are appropriate in the circumstances and for which sufficient data is available, maximising the use of relevant observable inputs and minimising the use of unobservable inputs.

Inputs to the valuation techniques in respect of assets and liabilities for which the fair value is measured or disclosed in the Council's financial statements are categorised within the fair value hierarchy, as follows:

- Level 1 – quoted prices (unadjusted) in active markets for identical assets or liabilities that the Council can access at the measurement date.
- Level 2 – inputs other than quoted prices included within Level 1 that are observable for the asset or liability, either directly or indirectly.
- Level 3 – unobservable inputs for the asset or liability.

## **SECTION 7 : Glossary of Terms**

### **ACCOUNTING POLICIES**

Those principles, bases, conventions, rules and practices applied by an entity that specify how the effects of transactions and other events are to be reflected in its financial statements through:

- recognising;
- selecting measurement bases for; and
- presenting assets, liabilities, gains, losses and changes to reserves.

Accounting policies do not include estimation techniques.

Accounting policies define the process whereby transactions and other events are reflected in financial statements. For example, an accounting policy for a particular type of expenditure may specify whether an asset or a loss is to be recognised; the basis on which it is to be measured; and where in the Income and Expenditure Account or Balance Sheet it is to be presented.

### **ACTUARIAL GAINS AND LOSSES**

For a defined benefit pension scheme, the changes in actuarial deficits or surpluses that arise because:

- events have not coincided with the actuarial assumptions made for the last valuation (experience gains or losses);
- the actuarial assumptions have changed.

### **ASSET CEILING**

Maximum amount of surplus that can be recognised on a Authority's Balance Sheet from its share of LGPS assets.

### **CAPITAL EXPENDITURE**

Expenditure on the acquisition of an asset or expenditure that adds to and not merely maintains the value of an existing asset.

### **CODE OF PRACTICE ON LOCAL AUTHORITY ACCOUNTING**

The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accounting (CIPFA) Code sets out the accounting concepts and accounting principles which underpin the statement of accounts.

### **COMMUNITY ASSETS**

Assets that the local authority intends to hold in perpetuity, that have no determinable useful life and that may have restrictions on their disposal. Examples of community assets are parks and historical buildings.

### **CONSISTENCY**

The principle that the accounting treatment of like items within an accounting period and from one period to the next is the same.

### **CONSTRUCTIVE OBLIGATION**

An obligation that derives from an Authority's actions where:

- a) by an established pattern of past practice, published policies or a sufficiently specific current statement, the Authority has indicated to other parties that it will accept certain responsibilities; and
- b) as a result, the Authority has created a valid expectation on the part of those other parties that it will discharge those responsibilities.

### **CONTINGENT LIABILITY**

A contingent liability is either:

- a) a possible obligation arising from past events whose existence will be confirmed only by the occurrence of one or more uncertain future events not wholly within the Authority's control; or
- b) a present obligation arising from past events where it is not probable that a transfer of economic benefits will be required or the amount of the obligation cannot be measured with sufficient reliability.

## **SECTION 7 : Glossary of Terms**

### **CREDITORS**

Amounts owed by the Authority for work done, goods received or services rendered within the accounting period but for which payment was not made at the Balance Sheet date.

### **CURRENT ASSETS**

Assets which can be expected to be consumed or realised during the next accounting period, e.g. debtors and stocks.

### **CURRENT LIABILITIES**

Amounts which will become payable or could be called in within the next accounting period e.g. creditors and cash overdrawn.

### **CURRENT SERVICE COST (PENSIONS)**

The increase in the present value of a defined benefit scheme's liabilities expected to rise from employee service in the current period.

### **CURTAILMENT**

For a defined benefit scheme, an event that reduces the expected years of future service of present employees or reduces for a number of employees the accrual of defined benefits for some or all of their future service. Curtailments include:

- a) termination of employee's services earlier than expected, for example as a result of closing a factory or discontinuing a segment of a business; and
- b) termination of, or amendment to the terms of, a defined benefit scheme so that some or all future service by current employees will no longer qualify for benefits or will qualify for only reduced benefits.

### **DEBTORS**

Amounts due to the Authority for works done, goods received or services rendered before the end of the accounting period, but for which payments have not been received by the end of that accounting period.

### **DEFINED BENEFIT SCHEME**

A pension or other retirement benefit scheme other than a defined contribution scheme. Usually, the scheme rules define the benefits independently of the contributions payable and the benefits are not directly related to the investments of the scheme. The scheme may be funded or unfunded (including notionally funded).

### **DEFINED CONTRIBUTION SCHEME**

A pension or other retirement benefit scheme into which an employer pays regular contributions fixed as an amount or as a percentage of pay and will have no legal or constructive obligation to pay further contributions if the scheme does not have sufficient assets to pay all employee benefits relating to employee service in the current and prior periods.

### **DEPRECIATION**

The measure of the cost or revalued amount of the benefits of the asset that have been consumed during the period.

Consumption includes the wearing out, using up or other reduction in the useful life of an asset whether arising from use or obsolescence through either changes in technology or demand for the goods and services produced by the asset.

## **SECTION 7 : Glossary of Terms**

### **DISCRETIONARY BENEFITS**

Retirement benefits which the employer has no legal, contractual or constructive obligation to award and which are awarded under the Authority's discretionary powers, such as The Local Government (Discretionary Payments) Regulations 1996.

### **ESTIMATION TECHNIQUES**

The methods adopted by an entity to arrive at estimated monetary amounts, corresponding to the measurement bases selected, for assets, liabilities, gains, losses and changes to reserves.

Estimation techniques implement the measurement aspects of accounting policies. An accounting policy will specify the basis on which an item is to be measured; where there is uncertainty over the monetary amount corresponding to that basis, the amount will be arrived at by using an estimation technique. Estimation techniques include, for example:

- a) Methods of depreciation, such as straight-line and reducing balance, applied in the context of a particular measurement basis, used to estimate the proportion of the economic benefits of property, plant and equipment consumed in a period;
- b) Difference methods used to estimate the proportion of debts that will not be recovered, particularly where such methods consider a population as a whole rather than individual balances.

### **EVENTS AFTER THE BALANCE SHEET DATE**

Events after the Balance Sheet date are events, favourable and unfavourable, that occur between the Balance Sheet date and the date when the Statement of Accounts is authorised for issue.

### **EXCEPTIONAL ITEMS**

Material items that derive from events or transactions that fall within the ordinary activities of the Authority and which need to be disclosed separately by virtue of their size or incidence to give fair presentation of the accounts.

### **EXPECTED RATE OF RETURN ON PENSION ASSETS**

For a funded defined benefit scheme, the average rate of return, including both income and changes in fair value but net of scheme expenses, expected over the remaining life of the related obligation on the actual assets held by the scheme.

### **FAIR VALUE**

The fair value of an asset is the price at which it could be exchanged in an arm's length transaction less, where applicable, any grants receivable towards the purchase or use of the asset.

### **FINANCE LEASE**

Leases are classified as finance leases where the terms of the lease transfer substantially all the risks and rewards incidental to ownership of the property, plant or equipment from the lessor to the lessee.

### **FINANCIAL GUARANTEE**

This is a legally binding commitment by a third party (the guarantor) to cover a borrower's debt or financial obligation if the borrower fails to meet their responsibilities.

### **FINANCIAL INSTRUMENT**

A legally enforceable agreement between two or more parties, expressing a contractual right or a right to the payment of money. Typical examples include investments, loans, trade creditors and trade debtors.

### **GOING CONCERN**

The concept that the Authority will remain in operational existence for the foreseeable future, in particular that the revenue accounts and Balance Sheet assume no intention to curtail significantly the scale of operations.

## **SECTION 7 : Glossary of Terms**

### **GOVERNMENT GRANTS**

Assistance by Government and inter-government agencies and similar bodies, whether local, national or international, in the form of cash or transfers of assets to an Authority in return for past or future compliance with certain conditions relating to the activities of the Authority.

### **HERITAGE ASSETS**

Assets preserved in trust for future generations because of their cultural, environmental or historical associations. It applies to assets held and maintained by the Authority principally for the contribution of knowledge and culture.

### **HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT**

Local Authorities are required to maintain a separate Housing Revenue Account - which sets out the expenditure and income arising from the provision of Council housing. Other services are charged to the General Fund.

### **IMPAIRMENT**

A reduction in the value of Property, Plant and Equipment below its carrying amount on the Balance Sheet.

### **INCREMENTAL BORROWING RATE**

The interest rate a council would pay to borrow funds over a similar term to lease an asset.

### **INFRASTRUCTURE ASSETS**

These assets that are inalienable, expenditure on which is recoverable only by continued use of the asset created. Examples of infrastructure assets are highways and footpaths.

### **INTANGIBLE ASSETS**

Expenditure which may properly be capitalised, but which does not result in an asset with substance. Examples of this type of expenditure are software and other licences, patents and trademarks and artistic originals.

### **INTEREST COST (PENSIONS)**

For a defined benefit scheme, the expected increase during the period is the present value of the scheme liabilities because the benefits are one period closer to settlement.

### **INTERNATIONAL ACCOUNTING STANDARDS (IAS)**

These standards are developed by the International Accounting Standards Board and regulate the preparation and presentation of financial statements.

### **INTERNATIONAL FINANCIAL REPORTING STANDARDS (IFRS)**

These standards are developed by the International Accounting Standards Board and regulate the preparation and presentation of financial statements. The Companies Act 1985 requires compliance with these Standards or disclosures in the notes if there are any material departures from these Standards.

### **INVENTORIES**

The amount of unused or unconsumed stocks held in expectation of future use. When use will not arise until a later period, it is appropriate to carry forward the amount to be matched to the use or consumption when it arises.

Inventories comprises the following categories:

- goods or other assets purchased for resale;
- consumable stores;
- raw materials and components purchased for incorporation into products for sale;
- products and services in intermediate stages of completion;
- long term contract balances; and
- finished goods.

## **SECTION 7 : Glossary of Terms**

### **INVESTMENT PROPERTIES**

Interest in land and/or buildings:

- a) in respect of which construction work and development have been completed; and
- b) which is held for its investment potential, any rental income being negotiated at arm's length.

### **INVESTMENTS (PENSIONS FUND)**

The investments of the Pensions Fund will be accounted for in the statements of that fund. However, authorities are also required to disclose, as part of the disclosures relating to retirement benefits, the attributable share of Pension Scheme assets associated with their underlying obligations.

### **LIQUID RESOURCES**

Current asset investments that are readily disposable by the Authority without disrupting its business and are either readily convertible to known amounts of cash at or close to the carrying amount, or traded in an active market.

### **LONG TERM CONTRACTS**

A contract entered into for the design, manufacture or construction of a single substantial asset or the provision of a service (or a combination of assets or services which together constitute a single project), where the time taken to substantially complete the contract is such that the contract activity falls into different accounting periods. Some contracts with a shorter duration than one year should be accounted for as long term contracts if they are sufficiently material to the activity of the period.

### **MINIMUM REVENUE PROVISION (MRP)**

The statutory minimum amount that authorities must set aside each year as provision for debt repayment based on the Capital Financing Requirement.

### **NET BOOK VALUE**

The amount at which assets are included in the Balance Sheet, that is their historical cost of current value less the cumulative amounts provided for depreciation.

### **NET CURRENT REPLACEMENT COST**

The cost of replacing or recreating the particular asset in its existing condition and in its existing use, that is the cost of its replacement or of the nearest equivalent asset adjusted to reflect the current condition of the existing asset.

### **NET DEBT**

The Authority's borrowings less cash and liquid resources. Where cash and liquid resources exceed borrowings, reference should be to net funds rather than net debt.

### **NET REALISABLE VALUE**

The open market value of the asset in its existing use (or open market value in the case of non-operational assets), less the expenses to be incurred in realising the asset.

### **NON-CURRENT ASSET**

Assets that yield benefits to the Authority, and the services it provides, for a period of more than one year.

## **SECTION 7 : Glossary of Terms**

### **NON-OPERATIONAL ASSETS**

Assets held by a local authority but not used or consumed in the delivery of services or for the service or strategic objectives of the Authority. Examples of non-operational assets include investment properties and assets that are surplus to requirements, pending their sale. It should be noted that the incidence of rental income does not necessarily mean that the asset is an investment property; it would be deemed an investment property only if the asset is held solely for investment purposes and does not support the service or strategic objectives of the Authority and the rental income is negotiated at arm's length.

### **OPERATING LEASES**

A lease other than a finance lease.

### **OPERATIONAL ASSETS**

Assets held and occupied, used or consumed by the Local Authority in the direct delivery of those services for which it has either a statutory or discretionary responsibility or for the service or strategic objectives of the Authority.

### **PAST SERVICE COST**

For a defined benefit scheme, the increase in the present value of the scheme liabilities related to employee service in prior periods arising in the current period as a result of the introduction of, or improvement to, retirement benefits.

### **PRIOR PERIOD ADJUSTMENTS**

Those material adjustments applicable to prior years arising from changes in accounting policies or from the correction of material errors. A material error is one that is of such significance as to destroy the validity of the financial statements. They do not include normal recurring corrections or adjustments of accounting estimates made in prior years.

### **PROJECTED UNIT METHOD**

An accrued benefits valuation method in which the scheme liabilities make allowance for projected earnings. An accrued benefits valuation method is a valuation method in which the scheme liabilities at the valuation date relate to:

- a) the benefits for pensioners and deferred pensioners (i.e. individuals who have ceased to be active members but are entitled to benefits payable at a later date) and their dependants, allowing where appropriate for future increases; and
- b) the accrued benefits for members in service of the valuation date.

The accrued benefits are the benefits for service up to a given point in time, whether vested rights or not.

### **PROPERTY, PLANT & EQUIPMENT**

This covers all assets with physical substance that are for use in the production or supply of goods and services, for rental to others, or for administrative purpose, and expected to be used during more than one period.

### **PROVISIONS**

Funds set aside to cover potential liabilities or losses which are likely or certain to be incurred at a future date but where the exact amount and timing of the liability or loss is currently not known.

## SECTION 7 : Glossary of Terms

### RELATED PARTIES

Two or more parties are related parties when at any time during the financial period:

- one party has direct or indirect control of the other party; or
- the parties are subject to common control from the same source; or
- one party has influence over the financial and operational policies of the other party to an extent that the other party might be inhibited from pursuing at all times its own separate interests; or
- the parties, in entering a transaction, are subject to influence from the same source to such an extent that one of the parties to the transaction has subordinated its own separate interests.

Examples of related parties of an authority include:

- Central Government;
- Local Authorities and other bodies precepting or levying demands on the Council Tax;
- its subsidiary and associated companies;
- its joint ventures and joint venture partners;
- its Councillors;
- its Chief Officers; and
- its Pension Fund.

Examples of related parties of a pension fund include its:

- administering Authority and its related parties;
- scheduled bodies and their related parties; and
- Trustees and Advisors.

These lists are not intended to be comprehensive.

For individuals identified as related parties, the following are also presumed to be related parties:

- members of the close family, or the same household; and
- partnerships, companies, trusts or other entities in which the individual, or a member of their close family or the same household, has a controlling interest.

### RELATED PARTY TRANSACTIONS

A related party transaction is the transfer of assets or liabilities or the performance of services by, to or for a related party irrespective of whether a charge is made. Examples of related party transactions include:

- the purchase, sale, lease, rental or hire of assets between related parties;
- the provision by a pension fund to a related party of assets or loans, irrespective of any direct economic benefit to the Pension Fund;
- the provision of a guarantee to a third party in relation to a liability or obligation of a related party;
- the provision of services to a related party, including the provision of pension fund administration services;
- transactions with individuals who are related parties of an authority or a pension fund, except those applicable to other members of the community or the pension fund, such as Council Tax, rents and payment of benefits.

This list is not intended to be comprehensive.

The materiality of related party transactions should be judged not only in terms of their significance to the Authority, but also in relation to its related party.

### REMUNERATION

All sums paid to or receivable by an employee and sums due by way of expenses allowances (as far as those sums are chargeable to UK income tax) and the money value of any other benefits received other than in cash. Pension contributions payable by the employer are excluded.

## **SECTION 7 : Glossary of Terms**

### **RESERVES**

The accumulation of surpluses, deficits and appropriations over past years. Reserves of a revenue nature are available and can be spent or earmarked at the discretion of the Authority. Some capital reserves such as the Revaluation Reserve cannot be used to meet current expenditure.

### **RESIDUAL VALUE**

The net realisable value of an asset at the end of its useful life. Residual values are based on prices prevailing at the date of the acquisition (or revaluation) of the asset and do not take account of expected future price changes.

### **RETIREMENT BENEFITS**

All forms of consideration given by an employer in exchange for services rendered by employees that are payable after completion of employment. Retirement benefits do not include termination benefits payable as a result of either:

- an employer's decision to terminate an employee's employment before the normal retirement date; or
- an employee's decision to accept voluntary redundancy in exchange for those benefits, because these are not given in exchange for services rendered by employees.

### **REVENUE EXPENDITURE FUNDED FROM CAPITAL UNDER STATUTE (REFCUS)**

Revenue expenditure funded by capital under statute. This is expenditure that can be properly capitalised, but which does not result in an asset for the Authority. Expenditure is therefore written off to revenue.

### **RIGHT-OF-USE ASSET**

An asset that represents a lessee's right to use an underlying asset for the lease term.

### **SAFETY-NET GRANT**

This grant is received by Local Authorities whose business rates income drops below a set percentage (92.5%) of the minimum level the Local Authority requires as determined by the Government.

### **SCHEME LIABILITIES**

The liabilities of a defined benefit scheme for outgoings due after the valuation date. Scheme liabilities measured using the projected unit method reflects the benefits that the employer is committed to provide for service up to the valuation date.

### **SETTLEMENT**

An irrecoverable action that relieves the employer (or the defined benefit scheme) of the primary responsibility for a pension obligation and eliminates significant risks relating to the obligation and the assets used to effect the settlement. Settlements include:

- a lump-sum cash payment to scheme members in exchange for their rights to receive specified pension benefits;
- the purchase of an irrecoverable annuity contract sufficient to cover vested benefits; and
- the transfer of scheme assets and liabilities relating to a group of employees leaving the scheme.

### **USEFUL LIFE**

The period over which the Authority will derive benefits from the use of an asset.

### **FURTHER INFORMATION**

Copies of this document can also be provided on audiotape or in large print, Braille and ethnic minority languages on request. We can also be contacted via Typetalk and enquiries in any language can be dealt with in person or on the telephone using Language Line instant translation service.



# Audit and Governance Committee

24<sup>th</sup> February 2026

**Report of:** Assistant Director (Regulatory Services)

**Subject:** SAFER HARTLEPOOL PARTNERSHIP ACTION PLAN 2025-2026

**Decision Type:** For information

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## 1 Council Plan Priority

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



## 2 Purpose of Report

- 2.1 To provide an overview of Safer Hartlepool Partnership performance linked to the priorities outlined in the Community Safety Plan 2024/27.

## 3 Background

- 3.1 The Community Safety Plan for 2024/27 has a strategic objective to “make Hartlepool a safe, prosperous and enjoyable place to live, work and visit”. Members agreed that the priority areas of focus to achieve this objective should be Anti-Social Behaviour, Drugs and Alcohol, Domestic Violence and Serious Violence. Please provide details for background here in plain language.

- 3.2 Partners contribute to a Safer Hartlepool Partnership (SHP) Action Plan by providing an outline of the work they are carrying out covering each priority with the Community Safety Plan. The action plan is a living document and allow partners to include new initiatives to fully reflect the work being carried out.
- 3.3 The reporting arrangements are that the Safer Hartlepool Partnership Action Plan is reported to the Partnership for consideration and comments
- 3.4 The SHP action plan was presented to the Safer Hartlepool Partnership meeting on 16<sup>th</sup> January 2026. The Action Plan was approved with the addition of the action plans for Off Road Bikes, Deliberate Fires, Retail Crime & the recommendation from Audit & Governance Committees Retail Crime investigation report.

#### 4. Proposals

- 4.1 The Safer Hartlepool Partnership Action Plan is attached in **Appendix 1** of the report it outlines activities carried out by partners across the priorities of the 2024/2027 plan.
- 4.2 Following workshops during the year additional actions have been added covering the York Road Ramp, Off Road Bike, Retail Crime and Deliberate fires
- 4.3 Audit and Governance Committee carried out its 'retail crime' investigation in 2024/25 and reported its findings at its meeting on 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2025. The recommendations in that report have been included in the SHP action plan in **Appendix 1** to this report.
- 4.4 Some partners produce action plans to accompany strategies such as Domestic Abuse and Drugs & Alcohol Details, links to these are included in the action plan to ensure that it fully reflects the work being carried out by all partner

**5. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS**

<b>RISK IMPLICATIONS</b>	No relevant issues
<b>FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS</b>	No relevant issues
<b>SUBSIDY CONTROL</b>	No relevant issues
<b>LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS</b>	No relevant issues
<b>SINGLE IMPACT ASSESSMENT</b>	No relevant issues
<b>STAFF CONSIDERATIONS</b>	No relevant issues
<b>ASSET MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS</b>	No relevant issues
<b>ENVIRONMENT, SUSTAINABILITY AND CLIMATE CHANGE CONSIDERATIONS</b>	No relevant issues
<b>CONSULTATION</b>	None

**6. Recommendations**

6.1 Members are asked to consider and comment on the SHP Action Plan 2024/2025

**7. Reasons for Recommendations**

7.1 The Audit and Governance Committee has within its responsibility to act as the Council’s Crime and Disorder Committee and in doing so scrutinize the performance management of the Safer Hartlepool Partnership.

**8. Background Papers**

8.1 The following background papers were used in the preparation of this report:-  
Safer Hartlepool Partnership – Community Safety Plan 2024/27

**9. Contact Officers**

Sylvia Pinkney  
Assistant Director (Regulatory Services)  
Hartlepool Borough Council  
Civic Centre  
Hartlepool  
TS24 8AY  
(01429) 523315  
[Sylvia.pinkney@hartlepool.gov.uk](mailto:Sylvia.pinkney@hartlepool.gov.uk)

Sign Off:-

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

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Priority	Objective / Outcome	Who	Actions/Progress/Comments
Anti-Social Behaviour	Ensure victims understand how to report ASB.	SHP members and partner organisations	<p><b>28/02/2025 - Cleveland Police update</b></p> <p>Cleveland Online Policing App (COPA) provides residents of Cleveland a digital platform to Cleveland Police and the Police and Crime Commissioner. The app allows them to feed in information about policing and community safety issues easily and quickly. It also lets them ask questions and give feedback.</p> <p>A new ‘Neighbourhoods Alert’ App is due to go live imminently, which will provide a digital platform for communicating between police and residents – more details to follow upon launch.</p> <p>Traditional methods of the 999, 101 and police front desk remain available.</p> <p><b>04/03/25 – Nicholas Stone, Community Safety Team Leader and Philip Hepburn, Community Safety Manager</b></p> <p>Publicity has occurred during 2024-25 regarding the work of Hartlepool Community Safety Team including work in the town centre and enforcement activity that has been undertaken.</p>
	Ensure victims are aware of the ASB case review process – “Community Trigger” and how to initiate it	SHP members and partner organisations	<p><b>28/06/24 – Nicholas Stone, Community Safety Team Leader</b></p> <p>Publicity to occurring regarding the work of Hartlepool Community Safety Team. Information regarding the team is available on HBC website.</p>

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			<p>Information regarding the Community Trigger is available on HBC website.</p> <p><b>04/03/25 – Nicholas Stone, Community Safety Team Leader and Philip Hepburn, Community Safety Manager</b></p> <p>The Community Safety Team webpages on the Council website have been updated in anticipation of a new Council website in 2025.</p> <p>Information regarding the Community Trigger remains available on HBC website. (Nicholas Stone)</p>
	<p>Provide a more visible police and council officer ‘on street’ presence</p>	<p>Police and Local Authority</p>	<p>ASB hot spot funding uniformed patrols carried out in Headland &amp; Harbour and Victoria wards.</p> <p><b>28/02/2025 - Cleveland Police update</b></p> <p>A new shift pattern was introduced in January 2025 for Hartlepool Neighbourhood Policing Teams, this has reduced the original three teams to two, meaning more police officers and Community Support Officers are on duty at any one time. All officers have dedicated wards to increase public confidence, engagement and officer accountability.</p> <p>Operation Artemis: In July 2025, Cleveland Police will be leading a large-scale day of action, involving several partner agencies, charities, local organisations – this will be aimed at two key areas, Anti-Social behaviour and Open Water Misadventure.</p>

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			<p><b>04/03/25 – Nicholas Stone, Community Safety Team Leader and Philip Hepburn, Community Safety Manager</b></p> <p>Safer Streets 5 project funding provided Community Cohesion Officer and Environmental Project Officer roles in Victoria Ward from April 2024 to March 2025. Town Centre patrols in place by Kingdom.</p> <p><b>04/03/2025 – Sylvia Pinkney (AD Regulatory Services)</b></p> <p>ASB hot spot funding has provided additional uniformed patrols in</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Victoria ward between October 2023 and September 2024.</li> <li>• Foggy Furze ward between September 2024 and March 2025</li> <li>• Headland &amp; Harbour ward between October 2023 and March 2025</li> </ul> <p>UKSPF funding has provided additional uniformed patrols in the town centre and marina areas of the town between April 2024 to March 2025.</p>
	Make full use of the ASB tools and powers related to the partnership activity to tackle ASB	Local Authority, Police and partner organisations; Thirteen Group	Community Safety Accreditation scheme in ASB hot spot areas giving Civil Enforcement Officers additional powers

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	Reduce deliberate fires	Local Authority, Police, Fire Brigade and partner organisations	<p><b>03/03/25 - Sean Smith (Hartlepool District Manager)</b></p> <p>Fire Brigade District manager, Sean Smith has now agreed to chair this group. (Sean Smith). Would recommend that all individuals who are known to be involved in deliberate fire setting are referred to Fire Brigade ‘Fire Education Intervention’ team for 1 to 1 education.</p> <p>Would recommend this group is attended by Fire Brigade Road and Water safety co-ordinator.</p> <p><b>04/03/25 – Nicholas Stone, Community Safety Team Leader and Philip Hepburn, Community Safety Manager</b></p> <p>Multi agency deliberate fires group – Chaired and hosted by FB with representation from partner agencies</p>
	Reduce the nuisance caused by illegal / off road bikes/vehicles	Local Authority, Police, Fire Brigade and partner organisations	<p><b>28/02/2025 - Cleveland Police update</b></p> <p>A reinvigorated Operation Endurance is in train, which will be aimed at a Multi-Agency approach to enforcement, problem solving and preventative activity regarding off-road bikes and ASB.</p> <p><b>04/03/25 – Nicholas Stone, Community Safety Team Leader and Philip Hepburn, Community Safety Manager</b></p> <p>Multi agency off road vehicle group – Chaired and hosted by HBC with representation from partner agencies</p>

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	Tackle environmental crime in all its forms	Local Authority, Police, Fire Brigade and partner organisations	<p><b>04/03/25 – Nicholas Stone, Community Safety Team Leader and Philip Hepburn, Community Safety Manager</b></p> <p>Multi agency fly tipping group. – Chaired and hosted by HBC with representation from partner agencies</p>
	<p>TOWN CENTRE RAMP / ASB - ACTION PLAN</p> <p>Explore greater use of Public Space protection Orders (PSPO)</p>	<p>HBC &amp; Police Explore how far / to who the orders can be devolved.</p> <p>HBC &amp; Police Explore the introduction of a PSPO across the wider Town Centre and Marine.</p>	<p><b>04/03/25 – Nicholas Stone, Community Safety Team Leader and Philip Hepburn, Community Safety Manager</b></p> <p>A review of the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 legislation and associated Home Office guidance for the Act shows that it would be possible to implement a PSPO for the town centre area.</p> <p><b>04/03/2025 – Sylvia Pinkney (AD Regulatory Services)</b></p> <p>Work is starting to gather evidence to support a PSPO and identify the area which it will relate to.</p>
	Create a ‘Support Hub / Safe Space’	<p>HBC Explore potential locations for the creation of the support Hub / Safe Space</p> <p>HBC Identify who could be co-located in the Hub / Safe Space (options including Wharton Trust, START / Drugs Services and Homeless Team)</p>	<p><b>28/02/25 – Abigail Reay (Public Health)</b></p> <p>A meeting was held with Start, Sylvia Pinkney, Neil Harrison and Phil Hepburn. It was agreed that a ‘support hub/safe space’ may not be the best option to tackle ASB at the ramp after discussions were held with wider partners. It was discussed that a place based approach using assertive outreach should be explored. This will include a team of staff working together to provide support to these individuals. A further meeting has been arranged to put plans into action.</p>

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	<p>Maximise the use of available interventions Create a ‘Retail Crime Forum’ to ensure that the voices of retailers are heard and promote greater reporting of crime</p>	<p>HBC &amp; CFB Explore types of support that could be provided, including Fire Brigade offer.</p> <p>HBC &amp; Police i) General promotion of use of available interventions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Community Protection Warnings</li> <li>- Community protection Notices</li> <li>- Fixed Penalty Notices</li> <li>- Dispersal Orders</li> <li>- AS13s</li> </ul> <p>Police Support Middleton Grange Shopping centre to better use the AS13s</p> <p>HBC PCC &amp; MP Letter to Businesses to include York Road businesses to: Explore benefits and business support of the creation of a retail Crime Forum.</p>	<p><b>28/02/2025 - Cleveland Police update</b></p> <p>A bespoke problem-solving plan has been commissioned, aimed at reducing retail crime in key locations/business within Hartlepool. This will include focus on both Theft of goods and violence towards employees and involve many stakeholders within the Community Safety Partnership.</p> <p><b>04/03/25 – Nicholas Stone, Community Safety Team Leader and Philip Hepburn, Community Safety Manager</b></p> <p>Several meetings have occurred between Community Safety, Cleveland Police and MGSC during 2024 to discuss joint working and tackling problems in the town centre. A further meeting has been arranged on 13<sup>th</sup> March 2025.</p> <p>Cleveland Police have offered to attend any Retail Crime Forum established by MGSC.</p> <p>The Community Safety Team has issued 21 Community Protection Warnings, and 4 Community Protection Notices under Operation Grantham which has targeted aggressive persons in the town centre.</p> <p>Anti-social Behaviour Officers and ward PCSOs have on a number of occasions undertaken walkabouts around the town centre during 2024 to speak to local businesses about any problems, and to provide advice on how to report any problems. Officers have also updated businesses on the actions being taken by Community Safety and provided them with posters with</p>
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			<p>names/photos of perpetrators who have been issued with CPWs/CPNs so that any breaches of these can be reported.</p> <p>Cleveland Police undertook 3 dispersal orders around the town centre in 2024.</p> <p>Should MGSC security pursue Community Safety Accreditation with Cleveland Police then this issue could be discussed.</p>
	Actively pursue additional funding opportunities	<p>PCC, HBC Explore options for increased / continued access to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- UK Shared prosperity Funding (UKSPF) (including the ongoing provision of additional Warden Patrols).</li> </ul> <p>CURV funding</p>	<p><b>04/03/2025 – Sylvia Pinkney (AD Regulatory Services)</b></p> <p>Meetings have been held Police to discuss initiatives and joint working</p> <p>Further meetings are planed</p>
	Expand the use of Community Safety Accreditation Scheme powers.	<p>PCC Expand the delegation of Community Safety Accreditation Scheme powers to Middleton Grange Shopping Centre</p>	<p><b>04/03/25 – Nicholas Stone, Community Safety Team Leader and Philip Hepburn, Community Safety Manager</b></p> <p>Should MGSC wish to pursue Community Safety Accreditation they should contact Cleveland Polices Licensing Support Unit for advice and guidance on the Accreditation process.</p>
	Use of Licensing Powers	<p>Police Review Licensing powers available.</p>	

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		Police Licensing teams to better control the sale of alcohol to intoxicated individuals.	
	CCTV in Hartlepool	HBC Improve communication and awareness of CCTV in Hartlepool and how it is monitored	<p><b>04/03/25 – Nicholas Stone, Community Safety Team Leader and Philip Hepburn, Community Safety Manager</b></p> <p>The Council is currently undertaking a refurbishment of town centre CCTV cameras. Once this has been completed by end March 2025 publicity will occur regarding the CCTV service.</p>
	Other Comments		<p><b>28/02/2025 - Cleveland Police update</b></p> <p><b>Operation Artemis – January 2025:</b>  Officers in Hartlepool carried out activity with Hartlepool Council Community Wardens to tackle antisocial behaviour, aggressive begging and alcohol related violence. They also engaged with local shop staff around the threat of violence to shopworkers. Two people were found to have drugs and dealt with, three antisocial behaviour orders were issued and a shop was reported to Trading Standards.</p> <p>Further activity continued into the evening, with checks on and around licensed premises. Sixty people were stop searched by officers, with seven of those dealt with for possession of drugs. Two were arrested on suspicion of possession with intent to supply drugs and one person arrested for an outstanding stalking offence.</p>

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			<p>A drugs dog was taken around licensed premises, which led to a large quantity of drugs discarded which was then recovered by officers.</p>
<p>Domestic Violence and Abuse*</p>	<p>Local delivery of the Domestic Abuse Local Strategic Partnership action plan 2022-2025</p>	<p>SHP members and partner organisations  Local Domestic Abuse Partnership Board / All</p>	<p><b>27/06/24 – Olivia Highley, Domestic Abuse Coordinator</b></p> <p>Needs assessment, strategy and action plan are in place with oversight provided by the statutory Domestic Abuse Local Strategic Partnership. Needs assessment completed 2021 and currently being refreshed. Strategy was published 2022 and will be updated 2025. Action plans completed for years 1 and 2 and year 3 is in progress.</p> <p><b>28/02/2025 – Cleveland Police update</b></p> <p>Domestic Abuse policy and appropriate strategies are in place, with a strategic governance framework.</p> <p>Referral mechanisms pertaining to the sharing of information with key services are well implemented.</p>
	<p>Workforce are equipped to ask the right questions and to support victims of Domestic Abuse</p>	<p>Strategic MARAC Group / Local Domestic Abuse Partnership Board</p>	<p>Training/ promotion of Domestic Abuse campaigns; Ask for Angela, 16 Days of Action/....</p> <p><b>27/06/24 – Olivia Highley, Domestic Abuse Coordinator</b></p> <p>The council has adopted and are implementing the Safe &amp; Together model and an implementation plan is being rolled out initially targeting children’s safeguarding teams and Multi-Agency partners. Training is available via HSSCP, TSAB and the council’s workforce development team as well as through our</p>

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			<p>commissioned service provider, Harbour. In addition training is being developed via Strategic MARAC.</p> <p><b>02/03/24 – Olivia Highley, Domestic Abuse Coordinator</b></p> <p>The implementation of Safe and Together is going well, with a further two, 4 day Core training sessions delivered to children’s social care, health colleagues and Harbour. MARAC training is available via TSAB website which has been developed by Strategic MARAC. Training is available via HSSCP, TSAB and the council’s workforce development team as well as through our commissioned service provider, Harbour.</p> <p><b>28/02/2025 – Cleveland Police update</b></p> <p>Incident reporting mechanisms are in place to ensure appropriate risk grading for domestic abuse and victim needs assessments – connecting with MARAC and additional support services.</p>
	Ensure that the needs of victims / survivors with multiple and complex issues are given due consideration	All / HBC Domestic Abuse Coordinator / Corporate Communication Teams	<p><b>27/06/24 – Olivia Highley, Domestic Abuse Coordinator</b></p> <p>TSAB refreshed the Team Around the Individual process which is now High Risk Adult Panel. Harbour have a dedicated assertive outreach worker for victims with complex needs. A second refuge has been opened specifically for complex needs victims and survivors.</p> <p><b>02/03/24 – Olivia Highley, Domestic Abuse Coordinator</b></p>

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			A perpetrator strategy has been developed and is currently out for consultation via OPCC
	Domestic Abuse in all its forms is recognised by the workforce and in the community	HBC Domestic Abuse Coordinator / Harbour	<p><b>27/06/24 – Olivia Highley, Domestic Abuse Coordinator</b></p> <p>A robust communications strategy is in place educating the public as well as professionals on domestic abuse, appropriate response and how to access help and support. The council’s website has been updated to reflect our offer of support services.</p>
	Victims/survivors (adults and children) are true partners in the review and development of services	SHP members and partner organisations	<p><b>27/06/24 – Olivia Highley, Domestic Abuse Coordinator</b></p> <p>The board has survivor representation, the needs assessment was completed and is being refreshed with support from victims and survivors. Harbour’s service user panel contributes to any policies, procedures and plans to ensure we are led by lived experience.</p>
	Learning from Domestic Homicide Reviews is disseminated, resulting in improved service delivery across the whole system	SHP members and partner organisations	<p><b>27/06/24 – Olivia Highley, Domestic Abuse Coordinator</b></p> <p>DHR – the SHP is responsible for commissioning DHRs where a death is a result of domestic abuse. The SHP will manage any recommendations and action plans with support from the Domestic Abuse Local Strategic Partnership Board</p>
	Other Comments		<b>28/02/25 – Abigail Reay (Public Health)</b>

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			<p>DAPO pilot to begin with START D&amp;A service this is a one year funded pilot providing dedicated staffing resource to the pilot</p> <p><b>28/02/2025 - Cleveland Police update</b></p> <p>DAPO: Cleveland police are one of three forces to pilot the introduction of Domestic Abuse Prevention Orders. This goes live on 05/03/2025. DAPO is a joint policy shared between the Home Office and Ministry of Justice. The aim of the DAPO is to bring together the strongest elements of the existing protective order regime into a single comprehensive, flexible order to afford longer-term protection for victims of all domestic abuse. The DAPO will be the first order available in all court jurisdictions (criminal, family and civil) providing victims with a choice to identify the most appropriate route for them. This emphasises the importance of victims having greater choice of how to apply and allows third parties the option to apply on behalf of victims.</p>
<p>Drug and Alcohol Misuse</p>	<p>Work in partnership with the Combatting Drugs Partnership (CDP) to reduce drug supply</p>	<p>SHP members and partner organisations</p>	<p><b>27/06/24 – Olivia Highley, Domestic Abuse Coordinator</b></p> <p>Hartlepool public health are represented at the combatting drugs partnership, as well as chairing CDP subgroup 2 regarding treatment and recovery. Community D+A services (Start) are also in attendance.</p> <p><b>28/02/25 – Abigail Reay, Public Health</b></p> <p>The above still stands – no updates</p>

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	Local delivery of the Drug & Alcohol Strategy action plan	START and Criminal Justice Partners	<p><b>27/06/24 – Olivia Highley, Domestic Abuse Coordinator</b></p> <p>Drug and alcohol strategy plan continues to be delivered with quarterly update meetings with partners we need to present this joint at Safer Hartlepool Partnership</p> <p><b>28/02/25 – Abigail Reay, Public Health</b></p> <p>Update meetings currently on hold whilst reviewed partnership. Meetings to be reinstated in the coming weeks. The D+A strategy plan continues to be worked on.</p> <p><b>28/02/2025 – Cleveland Police update</b></p> <p>Cleveland Police restructuring has seen the creation of a ‘Prevention Command’, with a dedicated team driving the use of Out of Court Disposals, diversionary schemes and early intervention.</p>
	Review the current criminal justice pathways into substance misuse services to ensure efficacy of treatment and support	Police Trading Standards Community Safety	<p><b>28/06/24 – Abigail Reay, Public Health/START</b></p> <p>Hartlepool’s continuity of care continues to be significantly higher than the national average, suggesting continuation of robust pathways between the prisons and community drug and alcohol services. Work on going to ensure that those who are taken into custody are also given opportunities to speak to substance use professionals, including onward referrals to community services. Those that are on community orders are also referred into our dedicated CJIT Team.</p>

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			<p><b>28/02/25 – Abigail Reay, Public Health</b></p> <p>There has been a dip in CoC stats across the region. Start have prioritised this work to increase CoC numbers and ensure timely and effective treatment to our prison leavers. Start are currently working closely with regional prisons. We can see from our local data, that our CoC stats have started to increase, showing progress with regard to the work Start have been doing.</p> <p>Aswell as being a pilot site for ISC Start are also working with Cleveland Police to look at Out of Court Disposal’s this will allow an even wider reach to individuals coming through the CJ pathways to support and divert away of crime and D+A use.</p>
	Work in partnership to disrupt the supply of illegal drugs	Police Trading Standards Community Safety	<p>Supply chain disruption work carried out including. Premises visits, raids &amp; premise closures orders</p> <p><b>28/02/2025 – Cleveland Police update</b></p> <p>Cleveland Police, along with key partners, continue to disrupt the manufacture and supply of controlled drugs. This includes effective intelligence gathering and making best use of search warrants and planned operations to target suspicious properties, seize drugs and arrest suspects. Hartlepool Neighbourhood Teams have recovered in excess of 12 million pounds worth of drugs over the last 24 months.</p>

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	<p>Raise awareness of the harms associated with drug and alcohol misuse amongst school and college students</p>	<p>Neighbourhood Police Team (PC Coggin)</p>	<p>Presentations and targeted interventions delivered in schools and colleges across Hartlepool on key themes including County Lines and anti-social behaviour and drink spiking</p> <p><b>28/06/24 – Abigail Reay, Public Health/START</b></p> <p>Start CYP Team have been approaching secondary schools to expand their treatment offer, as well as offering awareness sessions. CYP team also involved in an enrichment pilot lead by YouthFocusNE within High Tunstall and English Martyrs which will include substance use drop ins. CYP Team attend colleges frequently on their market place days and events such as Freshers.</p> <p><b>28/02/25 – Abigail Reay, Public Health</b></p> <p>The above is complete. Start CYP team are now working into all secondary and youth clubs across the town. A priority for Start CYP team for 2025 is to increase numbers into treatment for under 18s. Start continue to provide prevention and resilience work across the town.</p> <p><b>28/02/2025 – Cleveland Police update</b></p> <p>School liaison and engagement continuous with presentations and events raising awareness of many high-risk areas; including drugs, use of weapons, violence against women and girls.</p>
	<p>Other Comments</p>		<p><b>28/02/2025 – Cleveland Police update</b></p>

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			<p>Refresh of Naloxone training for Hartlepool police intended during 2025.</p>
<p>Serious Violence*</p>	<p>Analysis of existing and emerging hotspots of serious violence is shared and a Multi-Agency response is planned.</p>	<p>Cleveland Unit for the Reduction of Violence (CURV)</p>	<p>Partners providing data for need assessment.</p> <p>Partners providing data for deep dive.</p> <p><b>27/06/24 – Rachel Readman (Trading Standards and Licensing Manager)</b></p> <p>Three Bleed Cabinets have been installed in the NTE area. Installation took place on Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> June. The fourth cabinet has been purchased and will be installed as soon as the pole mounting kit has arrived.</p> <p><b>03/03/25 – Rachel Readman (Trading Standards and Licensing Manager)</b></p> <p><b>Bleed Control Cabinets</b> Four Bleed Cabinets have been installed in and around the Night Time Economy area.</p> <p><b><u>Bleed Control Kit Cabinet Locations</u></b></p> <p><b>1. <u>Bleed Cabinet 1</u></b></p> <p>Hartlepool Community Central Hub 124 York Road, Hartlepool, TS26 9DE On front wall of building, left of entrance, next to existing Defibrillator cabinet Three What Words /// loser.report.dock</p>

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			<p><b>1. <u>Bleed Cabinet 2</u></b></p> <p>Hartlepool Borough Council  Civic Centre building, Victoria Road, Hartlepool, TS24 8AY  At front of building, at top of steps on front entrance concourse,  next to existing Defibrillator cabinet  Three What Words /// handle.boot.twigs</p> <p><b>2. <u>Bleed Cabinet 3</u></b></p> <p>Tranquillity House (Orange Box building)  Harbour View, Hartlepool, TS24 0UX  Front wall of building, left of entrance, next to existing  Defibrillator cabinet  Three What Words /// hype.occurs.nobody</p> <p><b>3. <u>Bleed Cabinet 4</u></b></p> <p>Hartlepool Railway Station  Station Approach, Hartlepool, TS24 7ED  On Council owned public space CCTV camera column,  opposite front entrance of Hartlepool Railway Station, and  opposite existing Defibrillator cabinet  Three What Words /// beats.vines.filer</p> <p><b>28/02/2025 – Cleveland Police update</b></p> <p>We have a dedicated Licencing Officer for Hartlepool within the  Police who is working with the HBC officer(s). Plans are in</p>
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			<p>place to fund further high visibility operations throughout the year tackling NTE violence and taxi licencing. We will continue to work in partnership to tackle problem premises and offenders.</p>
	<p>Local delivery of the CURV Response Strategy</p>  <p>CURV Response Strategy-Final.pdf</p>	<p>Cleveland Unit for the Reduction of Violence (CURV)</p>	<p>27/06/24 - <b>Rachel Readman (Trading Standards and Licensing Manager)</b></p> <p>Premises have been chosen from the NTE area. Launch event taking place on 8<sup>th</sup> July when the radios will be distributed. Launch event will be attended by Cleveland Police, CURV, HBC Licensing, Licensing Committee representative and SHP Representative.</p> <p>03/03/25 - <b>Rachel Readman (Trading Standards and Licensing Manager)</b></p> <p>With support from the UKSPF funding the 25 pub watch radios are going to be funded for a further year (free to the NTE premises until July 2026). The UKSPF funding has also provided us with the opportunity to hire a further ten radios bringing the NTE Pub watch network up to 35 premises.</p> <p>So far 38 NTE premises have taken advantage of one years free membership to Schemelink, to assist with their Pub watch. SCHEMELINK is more than just a tool - it's the backbone of hundreds of watch schemes across the UK, from Pub watch to Shopwatch and beyond. With features designed to keep members connected, informed, and secure, SCHEMELINK</p>

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			<p>brings cutting-edge technology to the front lines of community safety and crime prevention.</p> <p>Via UKSPF funding free membership has been offered for the LASAI scheme to NTE premises within the eligible area. So far one premises has completed the process and been awarded five stars.</p> <p>Licensing Security &amp; Vulnerability initiative has been launched to keep licensed premises safer for staff and customers. Licensing SAVI brings together all the information a premises need to meet the requirements of police and council licensing teams to promote the four Licensing Objectives.</p> <p><b>04/03/24 – Brian Hughff, Integrated Offender Management (IOM) Team</b></p> <p>Cleveland IOM is a partnership approach to tackling the most prolific offenders committing ‘Neighbourhood Crime’ offences (Robbery, Burglary and other serious acquisitive crime). The key stakeholders are The Probation Service and Cleveland Police, who work with partners to collectively address the criminogenic needs of the cohorts. With substance misuse being a key driver behind the offending of this cohort the team work closely with START, who attend monthly meetings to discuss IOM cases who are causing the most concern, re-offending or harm. IOM prioritise selection of violent offenders who have committed Robbery and Aggravated Burglary offences as part of their index offence.</p>
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			<p>There are currently 17 offenders actively managed by the IOM Team. Over the last year the desistence rate for Hartlepool offenders has been positive (above 81.5% for the ‘fixed’ cohort) and there have been real sustainable outcomes for people at the end IOM management.</p> <p>Work is ongoing to expand IOM to include a cohort of other offenders who wouldn’t usually be ‘in scope’, but who would benefit from the IOM approach which will see the number offenders being managed increase.</p>
	Assist in the delivery of the CURV night time economy action plan.	SHP members and partner organisations	<p><b>27/06/24 - Rachel Readman (Trading Standards and Licensing Manager)</b></p> <p>Responsible Authorities group has been established. The group has been well received and has met regularly since its incorporation. The group is chaired by HBC Licensing Manager.</p> <p><b>03/03/25 - Rachel Readman (Trading Standards and Licensing Manager)</b></p> <p>Responsible Authorities group continues to meet to discuss new Premises Licence Applications. Multi Agency group made up of all responsible authorities as defined by the Licensing Act 2003.</p> <p><b>04/03/25 – Nicholas Stone, Community Safety Team Leader and Philip Hepburn, Community Safety Manager</b></p> <p>A fourth Bleed Control Cabinet has been installed in the town centre. Locations are: (1) Central Community Hub, York Road; (2)</p>

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			<p>Civic Centre, Victoria Road; (3) Hartlepool Railway Station; (4) Orangebox, Navigation Point.</p> <p><b>04/03/25 – Anna Waddington, Police</b></p> <p>All four bleed cabinets have now been installed and CURV are working to add these to NEAS’s CAD system so they can be accessed through a 999 call. Licensed premises and other NTE stakeholders have been trained in the use of the cabinet equipment. Has been agreed bleed cabinets will be installed at a number of police and fore stations.</p> <p>25 APEX radios have been distributed to licensed premises to support communication between venues, CCTV and police. Ask for Angela training for licensed premises is planned for this month.</p> <p>Hartlepool Town Pastors given funding for additional resources.</p> <p>Drug dog operation carried out in licensed premises. This was ‘piloted’ with CURV funding to be taken forward by the force in future.</p>
	Raise awareness of the risks and potential consequences of serious violence	Neighbourhood Police Team - Supt. Martin Hopps / PC Geoff Coggin	Presentations and targeted interventions delivered in schools and colleges across Hartlepool on key themes including knife crime, personal safety and “Ask for Angela” initiative.

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	amongst school and college students		
	Provide a more visible police presence to prevent and deter serious violence in identified hotspot areas and the night-time economy	Police - Supt. Martin Hopps / Ch. Inspector Pete Littlewood	<p>Dedicated patrols in hotspot (GRIP) areas / positive action / reduction in offences and victims</p> <p><b>27/06/24 - Rachel Readman (Trading Standards and Licensing Manager)</b></p> <p>Hartlepool Town Pastors meeting are hosted by HBC. The meetings are attended by Licensing, Cleveland Police and CCTV.</p> <p><b>03/03/25 - Rachel Readman (Trading Standards and Licensing Manager)</b></p> <p>Close working alongside the Hartlepool Town Pastors continues.</p> <p><b>28/06/24 – Nicholas Stone, Community Safety Team Leader</b></p> <p>Installation of 2 mobile CCTV cameras in the NTE area.</p> <p><b>28/02/2025 – Cleveland Police update</b></p> <p>During the year there have been multiple operations running which have tackled the reduction in Serious Violence within the LPA. Op Deterrence patrols have targeted areas highlighted from data for High Visibility Policing at key times which have been identified.</p>

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		<p>Operation Tranquillity is an ongoing force order for Night Time Economy Policing with a commitment to increasing staffing numbers on key identified dates that violence can increase.</p> <p><b>04/03/25 – Nicholas Stone, Community Safety Team Leader and Philip Hepburn, Community Safety Manager</b></p> <p>Pub Watch (Apex) radios have been distributed to Licenced Premises through the Hartlepool Licensee Association members. These radios are monitored by Hartlepool’s CCTV Control Room.</p>
	Other Comments	<p><b>28/02/2025 – Cleveland Police update</b></p> <p>Officers in Hartlepool carried out activity with Hartlepool Council Community Wardens to tackle antisocial behaviour, aggressive begging and alcohol related violence. They also engaged with local shop staff around the threat of violence to shopworkers. Two people were found to have drugs and dealt with, three antisocial behaviour orders were issued and a shop was reported to Trading Standards.</p> <p>Further activity continued into the evening, with checks on and around licensed premises. Sixty people were stop searched by officers, with seven of those dealt with for possession of drugs. Two were arrested on suspicion of possession with intent to supply drugs and one person arrested for an outstanding stalking offence.</p>

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			<p>Within Op Artemis Pc Coggin attended the College of Further education and delivered sessions on One Punch, Spiking and Violence Against Women and Girls.</p>
Re-offending	The Ministry of Justice (MOJ) 'Proven adult offending rate' for Hartlepool offenders is reduced.	Probation / Integrated Offender Management	
	Implement the Youth Justice Service Strategic Plan	YJS Management Board Chair (Jo Heaney) / HBC YJS Manager (Roni Checksfield)	<p><b>28/02/2025 – Cleveland Police update</b></p> <p>Cleveland Police continue to utilise Juvenile out of court disposal methods with projects such as the Triage scheme. These are referred to and then managed by the Youth Offending Team who work with partners to educate and divert children from re offending.</p> <p>This has been particularly well received in respect of youths involved in the Murray Street disorder.</p> <p>As described above there is a force wide focus led by the Prevention command to increase the use of Out of Court Disposals and Education to prevent re-offending and build safer communities.</p> <p><b>03/03/25 – Phil Gleaves (Youth Offending Operational Lead)</b></p> <p>The strategic plan has been to full council and been approved.</p>

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Prevent	Susceptible individuals are safeguarded from being radicalised by individuals and/or groups promoting extremist ideologies online or in the community	Community Safety / Police	<p>Training: Key partners briefed on the Counter Terrorism Local Profile</p> <p>Local Prevent Risk Assessment is in place</p> <p><b>04/03/25 – Nicholas Stone, Community Safety Team Leader and Philip Hepburn, Community Safety Manager</b></p> <p>Ongoing assessment to ensure compliance with Prevent duty – including developing venue booking policy, Mandatory staff training and providing Prevent awareness for commissioned services. Developing an ongoing local operational group to ensure delivery of the wider Cleveland Action Plan</p>
	Workforce and Community awareness of Prevent and the risks of radicalisation is increased	Community Safety / Police / Corporate Communication Team	<p><b>28/02/2025 – Cleveland Police update</b></p> <p>Cleveland Police have Prevent officers as part of the Counter Terrorism Unit which is managed in the Northern Area by West Yorkshire Police. Referrals are submitted via the intelligence submission process.</p> <p>Within the LPA Tasking and Co-ordinating Group meeting the current trends concerns are discussed as an overview with then further discussion in relation to specific identified individuals.</p>
	Victims of hate crime have increased confidence in reporting and accessing support services	Community Safety / VCAS / Third Party Reporting Centres	<p>Develop a Prevent Communications Plan</p> <p><b>04/03/25 – Nicholas Stone, Community Safety Team Leader and Philip Hepburn, Community Safety Manager</b></p>

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			<p>Hartlepool Community Safety Team operate a network of 10 Third Party Hate Crime Reporting Centres around Hartlepool. These centres are located in public and voluntary sector buildings. Centres are advertised through signage on buildings and with contact information published on the Council and OPCC websites. The Council will also be participating in the Hate Crime Awareness Week 11-18<sup>th</sup> October 2025.</p>
<p>Acquisitive Crime</p>	<p>Reduction in residential burglary offences</p>	<p>Police / Crime Prevention/Community Safety</p>	<p>Proactive patrols in key areas/ prioritise activity to locate and arrest outstanding suspects / crime prevention and target hardening measures to prevent repeat victimisation.</p> <p><b>28/02/2025 – Cleveland Police update</b></p> <p>This is an area monitored by the Tasking and Co-Ordinating Group with discussion around Crime trends and locations. This will then direct increased ward patrols by Neighbourhood Policing and Response Teams with Local CID tackling offenders.</p> <p>The Local Policing Framework has a force mission of Tackling Criminals and to this end we now have a Pro-active team in the Hartlepool Local Policing Area to support the arrest of people who are wanted.</p> <p>Within the LPA present figures show a 9.7% reduction in Residential Burglaries in the last 12 months.</p> <p><b>04/03/25 – Nicholas Stone, Community Safety Team Leader and Philip Hepburn, Community Safety Manager</b></p>

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			<p>The Safer Streets Project has handed out 287 anti-burglary packs to at risk residents in the Victoria Ward.</p> <p>Hartlepool Community Safety Team also operate a target hardening service for victims of crime.</p>
	Reduction in shoplifting offences	Police / PCSOs / Community Safety	<p>Proactive patrols in key areas / prioritise activity to locate and arrest outstanding suspects / pursue robust enforcement for repeat offenders.</p> <p><b>28/02/2025 – Cleveland Police update</b></p> <p>A bespoke problem-solving plan has been commissioned, aimed at reducing retail crime in key locations/business within Hartlepool. This will include focus on both Theft of goods and violence towards employees and involve many stakeholders within the Community Safety Partnership.</p> <p><b>03/03/2025 - Rachel Readman (Trading Standards and Licensing Manager)</b></p> <p>Through UKSPF funding over 55 Apex radios have been provided to Hartlepool Town Centre shops. The premises have received a radio with a two years free subscription in place.</p> <p>The radios will be used to help ensure effective communication between shops and the sharing of information/intelligence. The radio will also be connected to several services that operate in</p>

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			<p>the daytime economy that can provide help and support, including the Councils CCTV team and Cleveland Police.</p>
<p>Protect</p>	<p>Workforce and Community awareness of Protect duty and the risks of terrorist threats.</p>	<p>SHP members and partner organisations</p>	<p>Requirement for staff to undertake ACT Awareness eLearning and SCan for All training package</p> <p>Recommended that all staff with a work Mobile phone to download the free ProtectUK App</p> <p><b>27/06/24 - Rachel Readman (Trading Standards and Licensing Manager)</b></p> <p>Protect training is now incorporated into the mandatory training section of the 2024/25 Workforce Development Programme for all HBC members of staff.</p> <p><b>03/03/2025 - Rachel Readman (Trading Standards and Licensing Manager)</b></p> <p>Updates regarding Protect are provided at all meetings with stakeholders; for example Hartlepool Licensee Association and HUFC Safety Advisory Group.</p> <p>A HBC Safety Advisory Group Protect letter is now integrated within our SAG process and is provided to all internal and external event organisers to ensure that Protect measures are incorporated into the event planning.</p> <p><b>28/02/2025 – Cleveland Police update</b></p>

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			<p>ACT package is part of our e-learning Mandatory packages and compliance has been monitored.</p> <p><b>04/03/25 – Nicholas Stone, Community Safety Team Leader and Philip Hepburn, Community Safety Manager</b></p> <p>Prevent training is now incorporated into the mandatory training section of the 2024/25 Workforce Development Programme for all HBC members of staff.</p>
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# Audit and Governance Committee

24 February 2026

**Report of:** Scrutiny and Legal Support Officer

**Subject:** PREVENTING SUICIDE (TEES) - UPDATE

## 1. Council Plan Priority

<b>Hartlepool will be a place:</b>
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where people live healthier, safe and independent lives. (People)
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## 2. Purpose of Report

2.1. To provide the Audit and Governance Committee Members with an update on the progress made to date regarding preventing suicide in Teesside and the implementation of the Tees Suicide Prevention Strategic Plan 2024-2029.

## 3. Background

3.1. This item was discussed as a potential topic of investigation by the Committee at the start of this municipal year.

3.2. Members agreed that, due to the plan being in the first year of implementation, this topic would not be selected this year. However, Members requested that representatives be invited to a future meeting to provide progress on the plan. This would then inform Members decision as to whether this should be discussed as a potential topic of selection for the next municipal year.

## 4. Presentation of evidence

4.1. The Preventing Suicide (Tees) Public Health Practitioner is due to be in attendance to provide a presentation on the progress made to date regarding preventing suicide in Teesside and the implementation of the Tees Suicide

Prevention Strategic Plan 2024-2029. A presentation is provided at **appendix A**.

## 5. Recommendations

5.1. That the Committee notes the content of the presentation and seeks clarification on any matters where necessary.

## 6. Reasons for Recommendations

6.1. To inform Members decision as to whether this topic will be chosen as a potential topic of investigation for the Committee in 2026/27.

## 7. Background Papers

7.1. The following background paper was used in the preparation of this report:-.

- [Report and minutes from the Audit and Governance Committee meeting on the 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2025.](#)

## 8. Contact Officers

Gemma Jones  
Scrutiny and Legal Support Officer  
gemma.jones@hartlepool.gov.uk  
01429 284171

# Preventing Suicide (Tees)

Andrea McLoughlin

[andrea\\_mcloughlin@middlesbrough.gov.uk](mailto:andrea_mcloughlin@middlesbrough.gov.uk)

# REAL TIME SURVEILLANCE TEESSIDE

## What is meant by Real Time Surveillance data?

Upon Report to the Police and following their initial investigation;

- Scene attendance
- Confirmation of no third part involvement
- 'Suspected' Suicide – a more acceptable term

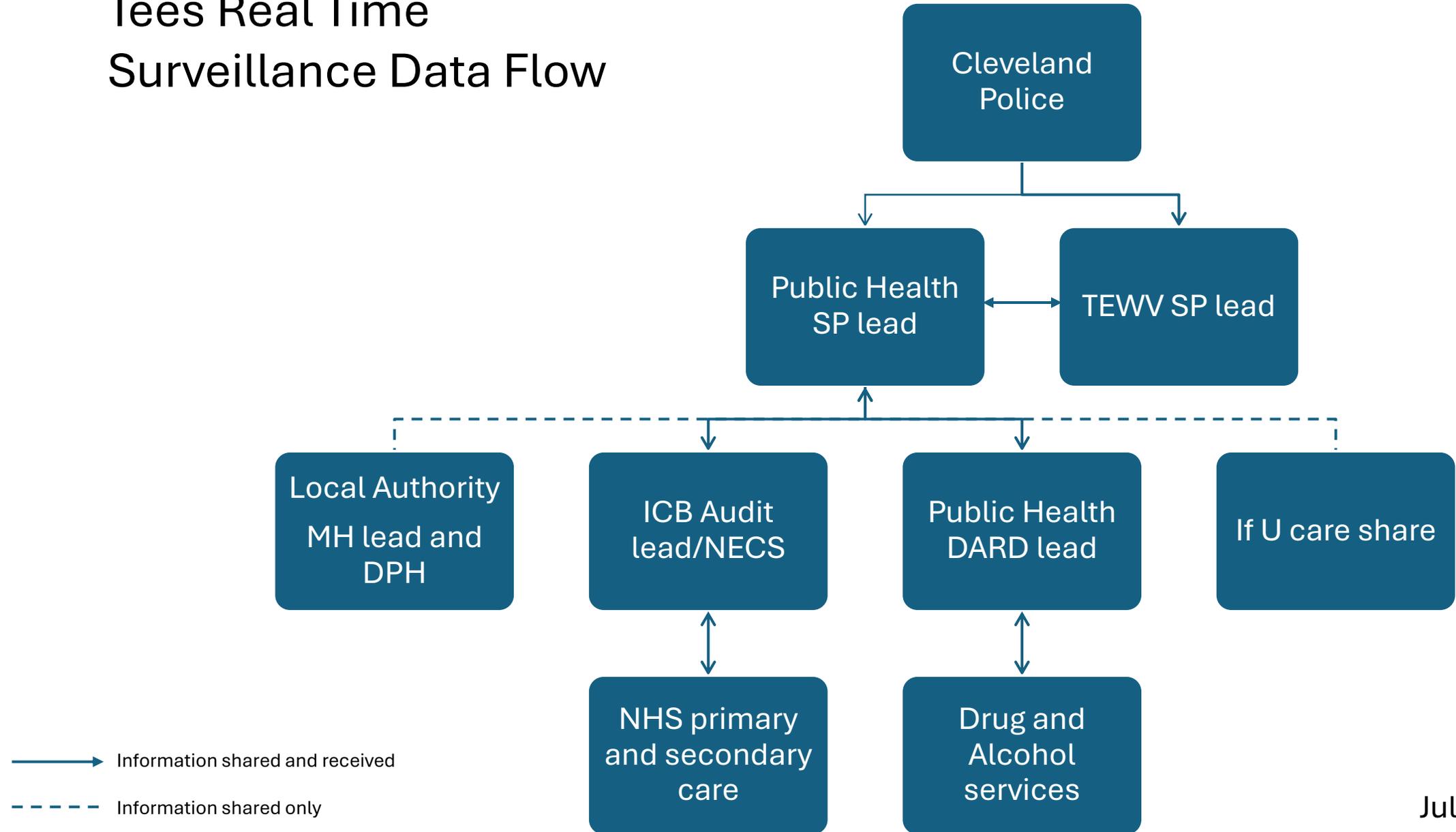
**Not** at the point of Audit following Coroner's inquest

**Not** reviewing statistics from the National Audit Office (NAO) or Office of National Statistics (ONS)

Objectives of RTS:

- Develop a consistent approach to local and regional real time surveillance of both suspected and attempted suicides, so this can be used to inform postvention support, suicide prevention activity and national real time data.
- Develop processes for gathering and using real time data more effectively to help prevent future suicides, including responding to suicide clusters.
- Undertake thematic analyses of collated multiagency data, utilising a Human Factors approach.
- Develop effective cross-organisational learning processes and embed a learning culture, strengthened by the foundations of quality science, in order to inform meaningful multi-agency suicide prevention activity.

# Tees Real Time Surveillance Data Flow



# Teesside

## 2024 vs 2025

Deaths by suspected suicide, rate per 100,000 population

12.3

DEATHS



Deaths by suspected suicide, rate per 100,000 population

11.6

AGE



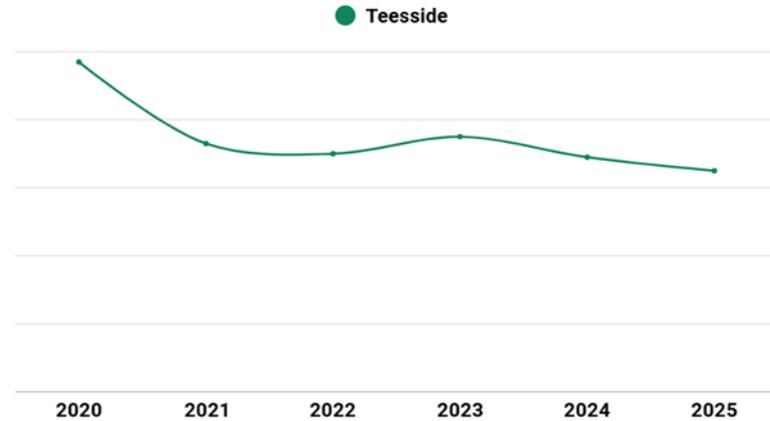
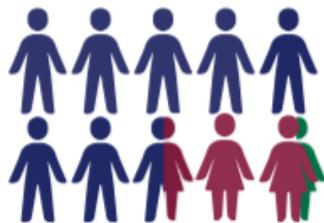
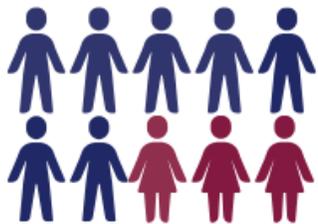
Highest Age Range

50-59

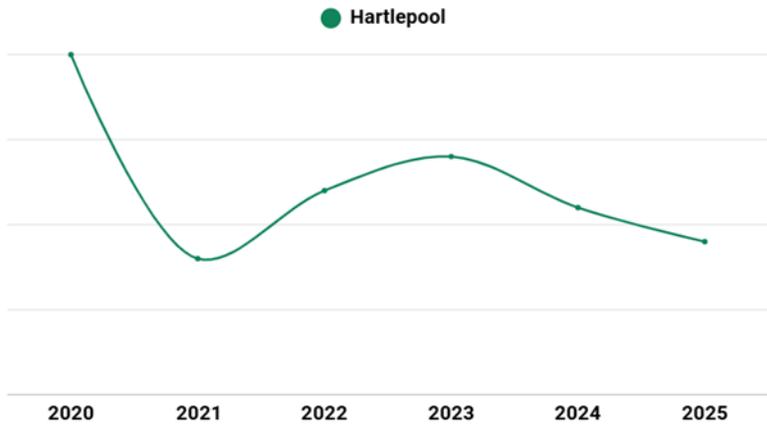
Highest Age Range

50-59

GENDER



- In 2025 Teesside saw a small decrease in deaths by suspected suicide compared to 2024.
- Since 2020 the rate has dropped 5.6 per 100,000 population.
- In 2025, 77% of deaths were male (consistent with England trends).
- Deaths predominantly occurred in decile 1 areas of residence.
- More deaths occurred on a Sunday than other days.
- 75% of deaths occurred in the home.



- Hartlepool has seen a reduction in deaths in comparison to 2024 by 1.2 per 100,000.
- Since 2020 Hartlepool has had a reduction of 11.96 per 100,000.
- In 2025, 78% of deaths were male.
- More deaths occurred on a Thursday than any other day.
- Victoria ward saw highest number of deaths.
- Deaths predominantly occurred in Decile 1 areas.

# Hartlepool

## 2024 vs 2025

Deaths by suspected suicide, rate per 100,000 population

12.0

DEATHS



Deaths by suspected suicide, rate per 100,000 population

9.8

Highest Age Range

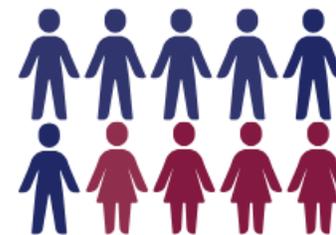
20-29

AGE



Highest Age Range

50-59

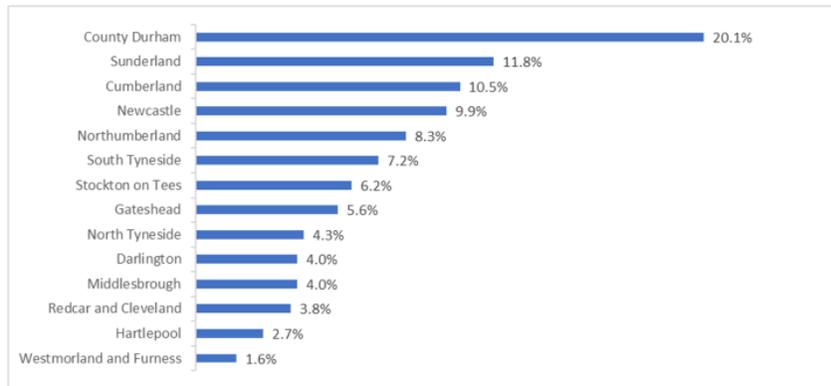


GENDER

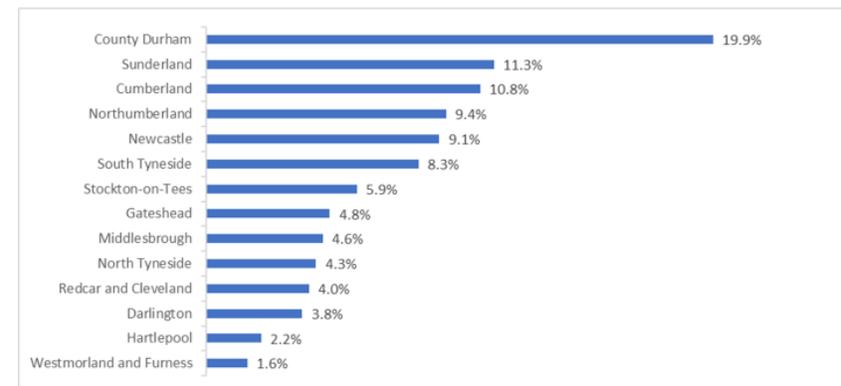


# Percentage of Cases by Area November 2023 – October 2024

LA of Residence



LA Where Individual Was Found



# TEES SUICIDE PREVENTION STRATEGIC PLAN 2024-2029

## KEY AREAS FOR ACTION

- Supporting practice through local data collection, research and intelligence.
- Provide tailored, targeted support for key priority groups.
- Identifying and addressing common risk factors linked to suicide.
- Promoting online safety and responsible media content.
- Identifying and supporting crisis pathways across sectors.
- Reducing access to means and methods of suicide.
- Providing effective bereavement support to those affected by suicide.
- Making suicide everybody's business.

## Key priority groups

- children and young people
- middle-aged men
- people who have self-harmed
- people in contact with mental health services
- people in contact with the justice system
- people diagnosed with autism
- pregnant women and new mothers
- Over 65 age group
- Those not in Education, Employment or Training

## Specific factors linked to increased risk

- physical illness
- financial difficulty and economic adversity
- harmful gambling
- substance misuse
- domestic abuse
- social isolation and loneliness

# HOW THIS LOOKS IN HARTLEPOOL

Key area	Action			
<b>Supporting practice through local data collection, research and intelligence</b>	Hartlepool now has access to police data regarding suspected suicides; therefore, we can gather trends regarding risk factors for poor mental health and suicidal ideation.	Hartlepool PH completed a mental health needs assessment for both young people and adults, to increase understanding of mental health across the town.	Hartlepool receives 6 monthly reports on suspected suicides which explores trends across Tees, as well as monthly reports across the Northeast region, supported by the ICB.	Hartlepool is part of the multiple of linked suspected suicide (MOLSS) plan, which uses real time data to identify multiple of linked suspected suicides, meaning we can work with local services and communities to prevent further deaths.
<b>Provide tailored, targeted support to key priority groups</b>	Using the real time surveillance system, to target communities who may be affected by suicide.	PH support adult social care in the commissioning of Togetherall. Within this, we can track which specific wards within Hartlepool who are signing up most and provided targeted intervention within these areas if required.	Hartlepool works with the statutory, commissioned, and voluntary sector organisations who support the identified priority groups by regularly attending the Health and Wellbeing Alliance, supporting the Community Transformation project and chairing the Suicide Prevention Taskforce.	Educational Psychology are providing training to schools across Hartlepool regarding mental health, wellbeing, and support following critical incidents.
<b>Identifying and addressing common risk factors linked to suicide</b>	Hartlepool PH have embedded a mental health team within our drug and alcohol service, provided by both primary and secondary mental health services.	Hartlepool understands that financial issues often lead to poor mental health, therefore have recently completed a Needs Assessment regarding Gambling Harms, and are undertaking research around the opinions of the Hartlepool population around Gambling Harms. Work will continue to engage financial services within the mental health and suicide prevention agenda.	PH support the commissioning of the domestic abuse services in Hartlepool. PH will ensure that pathways between Harbour, and mental health services are robust, and seamless.	Loneliness and isolation have been identified as common risk factors for poor mental health in Hartlepool. HBC will encourage collaborative working across community partners to combat this.

<b>Promoting online safety and responsible media content</b>	PH will continue to promote Samaritans online safety training amongst partners.	PH and Communications abide by the media guidelines for reporting suicide and self-harm where appropriate.	Educational Psychology provided ELSA training to schools, which included media/online safety.	Suicide Prevention leads work with Cleveland Police regarding intelligence around particularly harmful online social media trends around mental health, self-harm and suicidal ideation.
<b>Identifying and supporting crisis pathways across sectors</b>	PH and Communications regularly share crisis support lines across social media such as NHS 111 and SHOUT services.	Togetherall has clinicians monitoring risk 24/7, therefore if a Hartlepool resident is at risk, then the appropriate services are contacted. PH, a long side adult social care monitors the levels of risk regularly.	PH work closely with TEWW to ensure pathways between services are robust and seamless via the Community Mental Health Transformation programme.	PH will continue to monitor how factors such as deprivation, housing and other societal influences contribute to poor mental health, and ensure all services are equipped with access to the appropriate services, including crisis support.
<b>Reducing access to the means and methods of suicide</b>	Hartlepool, as part of Tees, works with Teesside Samaritans to audit locations and signage.	Hartlepool supports on going work with Network Rail and Samaritans to reduce deaths on the rail network and expand current working group to include all rail bridges in Teesside.	The most common location for suicide in Hartlepool remains in the home, however we continue to monitor any potential high-risk locations, in partnership with Cleveland Police.	
<b>Providing effective bereavement support for those effected by suicide</b>		Hartlepool supports the commissioning of the ICB for If You Care Share (IYCS) – a service that provides support for those impacted by suicide. IYCS offer practical, as well as emotional support.	Work continues with Cleveland police on their development of sudden and traumatic death signposting resource for use ‘on scene’ – and ensuring those effected have appropriate support.	Hartlepool continues to sensitively manage shrines and memorials to ensure public places do not become areas synonymous with suicidal behaviour.
<b>Make suicide everybody’s business</b>	PH have previously funded, and continue to promote when available, mental health first aid training, and ASIST, for anyone who may come across a person with suicidal ideation.	PH engages with the Lived Experience Forum, facilitated by Starfish where appropriate, to understand the needs of Hartlepool residents with lived experience of poor mental health, and/or suicidal ideation.	PH supports the quarterly campaigns within HBC regarding Health and Wellbeing.	Hartlepool supports the Making Every Contact Count approach to encourage anyone to the opportunities arising during their routine interactions with individuals to have conversations about how they might make positive improvements to their health or wellbeing.

# TEESSIDE – YEAR 2 PRIORITIES

## Supporting practice through data collection

- Identify improvements to local data collection processes

## Providing tailored, targeted support

- Male routine and manual workers
- BAME communities

## Identifying and addressing common risk factors

- Drug and Alcohol use
- Under 25 self harm
- Domestic violence

## Promoting online safety and media content

- Develop comms plan for associated campaigns and awareness events

## Supporting crisis pathways across sectors

- Support local alliance collaboratives
- Explore VCSE crisis network

## Reducing means and methods

- Vulnerability mapping of rail network and local assets

## Providing effective bereavement support

- Manage performance of locally commissioned bereavement support services

## Making suicide everybody's business

- Work with community health champions to facilitate open communication



# Audit and Governance Committee

24 February 2026

**Report of:** Scrutiny and Legal Support Officer

**Subject:** VETERAN HEALTH INVESTIGATION – GP SURVEY RESULTS

## 1. Council Plan Priority

<b>Hartlepool will be a place:</b>
- where people live healthier, safe and independent lives. (People)
- with a Council that is ambitious, fit for purpose and reflects the diversity of its community. (Organisation)

## 2. Purpose of Report

2.1. To provide Members with the results of the GP practice survey. This was circulated to GP Practices to gather their views and experiences of supporting veterans and signposting to health and wellbeing services.

## 3. Background

3.1. Members agreed the process for consultation and engagement for the investigation during the Audit and Governance Committee meeting on 4<sup>th</sup> November 2025.

3.2. To allow for further gathering of evidence for the investigation, it was agreed a survey would be circulated to all GP Practices in Hartlepool. This was launched in November 2025 and closed on 31<sup>st</sup> January 2026.

## 4. Presentation of evidence

- 4.1. The GP practice survey was distributed to all GP practices in Hartlepool, via email, to gather feedback/experiences in supporting veterans and their families.
- 4.2. The survey was originally due to close on 31<sup>st</sup> December 2025 but was extended to allow more time for the practices to respond. Practices were contacted on 3 separate occasions and invited to respond to the survey. A representative from North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board also circulated the survey and encouraged GP practices to take part. The survey received 4 responses out of a possible 12. It is likely that the timing of the survey, i.e. being launched during winter where GP practices face more pressure and demand on services contributed to the low response rate.

### GP survey results

- 4.3. The survey asked a series of questions relating to –
  - The identification of veterans
  - Health and non-health related challenges that veterans may face
  - Barriers and challenges to veterans accessing healthcare
  - Examples of good practice
  - Promotion of veteran specific services
  - Additional training/further information
- 4.4. Identifying veterans – when asked how veterans are identified within their practice, all four surgeries responded that they asked at registration. Two practices also indicated they asked during GP appointment, two advised they encouraged patients to volunteer this information via posters displayed in the surgery. To note there is no requirement for a veteran to provide this information.
- 4.5. Veteran specific health challenges – Some examples of veteran specific health conditions included mental health related issues such as Post Traumatic Stress Disorder and anxiety. Other issues related to joint/musculoskeletal conditions.
- 4.6. Non-health related challenges – the survey responses indicated that veterans can at times present at GP practices for non–health related issues such as housing, employment, social isolation, relationship issues and debt.
- 4.7. Barriers and challenges for veterans in accessing support – the survey asked what GP practices felt were potential barriers for veterans in

accessing support. Answers included a reluctance to seek support due to a sense of pride or stigma, feeling that services would not help or a lack of awareness of what support was available.

- 4.8. Best practice/good examples – One practice reported that they had an excellent social prescribing team who would support veterans and their families with non-health related issues. Another advised that they made a room available at their practice to allow veterans to access specialist counselling.
- 4.9. Promoting veteran specific services – ways in which they are promoted included sharing information amongst staff, leaflets, material in waiting rooms, social media, displaying posters and engaging with social prescribing teams.
- 4.10. Veteran friendly GP accreditation scheme – Two GP practices responded that they felt the scheme was effective. One commented that it helped the practice to become more aware of what support is available for veterans and had encouraged them to record veteran status.
- 4.11. Additional training/ further information – all GP practices who responded to the survey welcomed further information on agencies that offer support to veterans. Two practices indicated they would find it beneficial to have a directory of specific services to inform what support was available, for example charities/specialist support.
- 4.12. Summary of findings – although a small sample size, it was noted that all GP practices that responded were proactive in asking if patients were veterans at the registration stage. It was recognised that veterans at times presented with non-health related issues and emphasised the roll of social prescribers in the support they can offer with non-health related conditions.

## 5. Recommendations

- 5.1. That the Committee receives the information provided as part of the evidence gathering stage of the investigation and notes the results of the GP survey.

## 6. Reasons for Recommendations

- 6.1. To inform the development of the Committees final report.

## 7. Background Papers

- 7.1. The following background paper was used in the preparation of this report:-

[Report and minutes of the Audit and Governance Committee meeting held on the 4th November 2025.](#)

## 8. Contact Officers

Gemma Jones  
Scrutiny and Legal Support Officer  
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# SAFER HARTLEPOOL PARTNERSHIP MINUTES AND DECISION RECORD

3 October 2025

The meeting commenced at 1.00pm in the Civic Centre, Hartlepool.

**Present:**

**Responsible Authority Members:**

Councillor Karen Oliver, Elected Member, Hartlepool Borough Council  
Sylvia Pinkney, Assistant Director, Regulatory Services, Hartlepool Borough Council  
Helen Wilson, District Commander, Cleveland Police (Vice Chair)  
Ann Powell, Head of Stockton and Hartlepool Probation Delivery Unit

**Other Members:**

Jonathan Brash, MP for Hartlepool (Chair)  
Matt Storey, Office of Police and Crime Commissioner for Cleveland  
Angela Corner, Head of Community Resilience, Thirteen Group

Non-Voting Observer, Councillor Jorgeson, Representative of Audit and Governance Committee, Hartlepool Borough Council

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 4.2 John Lovatt, Assistant Director (Adult Social Care) was in attendance for Jill Harrison, Director of Adult and Community Based Services

Also present: Samantha Hayes, Drive Partnership  
Andrew Liddell, Neighbourhood Chief Inspector, Cleveland Police  
Rachel Parker, Office of Police and Crime Commissioner  
Anna Waddington, Office of Police and Crime Commissioner/CURV

**Officers:**

Phil Hepburn, Enforcement and Car Parking Services Manager  
Phil Gleaves, Operation Lead Pre-Court  
Olivia Highly, Domestic Abuse Co-ordinator  
Joan Stevens, Democratic Services and Statutory Scrutiny Manager  
Angela Armstrong, Principal Democratic Services Officer

## 9. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Brenda Harrison and Pamela Hargreaves, Gordon Bentley (North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board), Craig Blundred (Director of Public Health, Hartlepool Borough Council), Jill Harrison, (Executive Director of Adult and Community Based Services, Hartlepool Borough Council).

## 10. Declarations of Interest

None.

## 11. Minutes of the meeting held on 18 July 2025

Confirmed.

## 12. Community Payback Teesside – Probation Service (Operations Manager)

This item was deferred to the next meeting of the Partnership on 16 January 2026.

## 13. Domestic Abuse Protection Order (DAPO) (The Drive Partnership)

### Purpose of report

To provide an overview of the new Domestic Abuse Orders including the Positive Requirements element and the use of triage in this aspect of the orders. In addition the presentation illustrated how professionals might become involved or become linked to cases, service- users or individuals connected to a DAPO.

### Issue(s) for consideration

A representative from the Drive Partnership had been invited to provide the Partnership with an update on the pilot scheme that had been launched in Cleveland in March 2025 and was due to complete in March 2026. The new Domestic Abuse Orders (DAPO and DAPN) were designed to address some limitations of previous Domestic Abuse Orders and details of the powers of the Orders were provided in the presentation.

The presentation included comprehensive detail on the Positive Requirements under the DAPO mandate and the DAPO and triage processes through to final assessment and recommendations. Statistics were provided on the number of DAPO triage referrals processed and a Member requested a further breakdown of figures across the town, on a Ward by Ward basis. The Chair indicated that this information will be collated and circulated to the Partnership.

A discussion ensued during which the representative from the Drive Partnership provided detailed responses. It was confirmed that a number of Domestic Abuse charities and organisations were heavily involved through the pilot programme as they were integral to the development of the pilot. It was noted that there would be an evaluation undertaken of the pilot programme and this would be reported to a future meeting of the Partnership.

The representative from the Drive Partnership was thanked for attending and for the very informative presentation provided.

### **Decision**

- (i) The presentation was noted.
- (ii) That a breakdown of the DAPO referral statistics on a ward by ward basis across the town be collated and circulated to the Partnership.
- (iii) That the evaluation of the DAPO pilot be reported back to a future meeting of the Partnership.

## **14. Any Other Items which the Chairman Considers are Urgent**

The Chairman ruled that the following item of business should be considered by the Committee as a matter of urgency in accordance with the provisions of Section 100(B) (4)(b) of the Local Government Act 1972 in order that the matter could be dealt with without delay.

### **Minute 15 – Flying of flags across the town**

## **15. Flag Flying**

At the request of Councillor Sue Little who was unable to attend today's meeting, Councillor Karen Oliver raised concerns around the flying of the flags in the Seaton area as some residents had raised concerns with Councillor Little of feeling intimidated by this. The Chair confirmed that Home Office Guidance was extremely clear and indicated that there should be no proactive taking down of flags unless they posed a danger to the public or included offensive words. Councillor Oliver indicated she would pass on that feedback to Councillor Little.

## **16. 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 17 – Domestic Abuse Related Death Review** (*Assistant Director, Regulatory Services*) – This item contains exempt information under Schedule 12A Local Government Act 1972 as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006 namely information which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual (para 2).

- 17. Domestic Abuse Related Death Review** (*Assistant Director, Regulatory Services*) This item contains exempt information under Schedule 12A Local Government Act 1972 as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006 namely information which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual (para 2)

**Purpose of Report**

To consider the report into a death as part of the Safer Hartlepool Partnerships Statutory Duty to commission Domestic Abuse Related Death Reviews under Section 9 of the Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Act 2004.

**Issues for Consideration**

Further details can be found in the exempt section of the minutes.

**Decision**

Further details can be found in the exempt section of the minutes.

- 18. Date and Time of Next Meeting**

The Chair noted that the next meeting of the Partnership would be held on Friday 16 January 2026.

The meeting concluded at 2:30 pm

CHAIR