

REGENERATION SERVICES COMMITTEE

8th MAY 2014



Report of: Assistant Director (Regeneration)

Subject: LOCAL PLAN ISSUES AND OPTIONS PUBLIC
CONSULTATION DOCUMENT

1. TYPE OF DECISION/APPLICABLE CATEGORY

1.1 The Issues and Options Consultation Document (see **Appendix 1**) is the first stage in the production of a new Local Plan for Hartlepool and will form part of the Hartlepool Local Development Framework.

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

2.1 The purpose of this report is to seek permission from Regeneration Services Committee to consult on the Issues and Options Consultation Document for a period of eight weeks.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 The Issues and Options Stage is the first stage in the production of a new Local Plan for Hartlepool. The aim of this stage is to seek public thoughts and open the debate on what kind of place residents, businesses and all other stakeholders want Hartlepool to be in the future. Specifically it will focus on the most appropriate locations for development to occur over the next 15 years.

3.2 This stage of the plan does not rely on any of the evidence based pieces of work being completed as it is simply seeking the public's and interested parties thoughts and input into the process. The focus and aim of this document is to provide as many viable issues and options on the future development of Hartlepool as possible and then to seek the view of stakeholders. It is considered important that the Issues and Options is undertaken at the earliest opportunity to give time to analyse and reflect on the consultation feedback received which in turn will help to shape the Preferred Options Document. The Preferred Options Document, which is currently timetabled to be

produced by January 2015, will effectively be the first draft of the actual Local plan with proposed allocations and strategic policies.

- 3.3 The consultation paper sets the context in which the Local Plan is being prepared and gives a basic background to the planning system and highlights the other documents which will sit alongside the Local Plan to form the Local Development Framework. It also highlights opportunities, during the production of the Local Plan, for residents and other interested stakeholders to get involved and make comments to help guide the development of the Local Plan.
- 3.4 The Issues and Options paper sets out strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats which need to be considered in the production of a new Local Plan for the Borough. It also makes links to the recently published Hartlepool Vision and the recently refreshed Hartlepool Community Strategy and from this develops a proposed Vision for the Local Plan and a number of themes to help achieve the aspirations of the Local Plan and these other strategic documents.
- 3.5 The Issues and Options Document covers six broad Themes; Housing, Strengthening the Local Economy, Regeneration, Developing a Sustainable Community, Enhancing the Environment and Improving Connectivity. These themes are discussed in detail and options are suggested and questions are asked to help develop the Local Plan. There is a section on Locational Strategy which will help to set out in broad terms where the key developments are located within the town.
- 3.6 The conclusion asks whether there are any other areas which need to be included in the production of the Local Plan and also sets out the next stages in the production of the Plan.
- 3.7 In order to fully involve the community and other interested stakeholders and to provide meaningful feedback from the consultation it is envisaged that a range of public consultation methods would be used, including:
- A launch day, anticipated to be held at the Historic Quay which could involve a mixture of presentations, informal question and answer sessions and displays. This would involve direct invites similar to the launch of the Hartlepool Vision.
 - Copies of the documents made available at the Civic Centre
 - A statutory notice in the Hartlepool Mail
 - A local press release
 - Your town, Your say e-consultation
 - Use of the Council's twitter and facebook pages
 - Reference on the Planning Policy section on the Council's website
 - Letters to Parish Councils
 - Letters to statutory consultees and other stakeholders

- Individual meetings with community groups, organisations and other interested parties at their request
- Displays in the town centre or supermarkets

3.8 The consultation period for the Issues and Options will last for eight weeks and will run from May until July. Once completed, there will be analysis of the feedback and this, along with the various pieces of evidence base work which are currently being undertaken, to inform the development of the Preferred Options Document for consultation in January 2015.

4. RISK IMPLICATIONS

4.1 The main risk with not progressing the Issues and Options Consultation Document at this point in time is that, if delayed, this could have knock on effects in terms of progressing the development of the Local Plan in a timely manner.

5. SECTION 17 OF THE CRIME AND DISORDER ACT 1998 CONSIDERATIONS

5.1 The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 requires local authorities to consider crime and disorder reduction in the exercise of all their duties, activities and decision-making. The Council is committed to securing safe and secure environments within the Borough.

5.2 Safety and security is a key consideration when assessing planning applications; whilst there is no specific section within the Issues and Options document on this topic, this will be an important element of the detailed policy creation once the Local Plan progresses to Preferred Options stage.

6. FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

6.1 The main financial pressures relating to the production of and consultation on the Issues and Options Paper relate to printing costs and costs associated with organisation of events and advertising of the consultation. These costs are relatively small and it is envisaged that they will be met by the Local Plan budget.

7. LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

7.1 Hartlepool Borough Council is required by law to have a Local Plan to guide development in the Borough. Given that the existing Local Plan dates from 2006 it is vital that a new plan is progressed in a timely manner.

8. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY CONSIDERATIONS

- 8.1 The consultation will be carried out in accordance with the Council's adopted Statement of Community Involvement (SCI). The SCI was prepared in compliance with the Hartlepool Compact and its associated protocols. Consultation will be for an eight week period.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.1 Officers are permitted to undertake an eight week public consultation on the Issues and Options Consultation Document.

10. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 10.1 The Issues and Option Consultation Document is the first step in the production of a new Local Plan for Hartlepool and will form part of the Hartlepool Local Development Framework.

11. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 11.1 The 2006 Hartlepool Local Plan.
http://www.hartlepool.gov.uk/downloads/file/961/hartlepool_local_plan_2006

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Hartlepool Local Development Framework

Local Plan

ISSUES AND OPTIONS CONSULTATION PAPER

MAY 2014

1. FOREWORD

The Issues and Options Discussion Paper

- 1.1 The Local Plan will set out how the town develops over the next 15 years. The recent launch of the Hartlepool Vision sets out some of the exciting opportunities that exist for the regeneration of, in particular, the Marina and town centre areas including Jackson's Landing, Maritime Avenue and Church Street. The Vision will hopefully result in short, medium and long term financial investment in some of the key tourist, retail and business sectors in the town, helping to stimulate the town's economy. The Local Plan will however set the development framework in which these opportunities can be realised, covering a wide range of issues including new housing development, sites for business and industry, transport improvements and developments, retail, leisure and recreation and green spaces amongst others.
- 1.2 This discussion paper represents the start of the process for determining how Hartlepool will develop in the future. It is important for you to get involved at this time to help shape what kind of place Hartlepool will become. The paper sets out a number of key issues and suggests possible options for addressing these. To assist in the consultation process, these suggested options are assessed in terms of their possible economic, social and environmental impacts in a separate document (*Initial Sustainability Appraisal*).
- 1.3 There may be other issues and also alternative options which you feel should be considered. The purpose of this paper is to stimulate debate – not to provide the answers – and your participation in this process is key to ensure that the plan represents the views of the community of Hartlepool.

Image 1 – Extract from the Hartlepool Vision showing potential regeneration of the Marina Area



2. THE CONSULTATION PROCESS

- 2.1 This Issues and Options Discussion Paper will be widely available for a period of eight weeks from the 23rd May 2014. There will be a launch day where members of the public and other interested parties will be able to attend the drop in event and express their views and thoughts, view presentations and displays and listen to the thoughts of others. The documents will also be available for inspection at the Civic Centre and the town's libraries. A number of copies will be available at the Central Library. The documents are also available for downloading at the Council's website www.hartlepool.gov.uk and via the Council's social media on Twitter and Facebook.
- 2.2 Members from the Planning Policy Team are available at the Civic Centre during normal office hours to expand on anything included in this paper and / or to discuss any other matters relating to the preparation of the Local Plan. Officers can also visit your home if you are unable to get to the Civic Centre. If you are a member of a group of residents or businesses and would like an officer to attend one of your meetings, please contact the Planning Policy Team at the Civic Centre, Victoria Road, Hartlepool TS24 8AY (tel 01429 523532 or email planningpolicy@hartlepool.gov.uk).

How to comment

- 2.3 There are a number of ways by which you may make your views known:
- You can complete a questionnaire and return it to Planning Policy, Civic Centre, Hartlepool TS24 8AY – the questionnaires are available at the Civic Centre and the libraries, or can be requested by phoning 01429 523532 or emailing planningpolicy@hartlepool.gov.uk. A survey will also be undertaken using survey monkey.
 - You can comment on our social media links on Twitter or Facebook at the following links **ADD Links**
 - You can send your comments by letter to the Planning Policy Team at Civic Centre, Victoria Road, Hartlepool or by email to planningpolicy@hartlepool.gov.uk
- 2.4 All comments and questionnaires should be received by 4.30pm on Friday 18th July 2014. The responses will be assessed and analysed and a report on the findings will be published in the summer.

3. PREFACE – THE PLAN-MAKING SYSTEM

3.1 The Hartlepool Local Plan will set out the policies and general proposals for the use and development of land in Hartlepool was adopted in April 2006. In 2009 key policies which were still considered relevant and necessary were “saved” by direction of the Secretary of State and form the policies to direct development in the town. However, the plan-making system has been revised since 2006 with the consolidation of guidance into one document called the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). This is accompanied by the National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) which is an online tool to provide guidance. The overarching aim of the new planning framework is to achieve sustainable development. The new Local Plan and a collection of other documents, including a range of Supplementary Planning Documents, Neighbourhood Plans and other Development Plan Documents (such as the Tees Valley Minerals and Waste DPD) within what is termed the ‘Local Development Framework’, will form the Development Plan for Hartlepool.

How does the new spatial plan-making system of Local Development Frameworks differ from the old plan-making system of Local Plans?

3.2 Spatial planning goes beyond the old system of purely land use planning to bring together and integrate policies for the use and development of land with other policies and programmes which influence the nature of places and how they function. Documents within the Local Development Framework will, like the 2006 Local Plan, seek to ensure the most efficient use of land by balancing competing demands, but in accordance with a clear, distinctive and realistic vision of how the area will develop and change within a demonstrable context of sustainable development. This Issues and Options Document introduces the first stages of developing that vision.

3.3 In particular the documents within the Local Development Framework will be the delivery mechanism for the Community Strategy in so far as the Community Strategy relates to the use and development of land, but they must also take account of and help deliver other strategies and policies of the Council (such as the Local Transport Plan and strategies for education and environmental protection), and strategies of other bodies such as they relate to Hartlepool. Social, economic and environmental issues should be addressed and related to the use of land. This document sets out for consultation purposes some of the more important and strategic issues affecting the development of Hartlepool and suggests options to address those issues.

What is the Hartlepool Local Development Framework (LDF)?

3.4 The Local Development Framework will comprise a number of documents as shown in Diagram 1 below. Some of these (known as ‘Development Plan Documents’ or DPDs for short) form the local part of the statutory Development Plan for Hartlepool and, in due course, will essentially replace the 2006 Local Plan.

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3.5 The Development Plan Documents for Hartlepool must include:

- A new Local Plan setting out the spatial vision, spatial objectives and key strategic policies for the area – this consultation document on Issues and Options comprises the first stage in the preparation of the new Local Plan for Hartlepool;
- A range of Supplementary Planning Documents;
- A Proposals Map
- DPDs containing waste and minerals policies; and
- Any Neighbourhood Plans

Diagram 1 – The Local Development Framework

LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK													
A portfolio of local development and other documents													
Local Development Documents										Other Documents			
Development Plan Documents				Supplementary Planning Documents									
Hartlepool Local Plan	Tees Valley Minerals & Waste DPD	Hartlepool Local Plan Proposals Map	Neighbourhood Plans	Travel Plans and Transport Assessments SPD	Hartlepool Green Infrastructure SPD	Trees and Development SPD	Planning Obligations SPD	Shop Fronts SPD	Residential Design SPD	Residential Homes in the Countryside SPD	Local Development Scheme	Statement of Community Involvement	Authorities Monitoring Report
These documents will comprise the Development Plan for the area and ultimately replace the 2006 Local Plan.				These documents help to give further information and detail to support the Development Plan Documents.						These Documents and the highlighted Development Plan Documents must be prepared.			

3.6 In addition to DPDs, there are a number of other documents within the Hartlepool Local Development Framework as follows:

- Neighbourhood Plans (NP) are one of the key elements which emerged from the Government’s Localism concept. They allow members of the community to develop plans for their area which, providing they are in general conformity with the Development Plan for the town, can guide development within those communities who choose to undertake them. Currently there are three Neighbourhood Plan boundaries designated in Hartlepool (The Rural NP;

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The Headland NP and the Wynyard NP) and one currently suspended due to issues relating to its boundary (The Park NP).

- Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) which are non-statutory documents expanding on or providing further detail to policies in a development plan document. There are currently three adopted SPDs and four others in the process of being prepared. It is also likely that other SPD's will start to come forward to support the Local Plan, these may include an Affordable Housing SPD, a Local Centres SPD, A Hartlepool Vision SPD or others as the need arises.
- The Local Development Scheme (LDS) sets out the timescales for the Development Plan Documents to be produced.
- The Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) which sets out the Council's policy for involving the community and key stakeholders both in the preparation and revision of local development documents and with respect to planning applications;
- The LDF Authorities Monitoring Report which assesses the implementation of the Local Development Framework and the extent to which planning policies are being achieved.

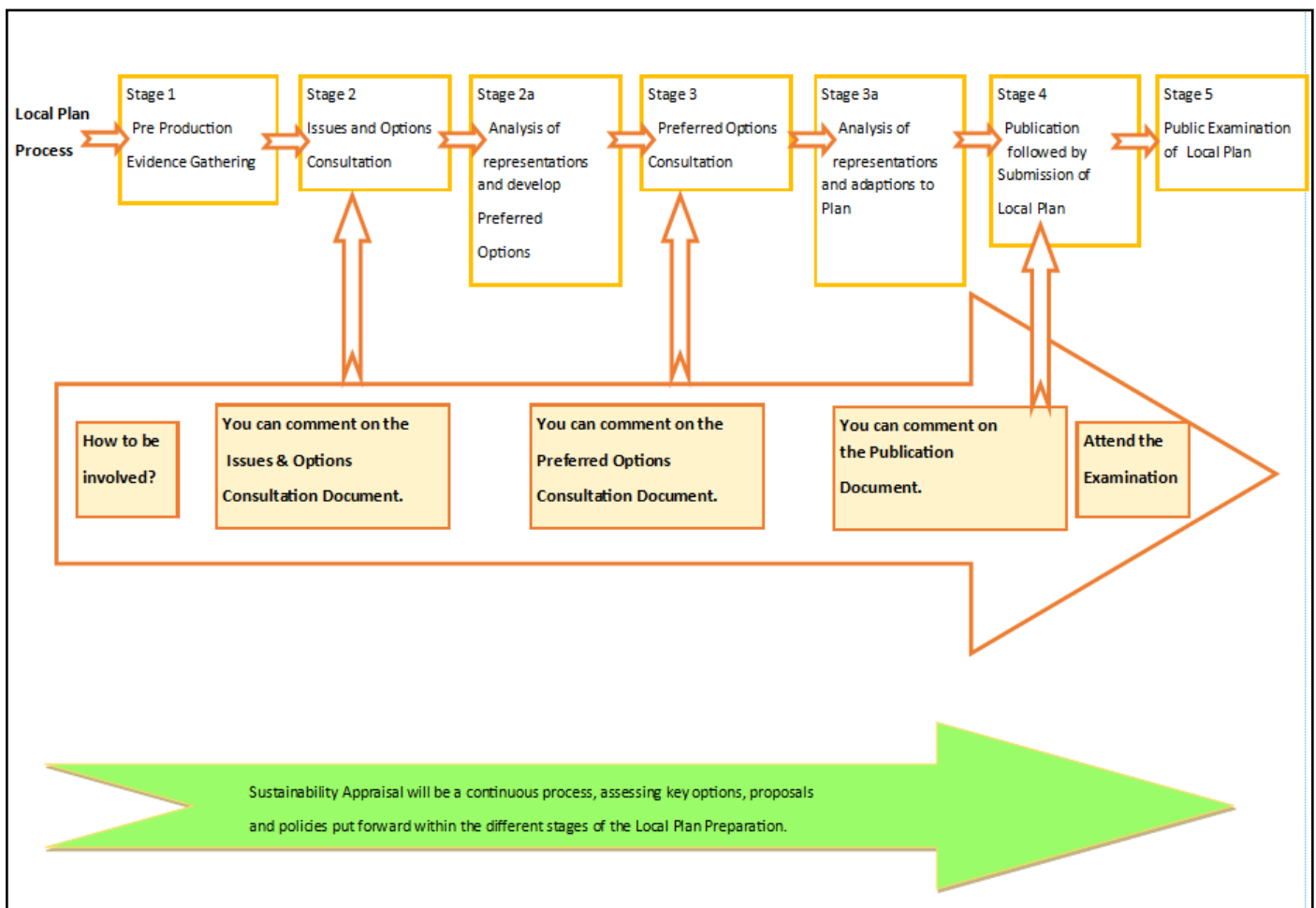
- 3.7 Copies of the documents in Hartlepool's Local Development Framework which have already been prepared can be viewed on the Council's website at www.hartlepool.gov.uk

4. INTRODUCTION – THE LOCAL PLAN

4.1 This report represents the first published stage in the preparation of a new Local Plan for Hartlepool. A considerable amount of preparatory work has been and is in the process of being undertaken, primarily related to the gathering of information – what is termed the ‘evidence base’. So far, for instance, a Tees Valley Strategic Housing Market Assessment (2012) to provide information on the housing needs and aspirations of the Hartlepool community has been undertaken, and work on identifying any shortcomings in the amount and/or location of open space uses is in the process of being reviewed and will be completed by the summer. It is important that the evidence base is as up-to-date as possible, in order for a Planning Inspector, who assesses the Local Plan in due course, to find that the plan has been developed in a legally compliant, robust and sound manner.

4.2 Opportunities to comment are available throughout each stage of the Local Plan production process (see diagram below). We are currently at stage two, ‘Issues and Options’; comments can be submitted on this Issues and Options document.

Diagram 2 – The Local Plan Process



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- 4.3 Hartlepool's Local Plan will set out broadly but clearly what kind of place the area will be in the future, what kind of changes will be needed to make this happen, and how this will be brought about. As a starting point it will set out the spatial vision for the Borough – as it is anticipated to be by 2031. It will reflect the aspirations set out within the new Hartlepool Vision and the overarching aims of the Hartlepool's Community Strategy, "Hartlepool's Ambition." To achieve this, the Local Plan will establish spatial objectives and a spatial strategy and strategic planning policies to deliver the vision and to guide the Borough's development over the next decade and more.
- 4.4 The Local Plan will however need to be consistent with national planning policy as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the accompanying National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG). It will also take account of other relevant plans, policies and strategies relating to Hartlepool and the adjoining area.
- 4.5 The Local Plan will set out requirements, such as the amount and location of housing to be provided in Hartlepool, and will also contain policies covering employment, retail, leisure, community and essential public services and transport development, setting out key development areas for these types of development and stipulating general principles regarding how the sites should be developed whilst respecting and protecting the amenity of neighbouring sites.

What is the context within which the Local Plan will be developed?

- 4.6 The Borough of Hartlepool comprises three distinct elements:
- i. the main urban area of Hartlepool including Seaton Carew and the industrial areas to the south - this classed as a urban area;
 - ii. an attractive rural hinterland within which lie the five villages of Hart, Elwick, Dalton Piercy, Greatham and Newton Bewley; and
 - iii. the residential, employment and recreational area at Wynyard.
- 4.7 Hartlepool is located within the North East of England within an area known as the Tees Valley. The Tees Valley comprises the five Boroughs of Darlington, Hartlepool, Middlesbrough, Redcar and Cleveland and Stockton-on-Tees. In developing a Plan for Hartlepool it is also important to reflect the wider aspirations for growth within the Tees Valley and also take account of other neighbouring areas, in particular County Durham.
- 4.8 Some facts and figures in relation to Hartlepool are contained in Table 1 below.

Table 1 - Key Hartlepool Statistics

	Hartlepool	England and Wales
Resident Population - Mid 2012 (ONS)	92,300	56,570,800
Population age 0-15 – Mid 2012 (ONS)	17,800	10,686,800
Population age 16-64 – Mid 2012 (ONS)	58,300	36,238,600
Population age 65+ – Mid 2012 (ONS)	16,200	9,642,400
Number of Households – Mid 2012 (ONS)	42,335	-
Area (hectares)	9,386	15,117,400
Population Density (persons per hectare)	9.83	3.74
Households with no one working – Census 2011	21.7%	9.9%
% of working age economically active – Census 2011	72.6%	77.4%
% in part time employment – Census 2011	27.6%	22.2%
% in full time employment – Census 2011	62%	62.1%
% self employed – Census 2011	10.4%	15.7%
% of working age receiving key benefits - 2013	19.4%	11.1%
% of households without a car – Census 2011	35.3%	25.6%
Crimes per 1000 population – 2012/3 total offences	70.3	-
Household tenure- owner occupied – Census 2011	60.3%	64.3%
Household tenure- Council/RP rented – Census 2011	23.5%	17.6%
Household tenure- Private rented – Census 2011	14.8%	16.7%
Qualifications – 5+ GCSEs A-Cs including English and Maths (%) – 2012	48.3%	58.6%

5. A SPATIAL VISION FOR HARTLEPOOL

What are the challenges facing Hartlepool?

5.1 The Hartlepool LDF Authorities Monitoring Report for 2012/13 includes a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) analysis as set out in Table 2 below. This provides an appropriate context within which to develop a spatial vision for Hartlepool.

Table 2 – SWOT Analysis. Source 2012/3 Authorities Monitoring Report.

Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Successful allocation of Enterprise Zones • Compactness of main urban area • Expanding population • Sense of community / belonging • Partnership working • Good track record in delivering physical regeneration • Diverse, high quality and accessible natural environment • Diverse range of heritage assets including the maritime, industrial and religious • Availability of a variety of high quality housing • Successful housing renewal • High levels of accessibility by road • Lack of congestion • Good local road communications • Direct rail link to London • Good local rail services • Active and diverse voluntary and community sector • Positive community engagement • Successful event management • Small business and SME development • Growth of visitor market • High quality tourist attractions • High quality expanding educational facilities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perceived image • Location off main north-south road corridor • High deprivation across large areas of the town • Low employment rates and high level of worklessness • Legacy of dedining heavy industrial base • Small service sector • Imbalance in the housing stock • Shortage of adequate affordable housing • Poor health • Low level of skills • High crime rates • Exposed dimate • Range and offer of retail facilities • Reductions in public resources have affected regeneration and employment levels. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young population, possible asset for future prosperity • Can improve the economy and the growing house choice thus improving the recent stabilisation of population levels • Availability of land to enable diversification of employment opportunities • Potential for development of major research, manufacturing and distribution facilities on A19 corridor • Potential for further tourism investment • Potential for integrated transport links • Major high quality employment opportunities at Victoria Harbour, Queens Meadow and Wynyard Park • Success of Tall Ships races and opportunity to bid for the event in the future • Plans for development of Tees Valley Metro • Established housing market renewal schemes • New state of the art hospital site in Wynyard • Potential New Nudcar Power Station • Renewable Energy and Eco Industries • Developing indigenous business start-up and growth • New government guidance in the form of the NPPF and CIL regulations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Closure of major employer/s • Expansion of area affected by housing market failure • Climate change and rising sea levels • Lack of financial resources / budget deficits • Increasing car ownership and congestion • Loss of Tees Crossing Project • Access to New hospital • Competition from neighbouring out of town retail parks • Competition from outlying housing markets • Uncertainty in relation to Council budgets • Uncertainty in relation to government funding programmes.

What is the Local Plan aiming to achieve?

- 5.2 The Local Plan will set out the vision for Hartlepool - what kind of place Hartlepool will be in the future. Its vision will be a spatial representation of the Hartlepool Vision and the overarching aims and vision of the 2014 Community Strategy for Hartlepool ('Hartlepool's Ambition') which is that:

'Hartlepool will be an ambitious, healthy, respectful, inclusive, thriving and outward-looking community, in an attractive and safe environment, where everyone is able to realise their potential.'

- 5.3 Looking at the vision for 'Hartlepool's Ambition' the spatial vision for the Local Plan should seek to achieve by 2031:
- the creation of a healthy local economy ('thriving' and 'ambitious' community),
 - the creation of mixed communities with all services to hand ('respectful' and 'inclusive' community),
 - provision of opportunities for recreational activities ('healthy' community),
 - improvement of transport links ('outward-looking' community).
 - improvements to the quality and design of housing and other areas ('attractive environment'),
 - reduction of the opportunities for crime and improvements in road safety ('safe environment')
- 5.4 The vision for the Local Plan should not be too generalised in the sense that it could be appropriate to any area of the region or country, but should be specific to and identifiable with Hartlepool and it should be achievable. Taking into account the SWOT analysis in Table 2 and the vision set out in 'Hartlepool's Ambition', the following is suggested as the overall **spatial vision** for the Local Plan:

"Hartlepool by 2031 will have achieved the substantial implementation of its key development and regeneration areas including Jackson's Landing, Trincomalee Wharf, Church Street, the Town Centre, Seaton Carew and the Headland and will have increased job opportunities through continued development at Wynyard and the Port, maximised housing choices and health opportunities for its residents to live in a safe and attractive environment as sustainable and inclusive communities within the Tees Valley and to have become a focal destination for visitors."

Questions

1. Does this spatial vision adequately reflect the ambitions for growth and development within Hartlepool over the next 15 years? If not, how can it be improved?
2. Are there any other aspects or locations which should be addressed in the vision?
3. Have you any other comments on the vision?

6. THEMES AND SPATIAL OBJECTIVES FOR THE LOCAL PLAN

How will the Local Plan develop from the Hartlepool Vision and Hartlepool’s Ambition contained within the Community Strategy?

6.1 Suggested themes for the Local Plan developed from the suggested spatial vision are as follows:

- Regeneration;
- Housing;
- Strengthening the Local Economy;
- Developing a Sustainable Community;
- Enhancing the Environment; and
- Improving Connectivity.

6.2 The issues and options in this document are considered under these main themes.

Table 3 – Relationship of Spatial Themes and Objectives of the Local Plan with Hartlepool’s Ambition and the new Hartlepool Vision

“Hartlepool’s Ambition” (Community Strategy 2014) Themes	Hartlepool Vision 2014	Suggested Themes for the Local Plan	Suggested Spatial Objectives for the Local Plan
Jobs and the Economy Lifelong learning and Skills	Wynyard Queens Meadow Port Estate Town Centre Church Street Seaton Carew	Regeneration Strengthening the Local Economy (Housing contributes in terms of jobs and economy)	1. To diversify the economic base of Hartlepool and promote an entrepreneurial culture to create more retail and employment opportunities for local people. 2. To develop Hartlepool as a destination of choice for inward investment 3. To enhance the tourism offer. 4. To support the development of educational and training facilities that will develop a skilled workforce. 5. To facilitate development in the key investment areas in the Borough
Strengthening Communities Community Safety Health and Wellbeing Housing	The Headland	Housing Developing a Sustainable Community	6. To meet current and future housing need and demand 7. To provide sustainable sites for the provision of high quality housing developments. 8. To provide a supply of affordable homes to meet the needs of the Borough both in urban and rural areas. 9. To make Hartlepool a safer place by reducing crime and the fear of crime of crime and anti-social behaviour. 10. To strengthen social cohesion and reduce inequalities by protecting and encouraging access to local facilities. 11. To encourage healthier and more sustainable lifestyles.

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Environment (excluding transport) Culture and Leisure	Hartlepool Waterfront Church Street The Headland Seaton Carew	Enhancing the Environment Regeneration	12. To protect, promote and enhance the quality and distinctiveness of the Boroughs natural, rural and built environment. 13. To protect and enhance the Boroughs unique cultural heritage and coastline. 14. To reduce the causes and minimise the impacts of climate change. 15. To maximise the re-use of previously developed land and buildings. 16. To ensure the efficient use of natural resources. 17. To provide a safe, attractive and well designed environment. 18. To promote the development and enhancement of recreational and leisure facilities within the Borough.
Environment (Transport)		Improving Connectivity	19. To ensure the provision of a safe, efficient and sustainable transport network, accessible to all. 20. To strengthen transport links with the Tees Valley sub-region, region and beyond.

Question

4. Do you agree with the six themes for the Local Plan? If not, what would you suggest?

6.3 The eight themes of ‘Hartlepool’s Ambition’ (the Community Strategy for Hartlepool) can be grouped alongside the Local Plan themes and they provide the basis of the suggested spatial objectives for the Local Plan as shown in Table 3 above.

Question

5. Will the 20 suggested objectives help to achieve the spatial vision? Do they adequately reflect ‘Hartlepool’s Ambition’?
 6. Are there any other objectives that should be included?

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7. LOCATIONAL STRATEGY (COVERING HOUSING AND REGENERATION THEMES)

Issue 1: Where should future development be concentrated?

7.1 The Local Plan will need to identify locations within the Borough where different types of development will be located. The Issues and Options Consultation Paper is seeking views on how much of the future development should be:

- in the central areas of the town (Trincomalee Wharf, Jackson's Landing, Town Centre etc);
- in other urban areas of the town;
- on greenfield land on the edge of the built-up area;
- at Wynyard;
- focussed on one or more of the villages; and / or
- a new village / settlement

7.2 The response to the options suggested in the rest of this discussion paper will help to determine what level and type of new development will be appropriate in these areas.

Issue 2: Where should future housing development be located?

7.3 Work on the recently withdrawn Hartlepool Local Plan 2013 had illustrated that a figure in the region of 320 new homes a year was an appropriate level of development which could be realistically achieved within the Borough. Over the new Local Plan period (2016-2031) this could mean sites capable of providing in the region of 4800 new homes will need to be identified (depending on the findings of the evidence base). The Local Plan will also need to take account of any planning permissions which currently exist which will contribute towards meeting this figure as well as any likely demolitions which are likely and therefore it may be the case that the new sites finally identified within the Local Plan are significantly under the figure of 4800.

7.4 In identifying sites it is necessary to provide a range of choice including affordable and high cost, low density housing to meet the needs of residents.

7.5 The strategic gaps between the urban area and the existing villages, in particular Greatham and Hart, should continue to be maintained to protect the separate identity of settlements, prevent them from coalescing and prevent urban sprawl where possible

7.6 The 2006 Local Plan has defined limits to development (an 'urban fence' around the main urban area, village envelopes around the villages and also limits around the residential (and employment) areas already approved for development at Wynyard). Keeping future development within these limits would protect the attractive open countryside around Hartlepool but constrain the opportunities for providing a wide choice of housing, including affordable and high cost low density housing, lead to more high density development contrary to the current policy of housing market re-

structuring, and if insufficient land which has not been previously developed ('brownfield' land) cannot be identified, result in the development of areas of amenity greenspace within the Borough and lead to town cramming. This may

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adversely affect the attractiveness of Hartlepool as a place to live and to the loss of the more mobile and probably more affluent sections of the community.

- 7.7 A westward extension of housing development beyond the existing limits may be sustainable, particularly where there are existing local services nearby, but due regard would need to be taken to maintaining the strategic gaps, particularly in the vicinity of Hart and Greatham villages. Further development in the villages may help to sustain or improve local services, but lead to an increase in commuting. Similarly allowing further housing development at Wynyard could be conditioned upon the provision of local services which the area lacks at present, but will not help to create a mixed community unless other types of housing than large detached dwellings are provided.

What could our Options be?

- Focus most housing development in the existing urban areas
- Give priority to housing development on brownfield land, including areas cleared of housing
- Allow a western expansion of the town beyond the existing limits
- Expand the villages
- Create a new village / settlement
- Allow further development at Wynyard

Questions

7. Within the urban area which sites do you believe should see more housing development on them?
8. Should we accept the loss of our areas of amenity greenspace to accommodate further housing development?
9. Are there any areas to the west of the urban area where further housing could be allowed?
10. Should we allow development to encroach nearer to Hart and Greatham villages?
11. Should any of the villages be allowed to expand, and why?
12. Should a new village / settlement be developed, and if so where would be appropriate?
13. Should we allow further housing development at Wynyard – if so how could we make the area more sustainable?
14. Are there any other options?

Issue 3: Central Area Retail?

- 7.8 Hartlepool has a relatively self-contained town centre serving the local area and parts of neighbouring Easington District. It is the main shopping, commercial, educational and social centre of Hartlepool. Middleton Grange Shopping Centre is the third largest covered retail area in the North East. One of the main aims of the recently published Hartlepool Vision is to see significant investment and change within Hartlepool Town Centre, improving the attractiveness and quality of the retail,

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cultural and leisure offer, hopefully not only improving the viability of the shops but also bringing about significant improvements in the economic competitiveness of the town centre.

- 7.9 There are a number of other key sites and locations identified within the Hartlepool Vision which are viewed as having great potential to revitalise and regenerate central Hartlepool. They include Jackson's Landing and the Trincomalee Wharf areas ("Hartlepool Waterfront") and Church Street. Opportunities for significant private sector led mixed use regeneration alongside potentially a new national leisure attraction to complement the Hartlepool Maritime Experience are aspirations which exist for the area.
- 7.10 Relatively close to the Middleton Grange Centre and within the town centre as currently defined in the Hartlepool Local Plan are two superstores - Morrisons and Asda. A Tesco superstore lies about half a mile to the south-west of Middleton Grange. Other major shopping developments are at the Anchor and Highlight retail parks in edge of centre locations and further afield at the High Point development and at Tees Bay.
- 7.11 The Victoria Park football ground, at Mill House, provides a focus for both residents and visitors to the town. A re-location to another site could make it less accessible to non-car users and remove the potential for fans to make use of the town centre's other facilities.
- 7.12 There are a number of sites in other areas adjoining the town centre (edge of centre sites), particularly on the eastern side of the dual carriageway A689, which have remained undeveloped for many years.

What could our Options be?

- Concentrate new retailing in the existing shopping centre.
- Reduce the size of the existing town centre & primary shopping centre to reflect the lack of demand and expenditure
- Replace the existing primary shopping centre with a new one
- Create a new district centre to include Tees Bay and the nearby retail and commercial/leisure developments
- Relax planning controls on retail development outside the town centre
- Shrink edge of centre areas to help focus development in the town centre
- Retain vacant or underused sites in the town centre or the area adjoining the centre for office, leisure and other well used uses
- Encourage the provision of new housing, including affordable housing, on sites within or adjoining the town centre which have remained unused for many years
- Create more public open spaces within and adjoining the town centre, including improved pedestrian flows between the Town Centre, Church Street and the Marina

Questions

15. Where should further major retail developments be located?
16. How can the town centre be made more attractive to users and investors?
17. Would providing more housing (including affordable housing) on sites close to the town centre (edge of centre sites) strengthen the opportunities for ensuring its key role as the main retail, commercial and leisure heart of Hartlepool?
18. Should we seek to retain the Football Ground on the Mill House site?
19. Are there ways of reducing the barrier caused by the A689 to provide a more cohesive town centre?

8. STRENGTHENING THE LOCAL ECONOMY**Issue 4: How can we continue to develop the leisure and tourism industry?**

- 8.1 The growing importance of the tourism and leisure industry is a key factor in the local economy. The town's assets include a range of attractions based on its maritime heritage and the Marina, its beaches, sports domes and historic links golf course at Seaton Carew, green tourism with its internationally important nature conservation areas, and its Christian / historic heritage particularly on the Headland.
- 8.2 There will be a need to broaden the range of visitor accommodation ensuring that new facilities are appropriate and that existing facilities are not adversely affected.
- 8.3 The contribution which the Tall Ships event in 2010 had needs to be built upon to ensure that lasting positive impacts for the town are realised. The opportunities which are identified around Jackson's Landing and Trincomalee Wharf offer a fantastic opportunity to further develop the maritime based tourism facilities within the town. Within the Marina and town centre areas it will be vital to ensure that the accompanying infrastructure and retail and commercial offer compliments the tourism offer and makes Hartlepool an attractive and vibrant place which people want to visit. Creating an attractive and safe environment in which the tourism offer sits will contribute significantly towards the overall aspirations for these areas.

What could our Options be?

- Provide for day visitor attractions only
- Allow tourist accommodation to provide for longer stays
- Develop a specialist tourist market
- Promote a site for a new, nationally significant tourist attraction
- Concentrate on our existing tourist sectors or develop new ones

Questions

20. Should the range of tourist attractions be broadened to provide a more effective contribution to the local economy?
21. Should Hartlepool concentrate on attracting a specific identifiable niche in the tourist market?
22. Should there be a wider range of tourist accommodation including caravan parks?
23. Are there any other options for developing the tourism economy?

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Issue 5: Is the amount and type of employment land sufficient to meet requirements of an expanding economy?

- 8.4 The Council is currently in the process of refreshing the Employment Land Review (ELR) to establish the amount of employment land realistically available and the long term needs for sites. It is important for inward investment to have a wide range of sites available for different employment requirements, thus the current allocated sites cater for most types of industrial activity, including sites for general industry, for high quality prestige development, port related development, special industry and as part of mixed use areas. The town also benefits from three Enterprise Zones at the Port, Queens Meadow and Oakesway. These zones benefit from simplified planning systems and some financial benefits for new businesses which locate there. These benefits will currently be available until April 2015.
- 8.5 As the take up of some industrial sites has been slow over recent years it might be possible to re-allocate some industrial sites for alternative uses. The revised ELR will consider the possibility of this and may look at areas which have been allocated for employment for many years but have not been taken up.
- 8.6 A large proportion of Hartlepool's employment land comprises the regionally important prestige site at Wynyard comprising the Wynyard Business Park and the land at North Burn to the north of the former Samsung site (Wynyard One). Some housing proposals have been permitted on the western side of the site however it is considered critical that the A689 frontage is maintained for prestige employment land as a regionally important site, sitting alongside a new state of the art hospital which has planning permission to be constructed in the eastern part of the site. North Burn is currently allocated as an electronic components park in the 2006 Local Plan but the deliverability of this site is highly questionable given the costs of a new junction which would be needed on the A19.
- 8.7 Most of the other land allocated for employment is known as the southern business zone located in the south of the town with the north only being served by Oakesway and the Port area. Wynyard Business Park is located some distance to the west of the main urban area.
- 8.8 Some employment areas are reserved for specialist uses such as land at North of Seaton Channel for port related development. This is another area that the ELR will consider to see if the allocation is achievable and deliverable over the plan period.
- 8.9 The Tees Valley sub region is increasingly becoming important as a base for eco-industry based on recycling of materials and the treatment of waste. The area's workforce, with long experience of related heavy industrial skills, is well placed to undertake this type of activity.
- 8.10 At a more local level, Sandgate is identified in the 2006 Local Plan for untidy users such as car breakers and coal storage. Such difficult to locate industries are important to, and a necessary part, of the local economy but need to be carefully sited, and this may become difficult over the plan period given the relatively low number of small sites which are currently available on Sandgate. Given the nature of these businesses it will probably be necessary to identify another area to help meet the demand for this type of business.

What could our Options be?

- Make existing employment land more attractive for investment
- Reduce the overall amount of employment land
- Consider de-allocation of part of Wynyard Business Park to allow mixed use development
- Consider alternative uses for North Burn or de-allocate the site and treat it once again as part of the open countryside
- Identify additional employment land in the north of the Borough
- Identify more land for untidy users at such areas as Graythorp or the wider Longhill Industrial Estate area

Questions

24. What investment is needed to make our employment land more attractive for development?
25. Is the amount of employment land sufficient for current and future needs?
26. Should there be more land identified in the north of the Borough?
27. Can some employment sites be identified for different uses?
28. Should additional land be identified for untidy users – if so where?

Issue 6: Nuclear Power Station?

- 8.11 Hartlepool Power Station was identified as a potential site for a new nuclear power station by the Government and operator EDF Energy. There is currently no timescale around a decision on whether the new power station will be delivered in Hartlepool but the Council is required to safeguard land until a decision is made on whether the new station will be built. In the mean time, the existing power station has had its operational life extended until at least 2019, however, subject to safety checks, this lifespan could be extended. The issue of a second nuclear power station is a sensitive one involving economic, environmental and social aspects including issues of climate change, the effect on protected wildlife sites and safety and pollution; however it is now a decision which will be taken at a national level and the Council will purely be a consultee in the process. The construction of a new power station would undoubtedly contribute to the local economy during construction and during its subsequent operational life.

What could our Options be?

- Safeguard land for a new power station (this is a requirement not an option)
- Work proactively with the Government to illustrate a desire for a new nuclear power station
- Highlight improvements in associated infrastructure which are needed should a new power station come forward

Questions

29. In your opinion do the benefits of having a nuclear power station outweigh the negative impacts and risks associated?
30. Should some adjacent employment sites be protected from development?

Issue 7: How can the rural economy be strengthened?

8.12 The countryside of Hartlepool comprises approximately two thirds of the Borough's area although the population of the rural area is very small. The rural area is however an important asset in terms of its impact on the local economy by giving some local employment which in turn helps to sustain other parts of the economy such as village shops and other local services.

What could our Options be?

- Encourage a wider range of economic activities in the countryside through more farm diversification, employment provision and tourist accommodation
- Protect the open countryside for its own sake to ensure that the natural habitat and attractive nature of the countryside are not lost

Questions

31. Should the rural area be protected against the spread of employment uses in the open countryside?
32. What types of employment can be encouraged in the villages and in the open countryside?

Issue 8: How can training opportunities be encouraged so as to assist jobs and to have a lasting impact on the local economy?

8.13 It is important to encourage training opportunities which provide a strong base for the future workforce. This can be achieved by legal agreements with developers to provide appropriate training facilities such as the establishment of apprenticeships and the use of local contractors in construction.

What could our Options be?

- Strengthen the requirement for developers to provide training for local people as part of development
- Allow the market to determine the level of training and job creation

Questions

33. Should the planning system try to encourage training as a means of strengthening the economy?

9. HOUSING AND DEVELOPING A SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY

Issue 9: Can we provide the appropriate range and choice of housing and improve existing housing?

- 9.1 Balancing the supply and demand of housing to meet local aspirations is key to ensure that there is a variety of housing in terms of tenure, price and mix of different households to develop sustainable communities.
- 9.2 The housing market within Hartlepool can be characterised by the relatively affluent western and southern suburban areas, a relatively deprived town centre core of predominantly terraced properties and the newer market areas of the Marina and Middle Warren offering apartment living and a range of detached and semi-detached dwellings meeting modern aspirations.
- 9.3 However, Hartlepool has a very high level of terraced stock (34.8% of total dwelling stock in 2011 – see Table 2 below). Stock condition has been a major issue which is currently being addressed through various programmes including housing market renewal programme which has seen large numbers (circa 1000) of old, obsolete properties demolished in the past ten years and replaced by modern homes which meet today's aspirations and standards. Continuation of the housing market renewal (HMR) programme will have an impact on the overall stock condition and create dwellings of a modern standard. Once the current HMR programme is complete, further HMR work could continue to improve the housing offer in Hartlepool, meeting the aims of the ambitious Empty Homes Strategy which aims to bring long term empty homes back into use across the Borough. However the impacts of these schemes on the community will need to be closely monitored and will be dependent on future funding schemes.

Table 2 – Household Type and Size (2011 Household Survey)

Property Type	No. Bedrooms (Table%)						Base (No.)
	One	Two	Three	Four	Five +	Total	
Detached House	0.0	0.5	4.5	7.0	1.9	13.9	5,537
Semi-detached House	0.1	6.7	19.1	2.7	0.6	29.2	11,671
Terraced House	0.0	14.1	16.9	2.8	0.9	34.8	13,890
Bungalow	1.2	4.6	1.0	0.2	0.2	7.1	2,854
Maisonette	0.5	0.0	-	-	-	0.5	201
Flat / Apartment	7.9	5.2	0.6	0.0	-	13.7	5,477
Caravan / Park Home	0.0	0.3	-	-	-	0.3	124
Other	0.3	-	0.2	-	-	0.4	177
Total	10.0	31.4	42.2	12.7	3.7	100.0	-
Base	3,995	12,538	16,868	5,062	1,469	-	39,932

- 9.4 The Tees Valley Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) provided an analysis of housing supply and demand in the Borough, and illustrated a future

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need and demand for all types of housing with an acute need and demand for larger dwellings, detached dwellings and bungalows. Table 3 below, taken from the SHMA, helps to identify the need by type and area of the Borough. This information needs to be taken into account when assessing applications for housing and when allocating sites to meet the identified demand over the plan period.

Table 3 – Household Need by Type and Area (Data from TVSHMA)

Category		Inner Suburbs	Outer Suburbs	Rural	Town Centre	Hartlepool Borough
Tenure	Owner Occupied	Demand	Demand	Balanced	High Demand	Demand
	Private Rented	Balanced	Balanced	Balanced	Balanced	Balanced
Property Size	One	Balanced	Over supply	Balanced	Over supply	Balanced
	Two	Balanced	Balanced	Balanced	Balanced	Balanced
	Three	Demand	Demand	Balanced	Demand	Demand
	Four or more	Demand	Demand	Balanced	Balanced	Demand
Property Type	Detached	High Demand	Demand	Balanced	High Demand	High Demand
	Semi	Demand	Balanced	Balanced	Demand	Balanced
	Terraced	Balanced	High Demand	Over supply	Balanced	Balanced
	Flat	Demand	Over supply	Balanced	Balanced	Balanced
	Bungalow	High Demand	High Demand	Balanced	High Demand	High Demand

- 9.5 The provision and retention of bungalows and methods to prevent the oversupply of flats/apartments in the Borough is an issue which needs consideration within the Local Plan. Levels of resident dissatisfaction revealed by survey work for the SHMA were linked to age and property type and private renters were most dissatisfied with state of repair of their properties. Addressing the problems caused by the private rented sector would contribute significantly to the development of community cohesion. There is an increasing need for support and appropriate housing for vulnerable people with demographic change and an ageing population.
- 9.6 The challenge lies in supplying the right type of accommodation to meet aspirations within the established communities of Hartlepool in a sustainable way, but to provide sustainable communities, there needs to be a range of type and location of dwellings to meet the aspirations of all socio-economic groups. Hartlepool has a lower proportion of the higher socio-economic groups than nationally, and conversely a higher proportion of the lower socio-economic groups. There is therefore a need to ensure that there is provision for the development of a range of high cost housing including low density detached dwellings, to encourage the

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retention within Hartlepool of that section of the population who are most mobile, and to encourage some in-migration.

- 9.7 The villages in Hartlepool generally offer a range of housing, but are becoming less sustainable with the loss of local services and are, in the main, served by relatively poor and infrequent public transport services which have been reduced in recent years where the operators did not see them as profitable. An option would be to allow some expansion in these villages. This raises issues of loss of countryside and the increase of commuting that may not be the most sustainable option available.
- 9.8 In terms of need for pitches for Gypsies and Travellers and plots for Travelling Showpeople the previous evidence from 2009 which identified a need for 6-10 pitches is now considered out of date and a new study is currently being undertaken by consultants to assess the current need and refresh the evidence base. The study is due to be completed in June and if it identifies a need there will be a requirement on the Local Authority to provide a sustainable site to meet this need.

What could our options be?

- Let the market decide the type of housing provided
- Encourage the provision of family housing and bungalows
- Facilitate the provision of more high cost low density dwellings
- Control the number of apartments/flats built within the town
- Allocate sites for supported housing or require some residential properties to have the ability to be adapted in the future
- Expand all villages for housing
- Expand selected villages
- Continue with further housing market renewal initiatives when the current schemes are complete
- Don't clear further housing on completion of current HMR schemes

Questions

34. Do you think the Council should address the issue of overprovision of flats, apartments and terraced properties?
35. Should we encourage the provision of bungalows and family homes?
36. Should we enable the provision of more high cost low density dwellings?
37. Do you think that allowing more housing in villages will protect existing services?
38. Will continuing housing market renewal schemes have a positive impact on the housing offer in Hartlepool?

Issue 10: How can we provide affordable homes for local residents?

- 9.9 The recent Tees Valley Strategic Housing Market Assessment highlighted the growing issue of a shortfall in affordable housing provision across the Borough, highlighting a need to provide 89 new affordable homes each year. This equates to a need of 27.5% each year based on an overall provision across the Local Plan period of 320 net new dwellings per annum. Of this affordable homes requirement the TVSHMA suggests that 70% should be social rented or affordable rent and 30%

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intermediate tenure. Stock condition and housing aspirations of Hartlepool residents were also considered within the study to provide a housing need and aspiration assessment.

- 9.10 The provision of special needs housing, providing for those people with an illness or disability, is also an issue for Hartlepool. If we wish to secure more affordable and special needs housing, sites could be allocated and an affordable housing target set to ensure new private developments assist in such provision. A mixture of market and affordable housing might be appropriate to create mixed and sustainable communities. Access to good quality housing is a key element of the Community Strategy housing theme.

What could our options be?

- Do not set a requirement for affordable housing on new developments
- Set a requirement of 27.5% of affordable housing (subject to viability) on all new housing developments as suggested in the recent Strategic Housing Market Assessment
- Set a lower affordable housing requirement for new housing developments
- Designate sites for affordable housing provision

Questions

39. Do you think that affordable housing is an essential element of a sustainable community?
40. What part of the town do you feel would benefit most from affordable housing?
41. Should developers be required to provide any affordable housing on all new developments?
42. Should the Council be looking for specific sites for affordable housing or should it be integrated into new developments?

Issue 11: How can we provide safe and accessible open space and facilities?

- 9.11 Open space forms an integral part of the urban fabric and contributes greatly to quality of life and desirable place to live and a more sustainable community. Providing the appropriate leisure and recreation facilities and sufficient open space contributes greatly to developing healthier lifestyles for Hartlepool residents, greater access to this open space and facilities can improve usage and quality of life. Provision of open space and recreation and leisure facilities are key elements within the Community Strategy Health and Wellbeing, Environment and Culture and Leisure themes. Open spaces and sport and recreation also span two of the Local

Plan themes; Developing a Sustainable Community and Enhancing the Environment.

- 9.12 The Green Network in Hartlepool is made up of wildlife sites, land for recreational and leisure use and other 'green' areas including open space, cemeteries, parks etc. The recently adopted Green Infrastructure Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) provides a comprehensive summary of the green network within Hartlepool. The provision of outdoor playing space within new developments and the retention and protection of green space in existing developments is an issue within Hartlepool as the need for housing sites grows, if green space is provided

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within/near housing it reduces the need for the private car therefore benefiting the environment. Protecting open space including areas such as allotments within Hartlepool to provide sustainable communities is also an important issue for the town as green areas remain an important environmental benefit for Hartlepool but have come under increasing pressure from development in recent years. It will be vital that the Local Plan provides a set of policies which can be used to robustly defend these important sites from development where possible.

- 9.13 Attention needs to be given to the development of local facilities in sustainable locations and specifically an increase in youth provision in areas of need. An open space assessment of Hartlepool is in the progress of being refreshed and will be used to inform the development of open space policies within the Local Plan. It will identify any deficiencies or surpluses in provision of open space within the town and provide a comprehensive assessment of the Borough's open space by addressing accessibility, quality and quantity. Supporting the delivery and provision of accessible recreational and leisure facilities can increase social cohesion and promote healthier lifestyles in the town.

What could our options be?

- To strengthen the policies designed to protect open space within the Borough
- To decide on the future of open space dependent on need within the locality
- To introduce a requirement for the provision of open space within new developments
- Identify new sites for recreation and leisure facilities where needed

Questions

43. Should open space be provided in new developments or should developer contributions be used to improve nearby open spaces or should a developer do both?
44. Should areas with overprovision of open space have some areas allocated for other uses?
45. Should sites such as allotments be retained as a way of developing sustainable communities?
46. Are there areas of the town in which you believe new open space sites are needed?

Issue 12: How can we provide appropriate local and rural services?

- 9.14 The provision of local services and facilities within the main urban area and the maintenance and retention of rural services are essential elements in the development of sustainable communities and are key issues for Hartlepool. Providing facilities close to homes reduces the need to travel by private car and creates more desirable and socially inclusive neighbourhoods.
- 9.15 Local centres include a range of small shops of a local nature, serving a small catchment. Typically, local centres might include, amongst others, shops, a small supermarket, a newsagent, a sub-post office and a pharmacy. Other facilities could include a hot-food takeaway, bookmakers or vets surgeries.

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- 9.16 The boundaries of allocated local centres were recently reviewed and updated to reflect their changing nature and the possible need for new services. Appropriate uses for these local centres is also a growing issue for Hartlepool with increasing numbers of planning applications for hot food takeaways being submitted for these local centres and for the town centre. The location of hot food takeaways and their number could be a factor in obesity levels in Hartlepool, creating the right balance and providing the right mix of services is an essential element for a sustainable community and a concentration of one particular use within these local centres does not provide the range of choice local to meet local aspirations. A visually pleasing and safe shopping environment is also important to ensure that these local centres remain economically viable.
- 9.17 New services and the allocation of new local centres may be required for future developments and it is important that these services are provided early on in development to provide facilities for newly arriving residents. Maintaining services within Hartlepool's villages to provide for local residents is also a growing issue; protection of these local services reduces reliance on the private car and their retention is particularly important for residents without access to a car. Wynyard Village and the lack of services in this area is also an issue which needs to be addressed should further development be proposed in that location. Allowing further development associated with services could contribute to the development of a more sustainable community and reduce private car use. However assessing the impact this may have on the town centre of Hartlepool will also be an important consideration.

What could our options be?

- Continue to protect the allocated local centres and retain the current boundaries
- Revisit the local centre boundaries and potentially allocate new local centres where necessary
- Set a limit for the number of hot food takeaways within local centres
- Look at the Health of the Borough particularly relating to the proximity of hot food takeaways to school
- Stipulate the development of a local centre at Wynyard if more homes are proposed
- Include a policy to protect essential rural services such as schools and play areas in the villages

Questions

47. Do you think that defining local centres is a good way to encourage the provision and protection of local services and are there any areas which would benefit from the allocation of a new local centre?
48. How can a Local Plan protect vital rural services?
49. Do you think limiting the number of hot food takeaways and their location could help tackle obesity in relation?
50. Do you think controlling the uses within local centres would help to provide the appropriate mix of facilities for local residents, avoiding the proliferation of a particular use?

10. ENHANCING THE ENVIRONMENT**Issue 13: How should we protect and improve the Borough's natural, rural, and built environment?**

- 10.1 While Hartlepool has a distinctive compact urban area, the Borough also includes attractive countryside and coastline, which has significant nature conservation and wildlife interest and importance. The natural and built environment make important contributions to quality of life issues. Hartlepool has developed primarily because of its coastal location. Much of the coastline is important for its wildlife interest, but it is also an important asset in terms of providing opportunities for recreation and tourism. Hartlepool has wildlife sites of importance ranging from international to locally important designations.
- 10.2 Part of the Tees estuary and much of the coastline of Hartlepool are designated as Special Protection Areas and Ramsar sites, which are of international importance. Hartlepool has eight nationally important sites or Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) located within the Borough and four located partially within the Borough. Currently there are 46 Local Wildlife Sites of which 6 are also Local Nature Reserves. There are also six Local Geological Sites within the Borough.
- 10.3 Previous development plans for Hartlepool recognised the key role that open space plays in encouraging biodiversity and in the economic and social well being of the town. This has led to the development of "The Green Network" which is made up of wildlife sites, recreation and leisure spaces and other green areas including amenity open space, cemeteries and churchyards and the coast margins together with the links between them. The Local Development Framework for Hartlepool continues to recognise the importance that the green network plays in the health of the Borough both in environmental, social and economic terms and again this is detailed in the Green Infrastructure SPD and Action Plan which was adopted in 2014.
- 10.4 A key component of the Green Network are the Green Wedges at How Beck Middle Warren, Summerhill/Burn Valley and Owton Manor which extend from the open countryside to the heart of the town. They provide convenient and extensive amenity open space and easy access to the countryside. The green wedges offer major opportunities for improving the overall environment of Hartlepool, for providing recreational, sporting and leisure uses and also for creating valuable links to wildlife.
- 10.5 Tourism and heritage have become very important to Hartlepool's economy and the Borough has substantial historic assets. There are eight conservation areas across the Borough, designated because of their special architectural or historic interest, the character and appearance of which is desirable to preserve and enhance. While a high standard of design is expected in conservation areas that seeks to enhance their character, this does not mean that no changes are permitted. However it does mean that great care will be taken to ensure that unsympathetic design and incompatible changes of use should not occur.
- 10.6 Hartlepool also has 200 buildings or structures, which are listed as being of historic interest. In recent years, Hartlepool has been successful in encouraging and supporting the restoration and re-use of many listed buildings across the Borough. Nevertheless, many listed buildings are not currently used for the purpose for which they were designed and it is important that new acceptable uses are found to bring

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them back into use. Currently there are around 15 Listed Buildings at risk in the Borough. Finding a positive solution to these listed buildings at risk and preventing more falling into being at risk is a key issue.

- 10.7 Within the Borough there are many high quality and attractive historic buildings which should be preserved but which are currently unlisted and therefore have no statutory protection. It is important that these are protected as they emphasise local character and sense of place.

What could our options be?

- Actively look to enhance our wildlife sites
- Expand the Green Network to include new areas
- Allow limited development in the Green Network
- Identify further green wedges in line with new housing proposals
- Reduce the extent of the existing green wedges to accommodate new development
- Strengthen the policies designed to protect and enhance the Borough's Conservation Areas
- Assess whether any new areas should be designated as conservation areas
- Give weight to the protection of buildings of local importance

Questions

51. What do you feel are the natural assets of the Borough?
52. What parts of the Borough's environment do you feel are most important for the quality of life of its residents?
53. Are there areas of the countryside that need consideration for improvement?
54. Are our conservation areas adequately protected?
55. Is there scope for enhancing our Conservation Areas?
56. Are there any parts of the Borough that should be designated as conservation areas?

Issue 14: How can we create a safe, attractive, accessible and well-designed environment?

- 10.8 There are parts of the built environment that in the past where poorly designed and over time this has failed to add to the urban quality of the Borough. The LDF for Hartlepool should seek to raise the overall standard of design for new development across the Borough. It is important that general design is improved, not just of buildings, but also other features such as landscaping and open space as good design not only includes the physical appearance of buildings and spaces but also how development integrates with its surroundings and addresses accessibility.
- 10.9 High quality design can help improve the image of specific areas as well as the image of the Borough as a whole. Good design used in the right way contributes to reducing crime and the fear of crime and supports inclusive and sustainable communities, particularly in terms of accessibility.
- 10.10 Hartlepool has a number of large disused buildings and abandoned sites most in prominent locations and in a poor state of repair. These buildings are becoming a problem in many ways to the ambitions of Hartlepool, but in particular they create a poor image of the Borough. It is important to the regeneration of the urban fabric of Hartlepool that solutions are found to these sites and buildings. This could involve alternative uses of buildings and sites or demolition and re-use. The Council has existing powers that can be used to compulsory purchase land and buildings in order to achieve the proper planning of the area.

What could our options be?

- Provide design related policies for new development to ensure a sense of place
- Consider higher aspirations for the quality of our built environment
- Focus on tackling disused buildings and abandoned sites possibly through use of Compulsory Purchase Powers or other mechanisms

Questions

57. How important do you feel it is that policies set high standards in terms of design for new development?
58. What should we do to improve the image of Hartlepool through design?
59. Should public money be invested into tackling the problems of privately owned buildings which are detracting from the image of certain parts of the town?

Issue 15: How can development be delivered in such a way that makes the best use of natural resources and helps minimise climate change?

- 10.11 Globally, climate change and its environmental consequences is the most important environmental concern. The major effects of climate change stem from a rise in temperature and resultant sea level rise. It is predicted that with the unprecedented levels of economic growth taking place around the world, particularly in developing countries such as India, this trend will continue.
- 10.12 Attention needs to be given to the implications of climate locally and given Hartlepool's coastal location this could involve the increase in the potential of

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flooding. It is critical that new development and its location and use type takes account of potential future flood risk.

- 10.13 Hartlepool Borough Council and the other Tees Valley Authorities produced a joint Tees Valley Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) in February 2007. A second SFRA for Hartlepool was concluded in 2010. It is a planning tool that enables the councils to select and develop sustainable locations away from flood risk areas and will assist in making the spatial planning decisions.
- 10.14 The Local Development Framework can help ensure the use and development of land which contributes at the local level to reducing the carbon footprint of new development and minimising the effects of climate change. The design, siting and the materials used in the construction of new buildings affects its energy efficiency and impact on climate change issues. It will be important to include a policy which helps to address these issues.
- 10.15 Hartlepool still has areas of vacant land and buildings that have been developed before but which has in some cases been abandoned. This land known as brownfield land can be used in more productive ways and offer potential to boost the economy as well as improving the overall environment of the Borough. Sometimes such brownfield land can be more species rich than farmed land or general open space and can be used for nature conservation purposes. However, some of these brownfield areas present a poor image of the Borough and can be a focus for anti-social behaviour and crime. In line with the principles of sustainable development promoted by the NPPF, the Local Plan should promote the re-use of brownfield land in Hartlepool which can provide opportunities for new housing, business and retail opportunities as well as for open space, nature conservation and leisure provision.

What could our options be?

- To embed within Policy the need to provide a proportion of renewable energy generation on new development
- To embed within policy the need to provide energy efficient buildings above and beyond what is required by Building Regulations
- To locate less vulnerable types of development to areas of higher flood risk
- To locate only water compatible development to areas of higher flood risk
- Continue to permit redevelopment of vacant land that becomes available
- Use of brownfield land for uses other than for built development

Questions

- 60.** How can the planning of Hartlepool minimise the risk of climate change and how can any impacts be mitigated against?
- 61.** Are there any other issues on how climate change will affect Hartlepool?

11. IMPROVING CONNECTIVITY

Issue 16: How can we improve the road network within Hartlepool?

- 11.1 Historically Hartlepool's road network has been seen as a major positive for the town. Not only does the town have very good links out to the A19 and the A1 (via the A689), Hartlepool also benefits from a dual carriageway that runs through the majority of the town which is a major benefit to the town's economy. The road network is however getting more congested and we need to consider ways of addressing this. The benefit of having a dual carriageway through the town centre however also creates a number of issues, in particular for pedestrians and the way the road cuts off the town centre from the Marina, Church Street and the public transport interchange. One of the key challenges over the coming years will be finding an effective way of overcoming this issue.
- 11.2 One sustainable way of addressing congestion in the central areas would be to develop park and ride facilities at key locations. Through encouraging people to leave their cars at park and ride hubs and to complete their journeys on foot, cycles or public transport we will be able to reduce congestion especially in the central area. One way to encourage people to use park and ride facilities would be to look at limiting car parking provision in the town centre but another way would be through the creation of more pedestrian and cycle links which people felt safe to use and which would deliver health benefits as well.
- 11.3 One other idea that may help to relieve traffic congestion on the roads in Hartlepool would be the creation of a western bypass which would run along the western fringe of the town between the A689 in the south and the A179, delivered in line with the development of greenfield sites on the to the west of the current urban area.
- 11.4 The wider use of Travel Plans could also help to reduce road congestion. A Travel Plan is an action plan to encourage alternative and more sustainable modes of transport to be used for commuting, schools journeys and business trips. These may include travel by bus, rail, bicycle, motorcycle, walking or car sharing. The current Hartlepool Local Plan includes a policy requiring the preparation of Travel Plans to accompany proposals for major developments.
- 11.5 For many years now there has been a desire to create another Tees Crossing. Depending on the location of such a crossing, this could benefit the town if it results in a more direct route in particular to Teesport and the rest of Middlesbrough and Redcar and Cleveland and it could help to reduce congestion on the A689 southwards out of the town and critically could take traffic away from the A19 which suffers from serious congestion at times. However the likelihood of delivery will have to be carefully considered as all policies in the Local Plan should be deliverable within the 15 year plan period.

What could our options be?

- To develop park and ride facilities at key points within the town to help reduce congestion within the town centre
- Reduce car parking provision in the town centre to encourage use of more sustainable forms of transport and to help reduce congestion
- To build a western bypass to ease congestion on the roads within the town
- Greater use of Travel Plans to achieve more sustainable transport movements

Questions

62. Should Park and Ride facilities be developed, and if so what would be the most suitable locations?
63. Should car parking levels in the town centre be reduced?
64. Do you feel the benefits a western bypass would bring to the road network would outweigh the environmental and other negative impacts that the development would have?
65. Should there be greater use of Travel Plans?

Issue 17: What should our priorities be in developing a Sustainable Transport Network?

- 11.6 One of the main aims of the Community Strategy is to improve the health of Hartlepool's population. Therefore one of our key aims is to support the delivery of a comprehensive network of cycleways/walkways throughout the Borough. The coastal route is one of the key links that has developed over a number of years however there are areas which still need to be created. Aspirational and upgradable routes will be highlighted on the Proposals Map. Improved cycle routes could link into Park and Ride facilities should they be developed and it will also be critical to the health of residents that improved countryside links are put in place to encourage walking and recreation within the countryside.
- 11.7 Rather than people parking and getting onto a bus, cycle facilities could be provided to encourage people to use a more sustainable method of travel and to help cut congestion in town centres. Locating park and ride facilities on existing bus routes will be important to make providing the facilities financially viable.
- 11.8 Within the Tees Valley there is a desire to deliver a Tees Valley Metro to give people the opportunity to travel more sustainably on a reliable and frequent system. This system would share track with existing heavy rail services but would need substantial investment especially in linked infrastructure. Re-instating rail halts at Greatham and Hart and opening a new halt at the Docks could all be possibilities that would benefit Hartlepool in developing a more sustainable and economically viable transport network.

What could our options be?

- Continue to develop the coastal walkway and promote the tourism benefits that stem from it
- Work with other Tees Valley authorities to deliver a Tees Valley Metro system, including the re-instatement of halts at Greatham, Hart and the Port
- Improve sustainable transport facilities across the Borough such as bus stops or cycle storage facilities

Questions

66. Do you feel the Authority should look to deliver the Tees Valley Metro idea to give people the opportunity to travel sustainably?
67. What areas of the town do you feel would benefit most from the construction of new cycle and walkways?
68. Are there any other methods of encouraging sustainable transport that the

Local Plan should cover?

Issue 18: How can access to the coast be improved?

- 11.9 The coast and the environment associated with it are one of Hartlepool's main assets which needs to be carefully managed to protect and enhance it. Along Hartlepool's coastline there are a number of environmental designations of national and international importance.
- 11.10 It is recognised however that the coast is also a key tourism sector within Hartlepool and that environmental protection and enhancement must work hand-in-hand with the delivery of an accessible tourism attraction. There are also benefits to the local community of having an accessible coastline such as encouraging healthier lifestyles (walking, cycling etc) and improving social cohesion. Another benefit of encouraging people to use the coastal areas are that it could help to cut down on illegal pursuits such as motorbikes on dunes which are currently an issue in certain areas along the coast.

What could our options be?

- Continue to develop Hartlepool's coastal areas, encouraging use as a tourist destination and as a way of encouraging healthier lifestyles and increasing social cohesion
- Develop specialised viewing points so residents and visitors can enjoy the benefits of the environmental designations along the coastline without damaging the environment
- Concentrate areas of access to the coast in areas where use will not damage environmentally sensitive areas

Questions

69. Along the coastline where do we need to improve linkages and access?
70. Do you feel that improved access in certain areas would help to discourage anti-social behaviour and illegal pursuits?
71. Should environmentally sensitive areas of the coastline be protected from over use by limiting access to them?

12. CONCLUSION

- 12.1 This Issues and Options paper sets out suggestions for a vision of how Hartlepool could develop by 2031. A number of objectives for delivering that vision have also been suggested.
- 12.2 The main part of the paper sets out a number of strategic issues which should be addressed to help to achieve the vision, and suggests some options for tackling them.

Questions

72. Are there any other key issues that should be addressed?
73. What are the options for tackling these?

APPENDIX 1

- 12.3 Issue 1 relates to the broad location and balance of future development in Hartlepool. Taking into account the other issues raised in this paper, where do you think most development should be concentrated?
- In the central area of the town;
 - In other areas of the town;
 - On greenfield land on the edge of the built-up area;
 - At Wynyard; and/or
 - Focussed on one or more of the villages.

Questions

74. Of the above locations, where do you consider most development should be in the future?
75. Are there any other areas that should be considered?

The Next Stages in the Preparation of the Local Plan

- 12.4 The Council will consider the comments put forward during the current consultation and these comments and the Council's responses to them will be made publicly available.
- 12.5 Then, taking account of the comments and any new issues or options raised, and in the context of a further sustainability appraisal report, the Council will determine its preferred options for the future development of the Borough. The Council will publish, at the beginning of 2015, a document setting out the preferred options. This document will also set out the different options considered during the preparation process and how and why the preferred options were arrived at.
- 12.6 The consultation to be carried out on the Preferred Options Report will present the last opportunity for you to influence the content of the Local Plan before a finalised Local Plan is submitted for public examination on its soundness.

REGENERATION SERVICES COMMITTEE

8th May 2014



Report of: Assistant Director (Regeneration)

Subject: UPDATE ON HARTLEPOOL YOUTH INVESTMENT PROJECT

1. TYPE OF DECISION/APPLICABLE CATEGORY

1.1 For information only.

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

2.1 The purpose of this report is to update members on the progress of the Hartlepool Youth Investment Project.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 The Hartlepool Youth Investment Project (HYIP) is the over-arching key strategic project in Hartlepool, which brings together all key partners such as schools, colleges, work-based learning providers, Jobcentre Plus, National Apprenticeship Service, voluntary sector and critically employers. The project commenced in September 2012 and will be delivered to September 2015. However, the project will extend beyond this time as it is now fully established and new targets will be set after this period.

4. AIM OF THE HARTLEPOOL YOUTH INVESTMENT PROJECT

4.1 The aim of this project is:

To improve the employability and entrepreneurial skills of young people so that they are prepared for the world of work and enterprise through improved collaborative working between schools, colleges, post-16 providers, universities and employers.

5. OBJECTIVES OF THE HARTLEPOOL YOUTH INVESTMENT PROJECT

- 5.1 The Hartlepool Youth Investment Project has adopted Hartlepool Economic Regeneration Strategy Objective 3 which complements this initiative as shown below:

To increase employment and skills levels and develop a competitive workforce that meets the demands of employers and the economy.

6. ACTIONS REQUIRED FOR FULL IMPLEMENTATION

- 6.1 There are 8 key actions that will need to be completed are shown below:

Action 1: Developing a curriculum offer for 14-16 year olds so that young people can access relevant vocational training programmes at Key Stage 4 (Including improved access to a Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) vocational training programme)

Action 2: Delivering work-related learning, including work experience for 14-16 year olds

Action 3: Developing a high quality internship and mentoring programme for 16-19 year olds who are studying vocational or non-vocational educational courses

Action 4: Ensuring all schools provide impartial Careers Education Information, Advice and Guidance (CEIAG) for all 14-16 year olds.

Action 5: Developing an enhanced pathway for 14-19 year olds who have been identified as at risk of becoming long term NEET or who are currently NEET

Action 6: Develop partnership working between Economic Regeneration Team, Jobcentre Plus, post-16 providers and National Apprenticeship Service (NAS) to increase engagement with employers to promote Apprenticeships, internships and work experience programmes.

Action 7: Raise awareness of self-employment and enterprise opportunities to all young people.

Action 8: Marketing of the project to all key partners.

7. TARGETS FOR THE PROJECT

- 7.1 The following targets have been set for the project.

- 1000 14-16 year olds will have access to vocational training

- 1000 14-16 year olds will have access to work-related learning, including work experience with local employers
- 500 16-18 year olds to have access to an internship with a local company who will provide mentoring support
- 200 young people identified as at risk of becoming long term NEET to have access to mentoring support and a re-engagement programme
- 500 local employers engaged to promote the project
- 150 16-24 year olds to enter into employment (with access to training).

8. CONTRIBUTION TO PERFORMANCE INDICATORS (PIs)

8.1 This project will directly contribute to a wide range of PIs outlined within the Hartlepool Economic Regeneration Strategy, such as:

- Reduce the percentage of 16 to 18 year olds who are NEET to 6.5% by 2014
- Employment rate (16-24). Increase the proportion of 16 to 24 year olds who are in employment to 46.5% by 2014
- Youth unemployment rate (Hartlepool). Reduce the proportion of economically active 18 to 24 year olds who are unemployed to 14.1% by 2014
- Raising the Participation Age for all 18 year olds by 2015.

9. PROGRESS TO DATE

9.1 Since the project commenced, there has been significant progress made. This includes:

- Successful launch of the project in September 2013 with over 80 partners attending. There was excellent media attention of this event including coverage from Hartlepool Mail, BBC Radio Tees and BBC Look North.
- There is now a dedicated Hartlepool Youth Guarantee Working Group who are responsible for monitoring the progress of the HYIP.
- The Youth Unemployment rate has reduced from 17% (1,405 young people) in September 2012 to 12.7% (1,050) in February 2014.

- Hartlepool now has the highest numbers of young people in post-16 learning in the North East and is placed 12th best in the Country for progressing school leavers.
- The Council has supported an additional 104 young people aged 16-24 year olds into employment and 299 into training.
- The Council's Going Forward Together NEET Project (2010-13) was successfully delivered and supported 372 young people at risk of becoming NEET, progressing 195 into training and 78 into employment. (Progression rate of 74%).
- The Council supported Stockton Borough Council to secure £2.1m of European Social Fund (ESF)/Skills Funding Agency (SFA) funding to support 1,022 (14-19 year olds) across Tees Valley who are NEET or at risk of becoming NEET. The Tees Valley YES project is now operational.
- The Council is heavily involved with the Tees Valley Jobs and Skills Investment Scheme where Tees Valley Unlimited has secured £7m of Regional Growth Funding to create 700 jobs in the next year. The Council has worked with employers and there are 199 proposed jobs for Hartlepool which are currently being processed.
- Delivery of the Choices (Careers) Events in October 2012 and 2013 which was attended by Year 10 and Year 11s linked with employers
- Supported the Tees Valley Skills Event in November 2013 at Hartlepool Dome which was targeted at young people and attended by schools, post-16 providers and employers.
- Securing over £3.5m of ESF/SFA funding to deliver the Tees Valley Workforce Skills project which will upskill over 3000 employed adults over the aged of 19 plus.
- The Council successfully delivered enterprise activity to 60 young people as part of National Youth Work Week in 2013.
- The Council is delivering on the 'Employer Core Offer' project which has brought together JCP, NAS, National Careers Service promote business support services, including advice on recruiting an apprentice. This group has been given a target of supporting 200 people into employment from April 2014 to March 2015.

10. PROGRESS AGAINST TARGETS

Outcome	Profiled Targets	Actual Delivery
14-16 year olds with access to vocational training	1000	1900
14-16 year olds with access to work-related learning	1000	233
16-18 year olds with access to an internship with a local company	500	270
Young people identified as at risk of becoming long term NEET to have access to a mentoring support programme	200	733
Local employers engaged to promote the project	500	226
16-24 year olds to enter into employment (with access to training)	150	104

11. FUTURE ACTIVITIES

11.1 There are ongoing activities to support young people including:

- A Youth Enterprise Event will be held on Friday 21st November 2014, coinciding with Global Entrepreneurship Week (Monday 17th and). The event will be targeted at groups of Year 10 pupils from each of the secondary schools to develop the key skills needed to become an entrepreneur or run your own business through interactive activities.
- Development of Work Based Enterprise Project in conjunction with secondary schools and employers, with the latter designing business projects for pupils to work on including research, marketing and product development.
- The Council secured €250,000 from European Commission to deliver the Hartlepool Youth Guarantee scheme which will provide an additional 30 hours mentoring support to 200 (Year 11 pupils) who have been identified as at risk of being NEET on leaving school. The aim is to support each young person to progress into post-16 activity by September 2014. The secondary schools will deliver this activity and will be supported by post-16 providers.
- The development of the Youth Exchange project in partnership with Hartlepool's twin town of Hückelhoven in Germany. A bid to the European Commission's Erasmus+ fund will be submitted by the end of April 2014 and if successful will see 60 young people (30 from Hartlepool and 30 from Hückelhoven) involved in a five day exchange scheme.

- The Council; in partnership with the other Tees Valley Local Authorities, Hartlepool College of Further Education and Heritage Craft Alliance will be delivering the Heritage Skills Apprenticeship Scheme which will see 40 young people employed for up to two years. The first 10 apprentices are due to start in May 2014.

12. FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES

12.1 It is worth highlighting that there is significant funding which has been allocated to the Tees Valley area including:

- £170m of European funding allocated to Tees Valley over the period 2014-2020.
- An additional £33m (including match) of Youth Employment Initiative funding.

13. DATA REVIEW

13.1 When reviewing the current dataset, it still reinforces that there are still key challenges as shown below:

- Hartlepool has the highest youth unemployment rate in England at 12.7% or 1,050 young people aged 18 to 24 years and the second highest rate in Great Britain, only behind Derry which has 14%.
- Hartlepool also has the highest level of long term (over 6 months) youth unemployment rate in England at 5% or 410 young people aged 18 to 24 years and the third highest rate in Great Britain only behind Derry at 6.1% and Strabane at 5.4% respectively.

14. IMPACT ON CHILD / FAMILY POVERTY

14.1 HYIP will positively contribute to ameliorating the longer term causes and consequences of child and family poverty by providing young people with access to provision that will enable them to reach their aspirational goals and become economically active.

14.2 The wider project objectives will also align young people and their families to additional support services, such as Think Families/Think Communities, Early Intervention Teams and FamilyWise programmes.

15. SECTION 17

15.1 This project will positively contribute to Section 17 by improving education and employment routeways for young people. This will include providing

early interventions to intensive support programmes for individuals who have been identified as high risk of offending.

16. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY CONSIDERATIONS

16.1 This project is aimed at supporting all young people to achieve their aspirational goals, help to narrow the education attainment gap and positively contribute to tackling employment inequality, particularly amongst vulnerable groups such as the seven priority groups shown below:

- Looked after children and care leavers
- Young offenders (including those leaving the secure estate)
- Teenage parents
- Young carers
- Young people with specific learning difficulties and/or disabilities (SLDD)
- Young people with mental health issues; and
- Young people with drug and alcohol misuse issues.

17. CONCLUSION

17.1 At a time when young people remain the most disadvantaged cohort within the labour market, the establishment of the HYIP can be seen as a major success for the Borough. Through a co-ordinated approach, the Council and its partners have managed to reduce the youth unemployment rate by 4.3% since the project commenced in September 2014.

17.2 There have already been substantial activities delivered through the HYIP which will help prepare young people for the world of work and move them into a positive outcome. As tackling youth unemployment is an ongoing process, the Council will continue to work with young people, partners and the business community (all of which are our greatest assets in successfully delivering the project).

18. RECOMMENDATION

18.1 The recommendation is for members to note the contents of this report.

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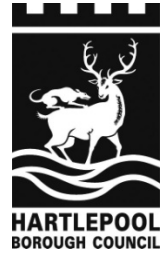
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REGENERATION SERVICES COMMITTEE

8TH MAY 2014



Report of: Assistant Director (Regeneration)

Subject: ECONOMIC REGENERATION QUARTERLY UPDATE

1. TYPE OF DECISION/APPLICABLE CATEGORY

1.1 For Information Only.

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

2.1 To update Members on the work of the Economic Regeneration Team (ERT). Being the first quarterly report submitted to committee, the report covers a significant amount of additional background information.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 The ERT has responsibility for delivering services that help stimulate economic growth and job creation and at the same time assisting residents to take advantage of economic growth either through employment or business start up. The service works closely with a range of Council sections and external partners including Tees Valley Unlimited (TVU), Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) and Job Centre Plus (JCP) to ensure a joined up and coordinated approach, maximising benefit to businesses and clients within the town.

3.2 The Economic Regeneration Strategy (ERS) provides the framework for the service;

- The ERS vision is; Hartlepool will achieve its ambition of sustained, economic prosperity through major regeneration, driving business growth, increasing innovation, developing entrepreneurship and skills to make the area an attractive location to live, invest, work and visit.
- The ERS aim is: 'Develop a more enterprising, vigorous and diverse local economy that will attract new investment, enable local enterprises and entrepreneurs to be globally competitive and create more employment opportunities for local people'.

3.3 The ERS has 5 main objectives:

- To improve business growth and business infrastructure and enhance a culture of entrepreneurship
- To attract new investment and develop major programmes to regenerate the area and improve connectivity
- To increase employment and skills levels and develop a competitive workforce that meets the demands of employers and the economy
- To increase the economic inclusion of adults, tackle financial exclusion and reduce the proportion of children in poverty
- To boost the visitor economy.

3.4 The Team comprises the following sections, staff and budgets;

- **Business Support** – 7 staff including Enterprise Centre management and operational staff.
- **Tourism** – 1.8 ft staff.
- **Hartlepool Working Solutions (HWS)** – 5 core staff, 3 externally funded staff and 3 co-located from Child and Adults.
- Economic Regeneration core funding for 2014/15 totals £842,841 however there is £324,093 of sub regional funding for TVU and therefore controllable core net funding for the service is £518,748.

4. KEY ACTIVITIES

4.1 One of the key strengths of the ERT is the integration of services with Business Support and Tourism providing the demand stimulus and HWS providing the supply side. Maximum added value is achieved by linking activities and ensuring local residents are able to enter into economic participation and take advantage of economic growth either through employment or business start up and self employment.

4.2 The following sections set out in detail the key activities and achievements of the Team.

Overarching Activity

4.3 The service is responsible for the secretariat of the key jobs and economy strategic group, The Economic Regeneration Forum, which is a key method of engaging with the private sector and key public sector partners. In addition the service is responsible for the development of a range of assessments and strategies including the following;

- Hartlepool Economic Assessment
- Hartlepool's Economic Regeneration Strategy
- Hartlepool's Incubation Strategy

4.4 At the current time the service, in conjunction with the Regeneration Team, has been responsible for the delivery of the Hartlepool Vision and commissioning of the Master Plan. The launch of the Vision was particularly successful with over 150 businesses and 70 residents attending two consecutive events. The tender exercise for the Master Plan is underway and it is anticipated that the Master Plan will be completed December 2014/ January 2015 and this will set out a clear path to undertake major regeneration activity for the following years.

4.5 The service is also heavily engaged at a sub regional level and has contributed to the following strategies;

- Tees Valley Statement of Ambition
- City Deal
- Tees Valley Strategic Economic Plan
- European Structural Investment Framework (ESIFS)
- Sector Development Plans
- Skills Development Plans.

4.6 At a more local level the service contributes to a range of strategies and plans including the following;

- Hartlepool Local Plan and specifically the employment land review
- Assisting VCS sector to develop strategies
- Contribute to the development of the Child Poverty Strategy, Think Families/Think Communities
- Early Intervention Strategy
- 11-19 Strategy.

4.7 A number of staff are members of Tees Valley sub regional groups ensuring Hartlepool's priorities are recognised and responded to and includes the following;

- Economic Development Group
- Employment, Learning and Skills Group
- ESIFS Working Groups
- Business Accommodation and Infrastructure
- Enterprise Zone Working Groups
- Broadband Working Group
- Tees Valley Business Growth Hub Steering Group.

Business Support

4.8 The main aims of the Business Support Team are to increase business start up rates, stimulate SME growth, inward investment and the delivery of business infrastructure.

- 4.9 Hartlepool's Incubation Strategy, whilst published in 2003 remains a valid framework and has informed the development of services. The strategy was produced in response to changing patterns of internationally mobile investment, recognising that the Town's economy was in need of diversification and indigenous business start up rates and business stock were low.
- 4.10 One of the key recommendations was the establishment of an overarching business support network, providing support that was specifically identified by the business community as key barriers to business start up and growth.
- 4.11 Business Support offers a wide range of interventions for individual clients but also offers seminars and events for groups. A range of services are provided to pre starts, starts, existing businesses and potential inward investors that are noted below;
- Mentoring
 - Business planning support
 - Financial and marketing advice
 - Financial assistance
 - Workshops and seminars on key business issues
 - Facilitate support from partner organisations such as UKTI and the Manufacturing Advisory Service, local universities and colleges
 - Provision of business accommodation at HEC and NBIE. Recent HEC initiatives include the creation of a creative industries cluster utilising the former caretaker house and adjacent external units
 - Property finding service
 - Assistance with planning and other statutory bodies
 - HR and employment law support. The Work Smart initiative offers a range of HR and employment law support to organisations of all sizes. This includes support tailored to help them deal with specific issues and seminars ensuring that organisations are kept up to date with employment legislation and current human resources issues. Many organisations have also benefited from in-house training for their managers and supervisors to develop their skills and knowledge in getting the best from their workforce. The service also generates income to support revenue costs.
 - Management of the Longhill/Sandgate Business Improvement District, into a successful second term and was the first BIDS on an industrial estate in the north of the UK
 - Working with partners to promote enterprise opportunities.
- 4.12 The Business Support Team has supported the Leapfrog project, which is an enterprise and employability programme being operated by Amacus. Support is available for individuals in receipt of benefits. Results to date are:
- No of Participants: 455
 - No of Jobs Created: 109
 - No of New Businesses: 15

- 4.13 The Council is about to partner with Amacus and Cleveland College of Art and Design in an enterprise course aimed at individuals currently in employment, which will start towards the end of April and run over 12 weeks. At the present time in excess of 30 people have signed up for the course.
- 4.14 The Business Support Team is also the main contact for the sub regional Digital City Business project. This project is aimed at developing a digital cluster, although in Hartlepool, in response to the Vision and Masterplan there is an agreement that this will extend to focus on digital creative businesses. In addition the project will seek to help businesses in other sectors to digitise their businesses.
- 4.15 The team is also increasingly working with the export elements of UK Trade and Investment. A formal dinner was held on 7th October 2013 in partnership with Iain Wright for Lord Green, Minister of State for Trade and Investment, including a number of exporters. This is being followed up with joint events in April and June 2014 focusing on overseas markets and access to finance.
- 4.16 Whilst the levels of business start ups, noted in the table below, have been encouraging with Hartlepool being consistently above the north east rate, performance is 70% of the GB rate and further improvement in startup rates is needed.

Area	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Hartlepool	32	36	40	49	36	32	29	38	35
Tees Valley	34	35	33	45	38	32	29	36	34
North East	37	37	34	42	36	31	28	33	33
Great Britain	59	57	52	57	54	48	47	52	50

- 4.17 Business stock levels have shown an improvement since 2009 with 18 per 10,000 head of population increase. All other locations except Stockton have experienced reductions in business stock levels over the same period. In addition the business survival rates in Hartlepool compare favourably with other areas and for instance 5 year survival rate at 47.1% is above GB rate of 44.6%, North East at 43.7% and Tees Valley at 45.6%.
- 4.18 Whilst satisfactory progress has been made, it is essential that Hartlepool continues to drive up enterprise rates to develop further resilience in the local economy and to create further demand for direct and indirect jobs. Currently, based on employment rates Hartlepool needs a further 1,800 jobs to meet the Tees Valley rate, 3,000 additional jobs to meet the north east rate and 5,000 additional jobs to meet the GB employment rate. Whilst it is hoped a significant level of new jobs can be created in the local economy over time it is likely that some of these jobs will be available in travel to work areas.
- 4.19 Business Support provides services to attract inward investors and whilst the market is not as active as previous years, opportunities still exist and

some success has been achieved at Queens Meadow, both pre and post Enterprise Zone status and are noted in the following sections.

- 4.20 Business Support is also responsible for the delivery of business infrastructure Projects and has been successful in a range of activities that are noted below;
- Establishment of the Tees Valley Enterprise Zone with Hartlepool, achieving 33% of the Tees Valley land allocation for Queens Meadow, the Port Estate and Oakesway.
 - Delivery of UKSE's 47,000 sq ft high quality managed workspace at Queens Meadow with a total investment of over £10m
 - Delivery of 40,000 sq ft move on accommodation at the Rivergreen development with a total investment of around £6.8m
 - Successful application for an interest free loan via Growing Places for the purchase of Jacksons Landing.
- 4.23 Some level of success has been achieved at Queens Meadow with 8 projects delivered, creating 93 jobs with private sector leverage of £1.56m. The estate will also be the first Enterprise Zone area in the Tees Valley to be enabled with super fast fibre broadband. Queens Meadow is currently the most successful Enterprise Zone in Tees Valley in terms of number of projects delivered. In addition the Port has seen an investment by TWI to service the Redcar Offshore Wind Farm and will create around 20 jobs.
- 4.21 Whilst opportunities for securing external funding within the business support field are somewhat limited the service has been particularly successful in gaining 2 tranches of ERDF to underpin key business support activities. Since 2008 £800,000 of funding has been attracted to deliver a range of key business support activities. The funding runs to June 2015.
- 4.22 The service also assists local companies and organisations to secure financial assistance and for example supported and assisted Huntsman to secure an RGF grant, safeguarding up to 700 jobs. In addition the service has assisted UKSE and Rivergreen to secure Single Programme Gap funding for the Innovation Centre and the Rivergreen development at Queens Meadow, with a total investment of over £16m.
- 4.23 More latterly Business Support has offered consultancy services and has been contracted to develop RGF and ERDF bids. Income is being generated with £6,000 being eamed in the last 4 months.
- 4.24 In terms of performance Business Support has delivered the following grant outputs from April 2013 to September 2013;

- Job Creation: 44 ft jobs
- Jobs Safeguarded: 8 ft jobs
- Business Start Ups assisted: 29
- Private sector leverage: £151,828
- Empty shops brought back into use: 8
- Number of grant awards: 37
- Total value of grant awards: £40,922
- Leverage ratio: 1:3.7

4.25 In addition the outputs for the service are noted below for the financial year 2012/2013;

- Number of Businesses Assisted: 1,007
- Number of jobs created: 262
- Number of business start ups assisted: 88

Tourism

4.26 Hartlepool has developed a significant visitor economy which is currently worth around £131m pa and supports 1,900 (FTE) jobs, source STEAM 2011. Notable attractions include HME, the Marina, Headland and Seaton Carew.

4.27 The Tourism Team provide specialist sectoral business support, largely supporting SME growth. The following activities form the bulk of the work of the Team;

- Co-ordination of two key network groups: Hartlepool Passport Group and Hartlepool Hotels Group
- Delivery of Welcome to Excellence training programmes
- Creation and delivery of My Tees Valley / My Hartlepool training programmes
- Delivery of Familiarisation visits to Hartlepool and Tees Valley by Group Travel Operators
- Promoting the visitor economy to students for business and employment opportunities
- Marketing advice particularly related to e-marketing and online trading.

4.28 The section also has responsibility for business and tourism marketing, promoting the Town to business investors and visitors. The service has moved significantly towards an e-marketing platform with significant investment in the destinationhartlepool.com and investinhartlepool.com websites. The ability for self-authoring has meant that the sites are maintained on an ongoing basis and costs have been reduced. There have been 75,000 unique hits in the preceding 12 months. E-newsletters are issued on a weekly basis to 6,000+ subscribers promoting events and timely offers at attractions, eateries and venues in Hartlepool. Hartlepool businesses are also contacted on a monthly basis with a new business e-newsletter.

- 4.29 More recently the service has developed social media for marketing purposes as noted below;
- Twitter @dest_hartlepool 803 followers
 - Facebook Eat in Hartlepool 337 likes
 - Church Square Presents 310 likes
 - Youtube Channel HartlepoolVision 5k+views.
- 4.30 The section also develops and implements a range of joint marketing initiatives with local businesses. Two noteworthy examples are listed below;
- EAT Initiative – Developed with the local restaurant trade the initiative has been highly successful and is in its 8th year. Supported by paid advertising, 25,000 EAT brochures are printed and disseminated to a targeted market within the North East. In addition a facebook campaign supports the initiative and it is actively marketed on the website.
 - Golf Week- Developed with Redcar and Cleveland Council and local golf courses, Hartlepool has led on the initiative. The programme offers short break golf holidays where golfers book a range of golf courses and compete to win a range of competition prizes. 300+ golfers take part with over 75% coming from outside of the area and booking local hotel accommodation. The programme runs at a slight profit for the Council.
- 4.31 Tourism, in conjunction with the Regeneration Team has also led on the development of the Vision brochure, DVD and the delivery of the Vision launch event held in January 2014, which attracted record numbers of delegates. At the same time Tourism works closely with other Council sections to help deliver a range of activities such as the twice-yearly Hartlepool Town Hall Theatre and Cinema Guide and the delivery of the High Street Innovation fund Church Square Presents programme of events.

Hartlepool Working Solutions (HWS)

- 4.32 HWS originally evolved from work that Economic Regeneration led on for City Challenge. The original aim, which holds true to date is ensuring local residents were able to access employment related to major construction projects and general economic growth.
- 4.33 HWS has evolved over time and provides a broad range of interventions to support disadvantaged residents to become economically active but also supports businesses on recruitment and redundancy scenarios. At the same time HWS has forged strong links with Child and Adults to develop joint initiatives particularly relating to young people and vulnerable adults. Key activities are noted in the following sections.

Hartlepool Youth Investment Project

- 4.34 The Hartlepool Youth Investment Project (HYIP) was successfully launched in September 2013 with approximately 80 attendees from key partners such as schools, colleges, JCP and critically employers. There is now an

established Working Group consisting of partners from the public, private and third sector who are responsible for ensuring the project is delivered on time.

- 4.35 To date the HYIP has supported an additional 104 young people aged 16-24 year olds into employment and 299 into training. Since the project started the Youth Unemployment rate has reduced from 17% (1,405 young people) in September 2012 to 12.7% (1,050) in February 2014.

ESF Families with Multiple Problems (FamilyWise)

- 4.36 The aim of the programme is to tackle entrenched worklessness by progressing multi-generational families and family members with multiple problems closer to the labour market.
- 4.37 The project started in December 2011 and is due to finish in December 2014 with the Wise Group managing the programme in the North East region. HWS is a sub-contractor delivering 50% of the Hartlepool activity. Currently, 341 customers have started in on the programme with 82 completing a progress measure and 97 progressing into employment. The project is the best performing in the North East in terms of employment outcomes, achieving a 20% success rate. This compares favourably with Work Programme Providers who average around a 3 to 4% success rate.

Employer Core Offer

- 4.38 Since April 2012, HWS, National Apprenticeship Service and Jobcentre Plus have been working closely together to provide a core offer of support to employers. Also, in January 2014 the National Careers Service joined the Core Offer Group.
- 4.39 Through this agreement, all the organisations undertake joint engagement to employers to advise companies on the services collectively available to support business growth. This includes inward investment, support with recruitment and access to grant funding. To measure the success of the Core Offer Group a target of supporting 200 young people to progress into employment has been agreed for each financial year starting in April 2014.

Employment Link Team (ELT)

- 4.40 Since 2009, HWS and ELT have worked increasingly closer to help adults with a disability to enter into education, employment or training. In April 2013, through a Service Level Agreement (SLA) the ELT was co-located within Economic Regeneration, enabling both teams to work formally together.
- 4.41 The integration of ELT with HWS has proven highly successful, with the number of adults with a learning disability / difficulty entering into employment or permitted work (NI 146) increasing by nearly 50% (to a total of 64 adults). In addition, since April 2013 the service has achieved the following outputs;

- Vulnerable adults have been supported: 143
- Progressed into training: 74
- Progressed into volunteering: 43
- Progressed into employment: 35

4.42 Over 17% of NI 146 clients who are known to the Council have now been supported into work or permitted earnings, which is nearly three times the national average for this cohort. Due to the success of this joint working, it has been agreed to extend the SLA for an additional year until March 2015.

European Commission Youth Guarantee

4.43 HWS in conjunction with Child and Adults has secured €250,000 from the European Commission to deliver the Hartlepool Youth Guarantee scheme. This will provide an additional 30 hours mentoring support to 200 (Year 11 pupils) who have been identified as at risk of being NEET on leaving school. The six secondary schools in the town will deliver the Youth Guarantee with the aim of supporting each of the 200 young people to progress into a positive destination by September 2014.

Youth Engagement & Support (YES) Project

4.44 HWS supported Stockton Borough Council to secure £2.1m of ESF/SFA funding to support 1,022 14-19 year olds across Tees Valley who are not in education, employment or training (NEET) or at risk of becoming NEET. The project started in December 2013 with HWS delivering the Hartlepool element with Stockton Borough Council as the accountable body.

4.45 In Hartlepool, the project has a target of supporting 79 young people by July 2015 with a particular focus on engaging young people from the Manor, Rift House and De Brus wards. Currently, 17 young people have started on the programme with all of them receiving tailored support to ensure they progress into education, employment or training.

Youth Contract

4.46 HWS secured sub contracting arrangements with Pertemps to deliver the Youth contract in Hartlepool. The aim of the project is to support 90 disengaged 16 to 17 year olds to move into education, training or employment with training by March 2016. To be eligible young people need to fit one of the following criteria;

- Not have achieved more than 1 GCSE grade A* - C
- Young offenders
- Care leavers
- Young people serving community sentences

4.47 The project started September 2013 and is, currently, 14 young people are on programme with three progressing onto a study programme and two progressing onto an apprenticeship

ESF Skills Support for the Workplace

- 4.48 This is a European Social Funded project which aims to support Small to Medium Enterprises (SME) across the Tees Valley by providing a comprehensive range of training to the company's employees who are aged 19 or over.
- 4.49 The project has five Business Co-ordinators one of which is based within each of the Local Authority ERT across Tees Valley. Their role is to promote the project to employers, checking the eligibility of the company and the type of training they require. There are also four Skills Co-ordinators who are based within the Adult Education team in Hartlepool and whose role it is to develop a bespoke package of training for the employer. All training is delivered by the Adult Education team, FE College or SFA contracted Organisation.
- 4.50 The Hartlepool Business Co-ordinator, who is placed within the ERT has contacted over 500 companies, successfully engaged with 110 and signed up 60 employers. The projected number of employees who will receive training is 950 against a target for Hartlepool of 500.

Supporting Community Groups

- 4.51 HWS continues to support community organisations to develop activities and are currently working with the Headland Carnival Committee to provide advice around areas such as marketing and access to external funding. In addition support has been given to Hart Gables to submit a large scale BIG Lottery Funding bid.

Tees Valley Jobs and Skills Investment Scheme

- 4.52 Tees Valley Unlimited secured £7m of Regional Growth Fund to create 700 jobs by June 2015. Through this project, employers can receive funding of 50% of salary costs for the first year to create a new job within a growth sector area (up to £11k). All jobs must last a minimum of two years. HWS has been proactively promoting this project to local businesses and to date companies have submitted applications to TVU to create 209 new jobs.
- 4.53 HWS is also responsible for the development of recruitment packages for businesses and offers a bespoke service including vacancy advertising, the identification of suitable candidates, pre recruitment training, production of job descriptions and assistance with interviews. The Business Support Team work closely with HWS on job creation through business start ups, SME growth and inward investment and all job opportunities are referred to HWS. The process is also supported by Worksmart, whereby businesses are assisted to develop appropriate employment frameworks and support includes developing HR processes, development of contracts of employment, policy and procedures etc. This joint work has been particularly successful as many small businesses are reluctant to recruit their first employee due to the perceived complexity of employment legislation. Worksmart demystifies and simplifies recruitment and removes this barrier to economic growth.

Hartlepool Works Employment & Skills Consortium

- 4.54 Officers from HWS are responsible for managing the Hartlepool Works Employment & Skills Consortium which has a membership of over 40 partners and providers across the Borough. The partners work within a set strategic framework which ensures that they develop collaborative and targeted interventions, with a specific focus on supporting priority groups or engaging adults from unemployment 'hotspot areas'. The Consortium meet on a regular basis to develop new ways of working to tackle economic inactivity including organising Jobs Fairs and employability programmes.

Sector Based Routeways and Apprenticeship Schemes

- 4.55 Through direct engagement with employers, HWS, in collaboration with key partners such as JCP, NAS, Working Links and Hartlepool College of Further Education have designed a wide range of sector based routeways and Apprenticeship programmes which meet the demands of the business community. Recent examples of successful joint initiatives include:
- Joint work with Merlin Flex-Ability who employed five long-term unemployed young people aged 18 – 24 years as trainee production operatives.
 - 21 Environmental Apprentices who were employed by HCFE Flagship Scheme and who were based within Neighbourhood Services. This project was financially supported by JCP and through Ward Members Budgets and a new Environmental Apprenticeship Scheme for 10 young people is due to commence in 2014/15.
 - 6 Apprentices employed by Vela Group in Fencing/Joinery positions.
 - The Tees Valley Heritage Skills Apprenticeship Scheme which has been designed in consultation with local businesses, which aims to create 40 apprenticeships within this sector. The first 12 apprentices are due to start with their parent company in May 2014.

Matrix Accreditation

- 4.56 Since 2008, ERT has been successful in securing Matrix Accreditation. The Matrix Standard is the unique quality standard for organisations to assess and measure their advice and support services, which ultimately supports individuals in their choice of career, learning, work and life goals. Securing the Matrix Standard is essential for the section as it informs partners of the high quality service offered to local people, businesses and partners and is also required when bidding for external funding sources, such as ESF. In addition, staff within the service either have/or are working towards Level 4 and or 6 in IAG.

4.57 The key outputs of HWS for 2012/2013 are noted below;

- Number of Residents Assisted into Employment: 101
- Number of Residents Assisted into Employment Long Term: 56
- Number of Residents Assisted into Employment Youth: 69
- Number of Residents Assisted into Training: 343
- Number of Residents Assisted into Training Long Term: 87
- Number of Residents Assisted into Training Youth: 137

4.58 The following tables provide detailed information on key indicator progress over the last two years. General performance has been satisfactory given the economic difficulties experienced since 2008. The employment rate has shown a better percentage increase than Tees Valley and the North East, however as noted in Section 4.20 a further 1,800 jobs are needed to meet the Tees Valley rate, 3,000 additional jobs to meet the north east rate and 5,000 additional jobs to meet the GB employment rate.

Unemployment Rate

Area	March 2012		February 2014		Change
	%	Number	%	Number	
Hartlepool	8.0	4,671	6.6	3,817	-854
Middlesbrough	8.5	7,621	6.7	5,999	-1,622
Stockton	5.9	7,320	4.8	5,916	-1,404
Darlington	5.7	3,770	4.5	2,933	-837
Redcar	7.0	5,854	5.3	4,430	-1,424
Tees Valley					
Tees Valley	6.9	29,236	5.5	23,095	-6,141
North East					
North East	5.7	95,257	4.4	73,800	-21,457
Great Britain					
Great Britain	4.0	1,604,509	3.0	1,184,157	-420,352

Long Term Unemployment Rate – Over 6 Months

Area	March 2012		February 2014		Change
	%	Number	%	Number	
Hartlepool	4.2	2,465	3.4	2,010	-455
Middlesbrough	4.5	3,995	3.5	3,105	-890
Stockton	2.7	3,345	2.4	3,005	-340
Darlington	2.5	1,670	1.9	1,275	-395
Redcar	3.7	3,105	2.7	2,290	-815
Tees Valley					
Tees Valley	3.5	14,580	2.8	11,680	-2,900
North East					
North East	2.7	44,885	2.1	35,225	-9,660
Great Britain					
Great Britain	1.7	689,950	1.3	509,085	-180,865

Employment Rate

Area	Dec 2011		Sept 2013		Change
	%	Number	%	Number	
Hartlepool	58.5	34,100	62.1	36,100	+2,000
Middlesbrough	55.7	52,200	58.3	55,300	+3,100
Stockton	70.4	86,900	71.1	87,600	+700
Darlington	67.8	42,900	71.0	44,600	+1,700
Redcar	60.9	52,100	63.8	53,500	+2,400
Tees Valley					
Tees Valley	63.2	268,300	65.5	277,100	+8,800
North East					
North East	65.0	1,100,200	66.2	1,123,200	+23,000
Great Britain					
Great Britain	70.1	27,335,900	71.2	27,827,200	+491,300

Youth Unemployment Rate

Area	March 2012		February 2014		Change
	%	Number	%	Number	
Hartlepool	17.5	1,445	12.7	1,050	-395
Middlesbrough	14.6	2,415	9.5	1,575	-840
Stockton	13.3	2,380	9.4	1,680	-700
Darlington	13.6	1,120	9.5	780	-340
Redcar	17.3	1,965	10.9	1,235	-730
Tees Valley					
Tees Valley	15.0	9,325	10.1	6,320	-3,005
North East					
North East	12.0	31,005	8.0	20,610	-10,395
Great Britain					
Great Britain	8.3	477,400	5.2	299,580	-177,820

Long Term Youth Unemployment Rate – Over 6 Months

Area	March 2012		February 2014		Change
	%	Number	%	Number	
Hartlepool	8.2	680	5.0	410	-270
Middlesbrough	6.5	1,080	3.7	615	-465
Stockton	5.1	915	3.7	660	-255
Darlington	5.1	425	3.2	265	-160
Redcar	8.0	915	4.2	480	-435
Tees Valley					
Tees Valley	6.4	4,015	3.9	2,430	-1,585
North East					
North East	4.9	12,760	2.9	7,485	-5,275
Great Britain					
Great Britain	2.8	162,830	1.6	90,020	-72,810

Youth Employment Rate

Area	Dec 2011		Sept 2013		Change
	%	Number	%	Number	
Hartlepool	41.5	4,900	45.0	5,000	+100
Middlesbrough	36.6	7,500	39.8	8,600	+1,100
Stockton	48.9	12,300	47.9	10,200	-2,100
Darlington	51.6	6,100	51.9	6,300	+200
Redcar	41.3	5,700	38.5	6,100	+400
Tees Valley	43.9	36,400	44.1	36,200	-200
North East	48.3	160,600	44.5	146,600	-14,000
Great Britain	49.9	3,539,400	49.7	3,488,200	-51,200

External Funding Spent 2012/13

Amount of External Funding Spent	£378,588.65
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External Funding Secured – 2008 to date

Name of Funder	Project Title	Date Funding Awarded	Amount of Funding
Education Funding Agency (EFA)/ Skills Funding Agency (SFA) European Social Fund (ESF)	Tees Valley NEET Reduction (YES Project) managed by Stockton Borough Council	November 2013	£2.1million
European Commission	Youth Guarantee, managed by Hartlepool Borough Council (HBC)	October 2013	£202,000
EFA	Youth Contract (HBC as subcontractor of Pertemps)	September 2013	£82,785
SFA/ESF	Tees Valley Workforce Skills, managed by HBC on behalf of the 5 LAs	July 2013	£3,389,000
Department for Work & Pensions (DWP) –	Tees Valley Flexible Support Fund, managed by HBC on behalf of the 5 LAs	April 2012	£500,000
Department for Education	Hartlepool National Citizenship Service Pilot	April 2012	£346,657
DWP/ESF	FamilyWise Project (HBC as subcontractor of Wise Group)	December 2011	£414,166

Name of Funder	Project Title	Date Funding Awarded	Amount of Funding
EFA/SFA/ESF	Going Forward Together NEET Reduction Project, managed by HBC	February 2011	£787,060
SFA/ESF	North East Community Grants, managed by HBC	October 2009	£1.2million
DWP	Future Jobs Fund	October 2009	£4,680,000
EFA/SFA/ESF	Going Forward NEET Reduction Project, managed by HBC	June 2008	£761,877
TOTAL			£14,463,545

5. LEGAL AND FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no specific legal or financial implications for the purposes of this report.

6. IMPACT ON CHILD / FAMILY POVERTY

- 6.1 Being economically active is an accepted way of helping to alleviate child poverty and all the services of the Economic Regeneration Team are targeted at achieving economic growth and participation. In addition the service seeks to support value added businesses where, in general terms skills levels are higher and consequently wage levels are also correspondingly higher, providing better standards of living.

7. SECTION 17 OF THE CRIME AND DISORDER ACT 1998 CONSIDERATIONS

- 7.1 A range of activities support crime reduction measures. The business community is assisted with crime reduction measures including the BIDS at Longhill and Sandgate Industrial Estates. In addition, assisting residents to become economically active is an established method of assisting in the reduction of crime.

8. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY CONSIDERATIONS

- 8.1 The service provides universal access for all, but also targets specific groups that have multiple barriers to achieving economic participation and often have multiple barriers to progressing into education, training, employment and enterprise.

9. CONTRIBUTION TO OTHER COUNCIL PROJECTS AND PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

9.1 This funding will benefit other Council business and employment initiatives and will also support a broad range of key Council partners including the voluntary and community sector. The project will positively contribute to the following indicators;

- Business start up rates;
- Business survival rates;
- Numbers of jobs created;
- Improving the Overall Employment Rate;
- Improving the Overall Youth Employment Rate;
- Reducing the Youth Unemployment Rate, and;
- Reducing the number of young people who are not in education, employment or training (NEET).

10. RECOMMENDATIONS

10.1 That Members note the contents of this report and that further update reports will be submitted to this Committee.

11. BACKGROUND PAPERS

11.1 destinationhartlepool.com

12. CONTACT OFFICER

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**REGENERATION SERVICES
COMMITTEE**
8th May 2014



Report of: Assistant Director (Regeneration)

Subject: QUARTERLY REPORT – ADULT EDUCATION

1. TYPE OF DECISION/APPLICABLE CATEGORY

1.1 For information only.

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

2.1 The purpose of the report is to update members about the work of the Adult Education service.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 This report provides an update on the activities of the Adult Education service from the beginning of the academic year 2013-2014 until the end of March 2014.

3.2 The Adult Education service is fully funded through allocations which are received from the Skills Funding Agency (SFA) and the Education funding Agency (EFA) as well as income from fees.

3.3 Table 1 shows the figures for the engagement of learners to date for the current academic year in some key groups.

Category	Number of Enrolments as at	
	Jan 2104	March 2014
16 -18	61	67
19 - 24	238	275
25+	1139	1290
BME	10%	8%
Disability	24%	23%
Total	1438	1632

4 PROPOSALS

- 4.1 The report contains no proposals and is for information only

5. ADULT SKILLS

- 5.1 The Adult Skills Budget (ASB) is a mainstream allocation provided by the SFA for the delivery of a range of skills provision. This type of provision includes NVQs, English and Maths, Apprenticeships, and other listed qualifications. It also includes the delivery of short qualifications in e.g. Interview Skills to support unemployed adults. Since August this also includes the provision of traineeships for those aged 19-23.
- 5.2 Table 2 shows the number of enrolments in some key types of skills provision for the current academic year.

Aspect	Number of Enrolments as at	
	Jan 2014	March 2014
English and Maths	161	152
NVQ's	204	204
Other Qualifications	216	219
Provision for the unemployed	81	118
Traineeships	1	1
Apprenticeships	2	4

- 5.3 The service is also working in partnership with Job Centre plus (JC+) to support unemployed adults. Referrals are received from JC+ to deliver bespoke training to individuals under the Pace and Purpose project. The service also provides bespoke Skills for Life courses for those who have been mandated to achieve a maths or English qualification.

6. COMMUNITY LEARNING

- 6.1 The Community learning allocation is designed to deliver a wide range of non accredited provision in response to the Government paper New Challenges, New Chances, which was published in 2012
- 6.2 The Community Learning Programme is designed to reach those adults who are farthest removed from learning or the labour market. The programmes concentrate on working in partnership with a range of agencies to engage with the most disadvantaged. This could be in a range of ways and a range of provision.

- 6.3 A key project for the service is the provision of support to those adults who wish to participate in volunteering. The service provides access to a qualification in community volunteering as well as other training opportunities. The service works with other agencies to support any individual who wishes to volunteer. To date 119 have been supported into a volunteering placements, of these 13 have progressed onto employment and 27 have gone on to training programmes.
- 6.4 A second key aspect is the delivery of Family Learning type activities. These include working with schools, children's centres and other organisations to deliver a range of activities. These include e.g. Saturdays at Summerhill, Keeping up with the Kids, Safe and Sound and other programmes designed to get families learning together or to give parents skills to support their children. The service also supports the work of the Letterbox Club for children in care.
- 6.5 Table 3 shows the enrolments in some of the key aspects of the community learning provision in the current academic year

Aspect	Number of Enrolments as at	
	Jan 2014	March 2014
Family Learning	275	288
Volunteering	100	119
Personal Development	153	174
Employability	12	41

7. PROVISION FUNDED BY THE EDUCATION FUNDED AGENCY (EFA)

- 7.1 The service receives an allocation from the EFA for the delivery of a range of programmes to 16-18 year olds.
- 7.2 In August the Government launched the new Traineeship Programme. As a provider which has received an inspection Grade 2 the service is eligible to deliver this programme. To date the service has 4 trainees who are continuing their programmes. We also hope to recruit additional learners for an April start
- 7.3 The service also has a contract to deliver Apprenticeships to this age group. At present one apprentice is on programme.
- 7.4 The service also works with the Careers Service and the Council's 14-19 team to deliver study programmes to young people. At present the service is supporting 5 young people on a full time study programme. In addition 6 young people are supported through sub contracted provision.

- 7.5 Working in partnership with the 14-19 team the service is supporting 19 young people with special needs who are following a study programme at Catcote School.

8. TEES VALLEY WORKFORCE SKILLS

- 8.1 The Tees Valley Workforce Skills project is a European Social Fund (ESF) funded project delivered in partnership with the other Tees Valley local authorities.
- 8.2 The project started in July 2013 and will cease in July 2015. It is funded to engage employers in workforce development and to deliver training to employees across Tees Valley.
- 8.3 The project has to date employed 7 additional full time staff with 4 of these being based within the Regeneration teams of the Tees Valley local authorities.
- 8.4 Delivery of the project training is now increasing. To date the project has engaged with 201 employers and has delivered training to 328 employees. In addition a further 78 employees have been engaged in workshops.

9. ENTERPRISE PROVISION

- 9.1 The service maintains an Enterprise Programme which provides activities to employers at full cost. These activities include the provision of courses such as First Aid, Food Hygiene and Management. These courses are not fundable through the SFA or other funding streams so are delivered by the service at full cost.
- 9.2 During the current academic year 158 learners have participated in this type of provision. It is estimated that this provision has attracted £6,000 so far of income. This income is taken into account when planning the annual budget.

10 SUPPORT

- 10.1 In order to ensure that all the provision is fully accessible to all a range of support measures are put in place. These measures include providing where appropriate the provision of crèche, transport and 1-1 in class support to those individuals who may need extra support to allow them to participate in learning.

10.2 Table 4 shows the type of support which has been delivered to date

Type of Support	Number of Learners as at	
	Jan 2014	March 2014
Childcare	24	30
Equipment	12	12
Transport	1	6
Other	38	54
Total	75	102

11. INFORMATION, ADVICE AND GUIDANCE SERVICES

11.1 The service provides a range of Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) services from the main centre and 3 outreach venues.

11.2 The IAG services provide support to anyone who requires information about learning and work. The IAG team consists of trained advisers who will support people to choose the most appropriate learning activity. They are also on hand to support unemployed individuals with job search, CV writing and other skills to support them into work. The service receives many referrals from JC+ who send individuals to the centre to obtain a good CV. The team also provide extra support to any unemployed learners to assist them to acquire employment. To date 119 have accessed the IAG service. Of these 73 have achieved further learning and 8 have gained employment.

Type of Support	Number of Learners as at	
	Jan 2014	March 2014
Accessed IAG	90	119
Entered Training	41	73
Entered Employment	8	8

12. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

12.1 The service is fully funded by the SFA and EFA so there are no funding implications for the Council. The allocations which are received are subject to the successful delivery of learning outcomes.

13 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY CONSIDERATIONS

13.1 The service regularly carries out analysis of its provision to ensure that it is providing equality of opportunity and is fully accessible by all.

**14 SECTION 17 OF THE CRIME AND DISORDER ACT 1998
CONSIDERATIONS**

14.1 There are no Crime and Disorder considerations

15 RECOMMENDATIONS

15.1 Members are recommended to note the contents of this report.

16. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

16.1 To ensure that members are informed of the current activities across the Adult Education service

17 BACKGROUND PAPERS

17.1 There are no background papers.

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REGENERATION SERVICES COMMITTEE

8th May 2014



Report of: Assistant Director (Regeneration)

Subject: QUARTERLY UPDATE REPORT FOR PLANNING SERVICES JANUARY – MARCH 2013/2014

1. TYPE OF DECISION/APPLICABLE CATEGORY

This report is for information.

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 2.1 To update the Regeneration Services Committee on performance and progress across the key areas of Planning Services for the fourth quarter of 2013/2014.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Planning Service consists of four discrete teams: Development Control, Planning Policy, Landscape Planning and Conservation and Tees Archaeology.
- 3.2 The Development Control Team focuses on assessing proposals for new development and their impact on their surroundings, particularly in the form of planning applications. The service encourages the use of an advisory service (One Stop Shop) to enable proposals to be considered informally before applications are submitted, helping to improve the quality of development where appropriate. The section is also responsible for monitoring development and, where necessary, implementing enforcement action against unauthorised development, including derelict and untidy buildings and land.
- 3.3 Planning Policy is responsible for spatial planning policy and sustainable development policy, this includes the preparation, monitoring and review of the statutory Local Development Framework including the Local Plan, which will establish the overarching planning policy framework for the Borough and will eventually replace the adopted Hartlepool Local Plan 2006. The section

also provides policy advice in relation to planning applications and guidance on development activities, including the preparation of development briefs.

- 3.4 Landscape Planning and Conservation provides professional and technical expertise aimed at the conservation, protection and enhancement of the natural and built environment of Hartlepool. This team provides arboricultural and ecology advice and carries out ecology surveys and the inspection and review of Hartlepool's protected tree stock, including the making of Tree Preservation Orders, the processing of High Hedge applications and the surveying of Council owned trees. The section also has wider roles across the Council this includes ensuring that the authority complies with statutory duties such as the Habitats Directive, Wildlife & Countryside Act and NERC (Natural Environment and Rural Communities) Act.
- 3.5 Tees Archeology is a shared service between Hartlepool and Stockton Borough Councils based in Sir William Gray House. The section provides the Local Planning Authorities and other relevant organisations with advice on the archaeological implications of planning proposals and maintains and updates a Heritage Environment Record (HER). Government policy requires authorities to hold a record of heritage assets, archaeological and historical sites and other information such as excavations, found objects and documentary sources within its area. It is also involved in a wide range of projects both in Hartlepool, Stockton and the wider region.

4. DEVELOPMENT CONTROL

- 4.1 This quarter 97.89 % of planning applications were approved. In terms of the performance for the year 96.42 % of all planning applications were approved, this demonstrates the proactive, pro-development nature of the planning team.
- 4.2 In terms of major applications (such as minerals and waste developments, residential developments over 10 dwellings, the creation of floorspace over 1,000 square metres or sites over 1 hectare) which have been received, 100% were determined within the required target date (13 weeks or longer with the applicant's consent). In terms of the performance for the year 89.18 % of major applications were determined within the target date well above the national target of 60%.
- 4.3 In terms of minor planning applications (such as residential developments up to 9 dwellings, the creation of floor space less than 1,000 square metres or sites less than 1 hectare) for the quarter, 71.42 % were determined within the 8 week target. In terms of the performance for the year 77.77 % of minor applications have been determined within the 8 week target date well above the national target of 65%.
- 4.4 With regard to other planning applications (such as change of use, householder development, advertisements, notifications etc) for the quarter, 77.27% were determined within the 8 week target date. In terms of the

performance for the year to date, 85.21% of minor applications have been determined within the 8 week target date again well above the national target of 80%.

- 4.5 Three planning appeals were received during this quarter. One enforcement appeal was determined which was dismissed by the Planning Inspectorate. For the year 10 appeals (including enforcement appeals) were received 5 were dismissed, one appeal was allowed giving a 83% success rate. Four appeals are ongoing.
- 4.6 The applications received this quarter have generated a fee income of £53,475.80. For the year as a whole the fee income was £372,872.80.
- 4.7 This quarter 124 informal enquiries (pre-application advice in the form of the 'One Stop Shop') have been received generating a fee income of £2,422.50. For the year 584 informal enquiries have been received generating a fee income of £14,769.16.
- 4.8 Planning Services receives complaints regarding potential planning breaches which are then investigated by the Council's Planning Enforcement Officer and 41 complaints were received this quarter (see **Appendix 1**). No enforcement notices were served. A single appeal was determined against an enforcement notice served. The appeal was dismissed. For the year to date, 171 complaints have been received, 2 enforcement notices served, 7 Section 215 notices served and a single appeal was received against an enforcement notice served which was dismissed.

5. PLANNING POLICY

- 5.1 Officers have completed a draft version of the Issues and Options Paper which is the first stage of the new Local Plan. The aim of this stage is to seek public thoughts and open the debate on what kind of place residents, businesses and all other stakeholders want Hartlepool to be in the future. Specifically it will focus on the most appropriate locations for development to occur over the next 15 years.
- 5.2 This stage of the plan does not rely on any of the evidence base pieces of work being completed as it is simply seeking the public's thoughts and input into the process. The focus of this document is to provide as many viable issues and options on the future development of Hartlepool as possible and then to seek the view of stakeholders. It is considered important that the Issues and Options exercise is undertaken at the earliest opportunity to give time to analyse and reflect on the consultation feedback received to help shape the Preferred Options Document. This Preferred Options Document will effectively be the first draft of the Local Plan with proposed allocations and strategic policies.
- 5.3 The Issues and Options will be reported to the Regeneration Committee seeking permission to undertake an eight week public consultation.

- 5.4 The main evidence base documents that underpin the Local Plan include, the Strategic Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA), Employment Land Review (ELR), The Open Space Assessment and Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA). Other subsequent evidence base work will be carried out once these have been completed covering such issues as flood risk, retail and infrastructure.
- 5.5 The SHLAA identifies future suitable sites to ensure that there will be enough land available in the Borough to continuously meet housing need over a fifteen year timescale and starting in years 2014-15. The SHLAA will provide options for housing development that will ultimately be the basis for allocations in the emerging local plan and all work will be done in-house.
- 5.6 The SHLAA will consider 116 potential sites across the Borough including over 50 Council owned sites. During this quarter the initial assessments have taken place which includes a site visit and survey of each site as well as desk based work to assess known constraints. The initial assessments have been completed and a database has been sent to consultees for their expert comments. Consultees include external bodies such as the Environment Agency and utility providers as well as internal services such as Highways.
- 5.7 The Employment Land Review (ELR) is a three stage process that assesses the existing employment land stock and quality and then identifies quantitative and qualitative need over the Local Plan period. Stage 1 will be done in-house whilst stages 2 and 3 have been put out to tender.
- 5.8 In February field work/site visits to all allocated employment sites were undertaken and from this all 'available' employment land has been determined to be taken forward for further analysis by consultants. The analysis mainly revolves around market demand assessment, application of economic models and scenarios to determine which sites should be retained and which should be de-allocated. Employment land take up rates and land availability between 2008 and 2014 have been worked out on all employment sites and a report has been compiled to take forward to stages 2 and 3 to complete the ELR.
- 5.9 In March officers tendered for suitable consultants to undertake stages two and three. Shortlisting will take place in early April and the interviews are due to take place in April.
- 5.10 The Open Space Sport and Recreation Audit and Assessment document will be the main piece of evidence which will aid the Council in requesting developer contributions for green infrastructure and open space and play provision. The public consultation will be the first stage in the process. A questionnaire has been designed and approved and the consultant will now send out this questionnaire to a random sample of residential addresses. The sample will ensure a fair distribution across the different Wards within the Borough to try and ensure the responses are representative of the whole

of the town. This has been the main focus of the work over the first two months of the project and it is likely the site survey will begin in the following quarter.

- 5.11 An updated Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) is required to contribute towards the Local Plan evidence base. The Council has appointed Renaissance Consulting to look at the future need and demand for Gypsy and Traveller (G&T) provision in the Borough over the next 15 years and will assess whether there is a need to provide a physical site, and if so how many pitches the site needs to accommodate. Renaissance Consulting has recently carried out the G&T assessment for County Durham.
- 5.12 The evidence will be used to guide planning policy in the new Local Plan. The consultant is currently gathering information from national sources including the 2011 Census, local information from Council officers, local stakeholders, local G&T community groups and talking to G&T currently living in the Borough. It is anticipated that the consultant will prepare the assessment and present the draft findings to the Council in July 2014.
- 5.13 Officers have also been offering professional planning advice to the Neighbourhood Planning Groups which have been established in the Borough to support the Community Regeneration Team.
- 5.14 In the last quarter the Planning Policy section has, as part of its regular workload, been heavily involved in the processing of major planning applications. This is primarily providing professional advice to seek and negotiate developer contributions which subsequently involves viability testing. Examples include applications at Upper Warren and Wynyard Park.
- 5.15 A regular quarterly monitoring update will be reported on the Local Development Orders (LDO's) for Enterprise Zones as per the monitoring framework agreed as part of the LDOs. There have been no new businesses locating to the Enterprise Zones in this quarter; however officers understand that one will be delivered soon and this will be reported in the next quarter.

6. LANDSCAPE PLANNING AND CONSERVATION

- 6.1 The work on the Elwick Village Atlas, supported by the Ecologist, has now been completed with a celebration event planned in May. This will showcase the work that has been carried out over the past six months by residents in the village including research into the wildlife of the area. In addition to this work with the community the consultancy side of the service continues to develop with bat survey work carried out for a local housing association, advice provided to a neighbouring authority and survey work to support coastal defence projects in Hartlepool. This has generated £2,120. Alongside this work the Ecologist continues to provide advice and guidance on works within the borough.

- 6.2 Arboricultural Officers continue to survey publicly owned trees in various locations within the town. This quarter areas included Burn Valley Gardens, the Fens Estate and the A689. These inspections are carried out on a cyclical basis with trees examined to identify any risks they may pose to the public or signs of obvious defects which can then in turn be reported to enable appropriate remedial action to take place. Officers have also carried out a review of a number of Tree Preservation Orders to ensure that the information remains up to date in areas where tree works have been carried out.
- 6.3 Conservation projects have included consultation work on the Shop Front Design Guidance contacting interested parties to gauge their views on the document. The Conservation Officer has been working with the Economic Development Section, Hartlepool College and neighbouring authorities to develop an apprenticeship programme focused on Heritage Skills. Whilst the first stage of the project has been confirmed, investigation work is now taking place to source funding to support work on historic buildings by the apprentices for the second part of the project. Work has continued on investigating ways in which Buildings at Risk can be brought back into use including advising owners of properties on potential schemes of work.
- 6.4 Alongside this work the team has provided specialist advice and guidance on 58 planning applications in the quarter of this year and processed numerous applications covering works to trees, listed building consent and work to properties in conservation areas.

7 TEES ARCHAEOLOGY

- 7.1 Tees Archaeology has continued working with the local community in two areas in Hartlepool. At Elwick as part of the lottery funded Limestone Landscapes Village Atlas programme report on medieval Elwick, an archaeological sensitivity map, a heritage trail and a signboard are all in preparation, with a report on Elwick's buildings having been completed. The Friends of North Cemetery project is drawing to a close with the preparation of a page for the Tees Archaeology website to host the report of the archaeological excavation the only remaining task.
- 7.2 The service has undertaken the preparation of heritage statements for Hartlepool town wall and the church of St. Mary Magdalene at Hart. Ongoing enhancement of the Historic Environment Record has focused on records relating to farmsteads in Hartlepool, and updating the information for Grade II listed buildings assessed during the Heritage at Risk Project carried out last year with the Conservation team.
- 7.3 The team continues to work outside the region generating income through externally financed projects. The major English Heritage funded project researching the Mesolithic period in North East Yorkshire, carried out in partnership with the North York Moors National Park, is also drawing to a

close, with the draft of the final report and a popular booklet about the period submitted to English Heritage.

- 7.4 Other external work includes carrying out the assessment of a large flint assemblage from a site in North Yorkshire on behalf of a commercial archaeological contractor.
- 7.5 The Archaeologist (Planning) is currently seconded part time to North Yorkshire County Council to provide maternity cover within their Archaeology Section.

8. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY CONSIDERATIONS

- 8.1 There are no equality or diversity implications.

9. SECTION 17 OF THE CRIME AND DISORDER ACT 1998 CONSIDERATIONS

- 9.1 There are no Section 17 Implications.

10. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 10.1 That the Regeneration Services Committee notes the content of the report and the progress made across key areas of the Planning Services Team.

11. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 11.1 There are no background papers.

12. CONTACT OFFICER

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REGENERATION SERVICES COMMITTEE

MAY 8TH 2014



Report of: Director of Public Health

Subject: SPORT AND RECREATION SERVICE - OPTIONS
APPRAISAL UPDATE

1. TYPE OF DECISION/APPLICABLE CATEGORY

Non-key

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 2.1 The purpose of this report is to update Committee of the progress made with the work being carried out to investigate the potential options for alternative management and delivery arrangements for the Council's Sport and Recreation service and assess these in comparison to continuing the current in-house arrangements.
- 2.2 Details of the assessment work to date are given as well as an early indication of the initial response from potential operators within the leisure market.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Local Government continues to face a time of unprecedented change through a combination of significantly decreasing budgets and the report taken to Finance and Policy Committee January 31st 2014 on the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) 2014/15 to 2016/17 detailed how the Council is faced with further reducing expenditure over the next 3 years following the reductions in previous years.
- 3.2 The report outlined that in relation to the Council's 2014/15 and 2015/16 Core Revenue Grant (including mainstreamed Council Tax Support Funding) the December 2014 Local Government Funding announcement confirmed significant grant cuts. As a result, by 2015/16, the Council's core General Fund grant will be £30.6m lower than in 2010/11 – a cash reduction of 39%.
- 3.3 As a consequence, options for the next financial year need to be explored where the Public Health Department is required to identify and achieve savings on the core Council budget. Two service areas in the Department are

currently funded by the General Fund – Public Protection and Sport and Recreation but this report focuses on the exploration of options for Sport and Recreation.

3.4 Sport and Recreation currently operates the following built leisure facilities:-

- Mill House Leisure Centre
- Brierton Community Sports Centre
- Headland Sports Hall / Borough Hall
- Summerhill Outdoor Centre & Country Park
- Carlton Outdoor Education Centre (leased from the Carlton Trustees)
- Grayfields Pavilion & Recreation Ground

It also manages a Learn to Swim Team, GP Referral Team and a Sport and Physical Activity Team.

3.5 In the period 2011/12 to 2014/15, the service has reduced its cost to the Council and has achieved savings and efficiencies amounting to £685,000 in total. For the current financial year (2014/15), the net operational budget for the service amounts to £1.369m support services costs.

3.6 However, this level of budget reduction is no longer sustainable and the continuing financial challenge coupled with the need for investment in the facilities means finding innovative ways of continuing to deliver services. A range of options are available and these include using alternative delivery models if these services are to remain. These services have a key role in supporting the focus the Council has on tackling public health issues and reducing health inequalities.

3.7 It should be noted that the Council is well served by a strong management team in Sport and Recreation. This team has successfully put the service in a strong position and that any options considered will look to build on this success but in the context of the significant financial pressures facing the Council. In the recent past, Officers have made best use of its resources to provide leisure facilities by forging relationships with funders and partners to provide both informal leisure opportunities and programmed activities in all our neighbourhoods. This partnership approach will need to continue as we strive to meet the financial challenge ahead, while continuing to provide quality local facilities for our communities.

4. **CONSIDERATION OF ALTERNATIVE DELIVERY MODELS**

4.1 The market for the delivery of leisure services is well developed and the process of externalising services has increasingly become more common as Councils have looked for lower cost and more efficient ways of providing services that they wish to see delivered. Other specific benefits apart from service efficiencies could include:-

- the ability to raise external finance

- Business Rates or VAT savings
 - investment in building stock to support service delivery
 - improvements in service delivery
 - increased user benefit and social outcomes
- 4.2 The Sport and Recreation services in Hartlepool have historically always been managed “in-house”, however the leisure centre function has twice been previously exposed to competition as a result of Compulsory Competitive Tendering (CCT) in the 1980’s and 1990’s.
- 4.3 Trust options have also been explored twice, more recently as a result of collaborative work with Darlington Borough Council and Deloitte and the establishment of a Trust Working Group in 2012. On both occasions, the conclusions were that the level of savings that could be achieved at that time would be minimal particularly given the government’s changes associated with the Localisation of Business Rates.
- 4.4 As part of the exploration of the options available, it is evident that there are however several different models of service with variations in the extent to which each departs from the more traditional and current model of “in-house” management. It is important therefore that these are properly considered via a rigorous options appraisal process to find the approach that Members consider are best suited to providing optimal value for money whilst still meeting the Council’s strategic priorities.
- 4.5 It is of importance to note that the Council is not alone in exploring alternative management delivery options provided through a commissioning route. Officers are aware that most North-East local authorities where in-house management arrangements still remain for their leisure provision, are also currently considering alternative delivery options.
- 4.6 Given the potential value and complex nature of any future contractual arrangements, specialist independent advisors, Max Associates, were appointed by the Council in February 2014 to undertake an initial Options Appraisal review. This was to assist the Council in the appraisal of a range of options and potentially the procurement strategy to follow dependant on these.
- 4.7 An approach for this work was agreed and can be summarised as follows:-
- consultation with key Members, Senior Managers and other key stakeholders (which took place in March 2014)
 - undertake a strategic review of the service, analyse current performance and soft market test with potential operators (which at the time of compiling this report is currently ongoing).
 - assess the service scope i.e. what remains “in” or goes “out”
 - assess the different delivery options looking at the relative merits of each – this is to include a Members Workshop (due to take place on April 23rd 2014)

- Subject to an in principle agreement of the business plans and the management options analysis, to provide an implementation plan.

4.8 The initial Stage One Options Appraisal assessment is due to be completed by May 2014 following which a further report will be brought to Regeneration Committee to consider whether Members wish to proceed to a second stage. This second stage will, should there be value and benefit in doing so, be to commission an alternative delivery model for the specified services.

5. INITIAL FEEDBACK ON OPTIONS APPRAISAL

5.1 The initial review of current service delivery has been completed. This has shown that the service is performing very well in many aspects; however there is an early indication that opportunities do exist to drive income further than has already been achieved over the past 4 years. This is particularly in the areas of health and fitness and activity classes. Obviously this would inevitably lead to a reduction in the overall cost of the service.

5.2 An initial soft market test has been undertaken to gauge the interest in the market if the outcome of the options appraisal was to market test the service. Early indications show that there would be a good level of interest which could result in a competitive procurement process.

5.3 As alluded to in paragraph 4.5 of the report, a number of Boroughs in the North East are currently undertaking or have recently undertaken such a process, including Scarborough, Sunderland, Newcastle and Redcar & Cleveland. Redcar & Cleveland BC successfully appointed an operator in 2013 and reduced the cost of their service by over £400k per annum. This will obviously vary dependant on the services involved as well as how individual Councils wish to see these managed and operated.

5.4 The Members workshop planned for April 23rd 2014 will greatly assist in exploring the options available to the Council and will seek Members views and priorities for future service delivery of sport and leisure facilities across the Borough. This will allow for a full evaluation to be completed.

6. FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

6.1 The Options Appraisal is being undertaken on behalf of the Council by Max Associates.

6.2 Members will be aware of the close working relationship that the Sport and Recreation service has with Sport England and their support of the Council's strategic facilities review which led to the adoption of a revised Indoor Sports Facilities Strategy by the Council in November 2013.

6.3 As a consequence of this continued partnership work, the Head of Sport and Recreation has successfully obtained grant funding of £5,000 from Sport England to assist with the cost of this appraisal work. The net cost of the Options Appraisal will be accommodated within the 2014/15 Departmental

Revenue budget.

- 6.4 If the ultimate decision is taken to commission a new partner, the indicative cost of procurement based on a competitive dialogue process and the development of a management and operational contract for services is likely to be approximately £40,000. The work will also require additional Officer resource and will take approximately a year to conclude. Consideration of how this could be funded will form part of any subsequent report brought to Committee.

7. SUMMARY

- 7.1 The report gives Committee an update on the progress to date of the Options Appraisal for alternative management arrangements for Sport and Recreation which is linked to the need to make additional budgetary savings for 2015/16 and future years.
- 7.2 It is anticipated that a further report will be brought to Committee for a decision on the future arrangements in June or July 2014.

8. SECTION 17 OF THE CRIME AND DISORDER ACT 1998 CONSIDERATIONS

- 8.1 There are no implications under Section 17.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.1 That the Regeneration Services Committee notes the contents of the report and the information to date that is provided.

9.2

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 10.1 Report to Finance & Policy Committee, 31st January 2014 - Medium Term Financial Strategy 2014/15 to 2016/17.

Report to Cabinet, 5th March 2012 - Medium Term Financial Strategy - Collaboration working – Cultural Trusts.

Report to Cabinet, 17th December 2012 - Medium Term Financial Strategy 2013/14 to 2016/17 - Item 4.2, Appendix 3 - SAVINGS PROGRAMME 2013/14 – Community Services Division of the Child & Adult Department.

11. CONTACT OFFICER(S)

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REGENERATION SERVICES COMMITTEE

8th May 2014



Report of: Director Regeneration and Neighbourhoods

Subject: PLANNING PEER CHALLENGE

1. TYPE OF DECISION/APPLICABLE CATEGORY

Report is for information only.

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 2.1 To inform Members of the findings from the recently conducted Planning Peer Challenge.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 In January of this year, Members of this Committee received a report entitled 'Planning Peer Challenge' which explained the impacts on the Council's Planning Service as a consequence of retrospectively introduced planning performance measures emanating from the Government's 2012 'Planning Performance and the Planning Guarantee' consultation paper.
- 3.2 One of the key performance measures introduced related to 'Major' planning applications, which although requiring determination within thirteen weeks, (with a target percentage to be achieved), are also subject to a minimum threshold of 30%. In simple terms, the Government were using the threat of placing Local Authorities in special measures should their determination of major planning applications fall below 30%.
- 3.3 At the time the Government first released the table of performance in the latter part of 2013, the Council's Planning Service was on the brink of being placed into planning special measures, hovering as it was dangerously close to the 30% minimum threshold.
- 3.4 As a consequence, contact was made by Officers of the Council with the Planning Advisory Service (PAS) to seek advice and guidance on improving performance. This support consisted of: -
- Officer attendance at a workshop on impacts and implications of being placed in special measures and how to avoid it;

- Members attendance at the ‘Leadership Academy – Making Decisions in Line with Policy’ workshop;

and

- The Assistant Director (Regeneration) submitted a business case to receive 100% funding from the PAS to undertake a Planning Peer Challenge.

3.5 Details of the proposal submitted and the agreed brief for the Planning Peer Challenge formed a key section for the report presented to Members in January 2014 and focused on the following: -

- Leadership – both officers and Members.
- The use of planning in delivering the Council Vision.
- Implications of the withdrawn Local Plan and the impacts in terms of costs, potential appeals and resources available to prepare a new Local Plan.
- Does the Council provide a good service to users?
- The extent to which the Planning Service is open, welcoming and enabling?
- The efficiency and effectiveness of the service processes in supporting an enabling approach.
- The effectiveness of the technology currently being used to support delivery?
- The adequacy of officer and Member capacity to deliver the planning service effectively including training.

3.5 The Planning Peer Challenge took place between the 18th and 20th February 2014 and was delivered by a team consisting of people from the PAS, the Local Government Association, along with Peer officers and Members from other Local Authorities experienced in carrying out Peer reviews. Others involved in the review included Members from across the Council, Members of the Planning Committee, Planning Services users, senior managers, Planning Officers and other Officers from across the Council.

4. PLANNING PEER CHALLENGE - FINDINGS

4.1 The specific areas examined are picked up under the themes of: -

- Vision and Leadership;
 - Community Leadership and Engagement;
 - Management, Service Delivery and Service to Users;
 - Partnership Working;
- and
- Advisory Outcomes.

4.2 Attached at **Appendix 1** is the full Peer Challenge Report which does include an Executive Summary of the findings and highlights the key recommendations from the Peer Challenge Team.

4.3 **Appendix 2** is a draft Action Plan which provides information on proposed timescales for implementing the recommendations, along with details on the lead officers/Member responsible for delivery. It must be stressed, however, that this is a draft Action Plan and may be subject to change once the Action Planning Day takes place, which will be led by the PAS.

5. FINANCIAL CONSIDERATION

5.1 There are no financial considerations arising directly from the report as all costs associated with the carrying out of the Planning Peer Challenge were funded through the PAS and the LGA.

5.2 It is likely that some costs may be incurred as a consequence of implementing the recommendations contained within the Action Plan; however, it is too early to say what they may relate to or how much they might be. Some elements, for example, where training is required, may need funding however, it is anticipated these can be accommodated within existing budgets.

5.3 It is also worth pointing out that any investment required in the longer term, once identified as necessary, for example investment in new IT, should lead to a more cost effective service and this benefits the Council financially through more efficient and effective decision making reducing the risks of appeals which can be costly for the Council to defend.

6. SECTION 17 OF THE CRIME AND DISORDER ACT 1998 CONSIDERATIONS

6.1 There are no implications Under Section 17 arising from this report.

7. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY CONSIDERATIONS

7.1 There are no equality or diversity implications.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1 Members are recommended to: -

- Note the findings from the Planning Peer Challenge
- Approve the provisional Action Plan attached at **Appendix 2** which may be subject to changes following the Action Planning Day – the date for which is yet to be agreed.

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

8.1 Report to Regeneration Services Committee 16th January 2014.

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Planning Peer Challenge

Hartlepool Borough Council

18 – 20 February 2014

Report

1. Background and scope of the peer challenge

This report is a summary of the findings of a planning peer challenge organised by the Local Government Association (LGA) in cooperation with the Planning Advisory Service (PAS) and carried out by its trained peers. Peer challenges are managed and delivered by the sector for the sector. They are improvement oriented and are tailored to meet individual councils' needs. Indeed they are designed to complement and add value to a council's own performance and improvement focus.

The council wanted the challenge team to consider and comment upon the role of the planning service and the view of it amongst the wider council; the relationship between officers and councillors; the leadership of the planning service; and the extent to which it has developed an open, welcoming and enabling approach.

These specific areas for examination are picked up under the themes and focus used for a planning peer challenge:

- Clarity and locally distinctive vision and leadership for the planning service
- Community leadership and engaging with the community
- Management and service delivery
- Partnership working both internally and externally
- Achieving outcomes

Peers were:

- Nick Bubalo, Area Director Regeneration and Economy, Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council
- Nicholas Harding, Group Manager Development Management, Peterborough City Council
- Councillor Ian Ward, Deputy Leader, Birmingham City Council (Labour councillor peer)
- Alice Lester, Programme Manager, Planning Advisory Service
- Bob Kenyon, Peer Challenge Manager, LGA Associate

The LGA and PAS make a significant investment in planning peer challenge delivery and are keen to ensure councils follow this up with an improvement programme. After the planning peer challenge report is finalised the following support is available to the council:

- A LGA and PAS no cost Improvement Planning day structured to meet the council's requirements and involving members of the peer challenge team.
- A range of additional planning support – much of this at no cost – is available from PAS <http://www.pas.gov.uk/pas/core/page.do?pageld=1>
- Follow-up advice through Mark Edgell, Principal Adviser, LGA on further support that the planning service and the council might require
- A range of other support from the LGA – some of this might be at no cost, some might be subsidised and some might be fully charged <http://www.local.gov.uk/>

The LGA may ask to meet with the council 6-12 months after the peer challenge to make an assessment of: the peer challenge recommendations; how the council acted on these; and what beneficial impact came from this.

The team appreciated the welcome and hospitality provided by Hartlepool Borough Council and the candour and openness in which discussions were held. The team would like to thank everybody that they met during the process for their time and contribution.

2. Executive summary and recommendations

Hartlepool Borough Council is a unitary authority, so it carries out the full range of planning duties. In 2010 and 2011, the Council brought the main planning functions together into one service, managed by the Planning Services Manager. Adjustments to the capacity of the team have continued to date, for example, the recent decision to host Tees Archaeology.

The Council had an elected mayor between 2002 and May 2013. The Council has moved to a committee system of management/governance and is working to a Labour administration. The Council does not have an up to date Local Plan. In October 2013 the Council resolved to withdraw the draft Local Plan - prior to its adoption, following it being found sound at Examination - and a statement of withdrawal was issued on 11 November 2013.

Following withdrawal of the draft Local Plan, the Council recognised the need for a clear spatial vision and published this in 'The Hartlepool Vision' and the supporting document, 'The Brief for Hartlepool's Regeneration Masterplan'. The Leader of the Council has endorsed the Vision and recognises the importance of planning in delivering the Council's vision. The Council has committed to allocating resources to proceed with a new local plan.

The planning staff and management provide a generally good service for customers. They are technically competent and well-regarded by colleagues, councillors and customers, although the staff are not always aware of this. Customers welcome enabling initiatives such as the 'one stop shop' to help them through the regulatory system.

The Planning Service recognises the need to increase its strategic management capacity as well as ensuring a flexible workforce to enable the Council to respond to future change. The Council has started to build management capacity by learning from other councils and providing support to increase strategic management capacity in the Service. It would benefit from a strategic review of the Planning Service to include a systematic assessment of processes, use of IT, and future needs. The Planning Service would benefit from introducing a systematic approach to performance management which is currently rather ad-hoc. This review will improve service performance by making better use of its existing resources.

The Council recognised that its Planning Committee would benefit from a review. It is a large committee and to outsiders can seem confusing in terms of roles and responsibilities. Debate is not always focussed on material planning matters and officers lack confidence to provide robust advice in the public committee setting, particularly around governance issues such as declarations of interest. This also requires stronger advice from democratic and legal services.

Relationships need to improve between officers and councillors. There are some excellent working relationships at a one to one level but an underlying mistrust between some councillors and some officers needs addressing.

The Council would benefit by ensuring that professional planning officers are involved - at the earliest opportunity - in discussions with potential developers about emerging schemes. This is to ensure that schemes are taken forward with greater certainty that they meet corporate priorities and existing and emerging planning policy.

The absence of a Local Plan will require the Council to take decisions on speculative applications without a strong, local policy framework. Clear legal, planning and financial

advice from officers for councillors will be critical in making these decisions. This will be important to minimise the cost to the Council of appeals whilst it does not have a development plan in place.

Despite some history of councillors feeling sidelined from decision making within the previous governance arrangements, they remain committed to high quality decision making. Both officers and councillors need to recognise their respective roles in planning decision making to ensure that councillors remain involved in strategic and controversial decisions but do not stray into more minor, operational matters that can and should be delegated to officers.

The Council has a track record in consultation in developing planning policy and is building on this with strong support for emerging neighbourhood plans. It can continue this good work and engage communities in the development of the emerging Local Plan. Councillors have a key community leadership role in getting buy in from their communities to the developing strategy.

The Planning Service has some track record in collaborative working and there is good cross working with other departments in the Council. The Council could consider building on this to look at opportunities for partnership working with adjacent councils, for example, in sharing expertise. Similarly, the Planning Service could do more to engage with developers and agents to continue to deliver improvements to the Service, such as by establishing a developer/agents forum. This will help keep customer (as in applicants' needs) at the centre of improvements.

Partnership working at the sub-regional level will become increasingly important for the Council - for example working with the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) to ensure that the Council's vision is supported through the Strategic Economic Plan in bids for funding and thus reflected in the LEP priorities.

The Planning Service is pro-development with a high rate of planning application approvals and a recent improvement in the 13 week performance figures. Staff are technically competent in delivering an effective development control service. However, the service is not so good at communicating the impact of its work in Hartlepool. This is important to show that Hartlepool is 'open for business'.

To support the planning service at Hartlepool Borough Council to improve further, the peer challenge team has made the following recommendations. These are:

R1: Improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the Planning Committee including visiting some others to compare and contrast good practice. In particular, the Council should consider:

- reducing the size of the committee to around 12
- improving the layout and operation of the committee to ensure clarity and transparency
- building respect between councillors and officers to present a more coherent approach to decision making
- training for councillors and officers to ensure an understanding of respective roles, expected values and behaviours.

- more pro-active legal advice in relation to governance and decision making
- bespoke training for Planning Committee members linked to their specific needs to make real practical improvements to current practice.

R2: Introduce a systematic approach to performance and service management to include:

- regular reporting of key performance data across the whole team
- regular reporting to Planning Committee of key performance data for the service to include more systematic analysis of what the data shows, for example, the outcome and learning from appeals, as well as progress against the Council's vision in terms of numbers of houses built etc
- regular review meetings between staff and team leaders to monitor progress on caseload
- regular meetings of the planning manager and team leaders to discuss strategic management issues across the Planning Service.

R3: Ensure councillor / officer working group for the development of the new Local Plan is inclusive - including development control planners who will be delivering the plan and backbencher councillors. The group needs to meet regularly and start early on in the process. Agree how the group then liaises with the rest of the Councillors.

R4: Implement a strategic review of service to include a:

- review of current and future staffing requirements to ensure continued flexible approach to use of staff across planning disciplines
- review of current and desired values and cultures and development of action plan to move from current to desired - to include officers and councillors
- review of business processes using LEAN or similar approach to remove duplication and 'hand offs' and ensure a focus on customers
- review of whether existing IT is fit for purpose with recommendations for any necessary investment.

R5: Invest in staff with a developmental programme including political awareness and mentoring with a focus on strategic management and leadership.

R6: Set up a major projects officer group, chaired by the Assistant Director, to include service managers from economic development and planning and other key staff to:

- review key projects applications
- monitor progress against council vision
- monitor planning inquiries and pre-application
- maximise the potential planning and economic benefits for Hartlepool.

R7: Ensure Leader and Chief Officers meeting agendas include update on key strategic planning and regeneration issues.

R8: Develop a pre-application protocol to include (where appropriate) involvement of key senior officers and councillors as well as planning officers.

3. Detailed findings

3.1 Vision and Leadership

Strengths

The Council has recently refined its vision for the future development of key sites in Hartlepool - and this will be very helpful in informing work on the new Local Plan and to help guide the work of the Council's planning and regeneration services. Hartlepool had an elected mayor between 2002 and May 2013. The Council moved to a committee system of governance and is now working to a Labour administration. The Council does not have an up to date Local Plan. In October 2013 the Council resolved to withdraw the draft Local Plan - prior to its adoption, following it being found sound at Examination - and a statement of withdrawal was issued on 11 November 2013. This was because it believed the draft plan did not fully meet its vision for the future of Hartlepool, or the views of all the people who live in Hartlepool.

The Council recognised the need for a clear vision to inform future planning work, and as an effective way to communicate with potential developers and the general public. 'The Hartlepool Vision' was published in 2014 and it describes the Council's vision for the future development of eight key areas of Hartlepool. The 'Brief for Hartlepool's Regeneration Masterplan' supports this vision and is a document written to invite tenders for work to produce a planning masterplan for the area around Hartlepool Town Centre, including the area around Jackson Dock. It is intended that the masterplan be published in January 2015 and this will be helpful to inform developers about what type of development the Council would like to see in this area.

The Leader of Hartlepool Council recognises the importance of planning in delivering the Council's vision for Hartlepool. He has provided leadership to, and personally endorsed, 'The Hartlepool Vision'. He recognises the importance of the Planning Service, and the Regeneration and Planning Committees, in delivering that vision. And the importance of the way those bodies present themselves, and deal with, developers - who are the people the council will work with to deliver the Council's spatial and economic vision.

At a political level, the Council recognises the need to resource the Planning Service adequately, in order to deliver its vision and priorities. In February 2014, the Council's Regeneration Services Committee approved resources to enable the production of the new Local Plan and to ensure performance is maintained in dealing with planning applications.

We believe that the Planning Service has very good professional leadership. We spoke to many staff, councillors and observed the Planning Committee and we found that the Manager of the Planning Service is well liked and respected and provides good and sound professional advice. We also found that senior management provides the sound advice and guidance necessary for the continual improvement of the planning service.

This leadership of the Planning Service has resulted in successful initial steps of Service improvement. For example, it has started to provide performance reports to its Planning Committee and it is also starting to provide informal pre-application meetings, that include councillors, and planning staff. The Service has successfully used mentoring support to help it identify a list of further potential improvements.

Areas for consideration

Planning Committee could be more efficient and effective in delivering the Council vision and priorities. We watched a Planning Committee meeting and interviewed a number of customers, councillors and staff about its operation. Debate at the Committee repeatedly strayed to non-material planning matters and focus was taken from the key planning issues. We felt that officers lacked the confidence to give clear advice to the committee. There was concern that it was not made clear to councillors when, and on what basis, they should declare an interest and not vote on an application. We feel there is a need for more proactive input from legal and democratic services on some of these issues. We also understand that there has been an historic lack of respect between officers and councillors. However, we also found that all parties recognise this and wish to move on to work closely together in delivering the Council vision - and hence, delivering development and improved prosperity for Hartlepool and its residents. It is important that Planning Committee functions well as it is 'a front window' through which the public, investors and developers view the Council.

We feel that the new reporting on planning performance is a good start that can be improved with more openness and a greater range of content. The reports contain basic statistical information but they do not include analysis of that information so that the Council can learn and improve, for example, when Council decisions on planning applications have been overturned on appeal. The reports do not contain information about the impact of approved applications, such as the amount of new housing, floorspace created and the number of new jobs that approved planning applications allow companies to create. The reports could provide valuable information to councillors and to the public, about improvement and progress towards meeting the Council's vision.

The Council should improve communication and trust between senior managers and planning staff. Some staff in the planning service perceive a lack of support from senior management. Having spoken to a range of staff and management, it is our view that this perception stems from a few isolated incidents rather than a general approach, and that there is senior management support for the planning service. It does suggest, to us that communication could be improved. And that an inclusive process of service 'continual improvement' - to improve processes and focus resources on delivery of the new Council vision - could help address some of the communication and perception problems.

The Service will benefit from time allocated to develop Planning Service staff. The Planning Service staff are a relatively young and technically skilled team. Due to the limited staff resource in the planning team, focus has been - by necessity - on technical delivery of policy, plans and processing planning applications. So staff have had little time or opportunity to develop their skills in the areas such as service improvement, strategic management and political awareness. We feel that staff development, of these and other areas, should be an integral part of any programme of continual service improvement.

The absence of a Local Plan has significant implications for members of Planning Committee and will likely require strong leadership to deal appropriately with some applications. For example, developers may make applications that the Council does not think fit with its current vision. The fact that the draft Local Plan was withdrawn after 'effective approval by an inspector', means that developers may put in applications that are in line with the withdrawn Local plan policies. Councillors will benefit from very robust advice from planning, legal and the S151 officers to avoid refusing applications without sound policy based reasons and that

are likely to be granted on appeal. This is important for councillors because of the direct financial implications (awards of costs payable by the Council), indirect costs (staff time), and possible lost revenue (the proposal in the Autumn Statement to withhold 'new homes bonus' where applications have been refused by the Council, but approved on appeal).

3.2 Community leadership and engagement

Strengths

Councillors are committed to high quality decision making as part of their community leadership role. Historically, during the Mayoral regime, some councillors felt that they were sidelined from strategic decision making. Despite this, councillors we spoke to remain committed to being involved in decision making to ensure the best outcomes for the people of Hartlepool.

The Council recognises the benefits of community engagement and community planning. It has a strong history of undertaking neighbourhood action plans. It has agreed to three neighbourhood plan areas and the forums to develop the plans, including the Headland Neighbourhood Plan. The Council has allocated resources in terms of officer time to help bring forward these plans. Planning policy staff are providing a strong input to these to help ensure that they are in conformity with national and local planning policies. Training for all councillors on neighbourhood planning is being provided by PAS in March.

The Council has a good track record of consultation in developing planning policy. We found that it had gone beyond its own commitments set out in the statement of community involvement in some of the consultation activity around plan preparation. It had also complied in relation to its duty to co-operate, as evidenced by the Inspector in the examination of the Local Plan that was subsequently withdrawn.

Areas for consideration

The process and operation of the Planning Committee could be more accessible. We found that the layout and seating arrangements were not ideal because it would be difficult for a visiting member of the public to be sure who were councillors; officers; and people such as developers there to make representations.

Councillors need to ensure that they focus on the strategic decisions and do not get involved in day to day operational decisions that are more appropriately dealt with by officers under delegated authority.

There is an opportunity for councillors to engage not only in the working group around the emerging Local Plan but also to exercise their community leadership role by engaging with local communities about the plan. Some councillors told us there was insufficient community support for the withdrawn Local Plan and they now have a role in building community support for the new forthcoming Local Plan. The mechanism and governance for involving councillors and securing their engagement in the emerging plan needs to be established.

3.3 Management, service delivery and service to users

Strengths

The recently re-organised and restructured Planning Service combines development control; planning policy; and landscape planning and conservation teams. This has resulted in officers working in different areas and has helped to get on top of planning performance as well as enhance the skills and experience of the team. This flexible approach should put the Council in a good position to deal with the varying demands on different parts of the Service in the future. This will help to respond to changes in legislation and an increase in planning applications as the economy starts to pick up.

Of particular note was that officers from the policy team had - with support from development control officers - been able to process planning applications, thus leading to an overall improvement in performance when looking at the 13 week performance statistics. Consideration needs to be given to this issue as resources are once more diverted to address the preparation of the new Local Plan.

The Planning Service provides a generally good service to its customers. We looked at the work that the Planning Service delivers, and its workload relative to the resources that the Council is able to commit. We found, for example, that the delegated reports were of a high standard and quality. We felt that - in relation to the level of staff resource, and level of past investment in technology - the Service provides a good and technically sound service to applicants.

The Planning Service has hardworking and committed staff. As well as talking to staff about the work they do, we talked to a range customers, work colleagues and councillors. Some typical comments we received about the staff were: “excellent”, “competent”, and “helpful”. Although there were some comments about it depending on ‘who you get’ and some officers are too negative in their approach to development, this was not the majority view. We think that it is important that senior managers and councillors are explicit in their appreciation of the work of the staff, because we feel that there is a staff perception that they are not trusted and valued - and this has an impact on staff morale.

The Council has introduced some new enabling initiatives. For example, the Council provides 'one stop shop' support for developers to guide them through the regulation process. This provides access to the right people to advise on a range of regulatory matters such as environmental health; highways; and planning policy. The Council has also successfully introduced charging a fee for pre-application advice. It has managed to set the fee at an appropriate level that has not had a significant impact on the level of pre-application requests. This is important because the service now provides some revenue to cover the costs of delivering the advice but without putting off developers from using it.

The Service is increasingly open to external ideas and good practice from elsewhere for continual improvement. It has recently started to use mentoring as a tool for supporting development. This has resulted in the production of a draft action plan aimed at delivering a range of strategic and operational improvements to the Service. This plan needs some further refinement to identify priorities, scale, and to focus on plan-making as well as development control .

Areas for consideration

Whilst we heard about some very good working relationships at an individual level between councillors and officers, we also heard about an underlying mutual distrust, sometimes played out in public at committee. We found a lack of understanding of the respective roles of councillors and officers in policy formulation and decision making. Some views were expressed that some councillors did not understand the implications of some of the decisions they made. Some councillors told us that they felt that officers ignored their views in terms of what is important politically.

We found that many councillors wish to be involved in decisions at too detailed a level. Whilst we understand councillors desire to be involved in decisions, they should understand the importance of some decisions being delegated to officers. As we have stated above, we believe the officer handling of delegated decisions is a strength. Having an appropriate scheme of delegation is important because it allows councillors to focus their time on determining the important and significant applications, whilst officers process more straight forward ones.

Senior officers and councillors should work closely with planning officers when engaging in dialogue with developers. It is inevitable that developers will contact senior officers and politicians to discuss proposals. It is understandable that the Council wishes to encourage and facilitate development in the Borough - but it is important that development is in accordance with local and national planning policies. Senior officers and councillors should support and encourage developers to take up pre-application advice but without assurances of the outcome of that advice. Planning officers also need to try to facilitate development wherever possible and find ways to overcome initial barriers that exist but also to be able to speak without fear or favour if planning policy really does prohibit particular proposals.

The Service would benefit by introducing performance management and a related culture. Currently the service relies on strong interpersonal relationships and uses an ad-hoc approach to performance management, partly because officers have high case loads and lack of capacity to develop this area. But this means that managers are unable to see any problems as they start to emerge and deal quickly with them. This is particularly important in the current climate of diminishing public sector resources and the potential for an increased volume of applications due to an uplift in the economy. Without a good and systematic understanding of the performance of individuals and the Service as a whole, the Council could find that it struggles to maintain performance levels and fails to spot problems soon enough. A systematic approach to performance management would allow the Service to work with any underperforming staff to develop and help them improve and to reward high performing staff.

The Council should consider how to develop capacity around strategic leadership and management for the Planning Service. Having combined several planning teams into one, the Council recognises the need to carry out a strategic review of the Service. It is not clear how this will be delivered within existing resources. Competing demands combined with the low level of strategic management experience in some parts of the Service mean that some additional support may be needed. An audit of existing skills and resources to deliver priorities should be included in the review.

The Service could improve its current workflow processes and the use and functionality of IT. For example, we looked into the validation of planning applications and found overly complex processes involving multiple handling. We also believe the possibility exists to explore increasing resilience and flexibility between planning and building control support. The Council has only made limited investment in IT for planning and the current system is inefficient. IT provision is basic, such as GIS, and the IT that is available is not well used, with a continued reliance on printing paper copies for use.

3.4 Partnership working

Strengths

The Council has a track record of collaborative working at an officer level. Various planning officers meet with colleagues from other councils to share experiences. And the recent Local Plan examination found that the Council had met the criteria necessary to pass the duty to cooperate test.

The Council works with external partners to deliver efficiencies. For example, it works collaboratively with Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council to deliver an archaeology service hosted at Hartlepool. And the Council is selling some spare capacity in its own trees and ecology services to support others.

The Planning Service is well respected and valued by some other parts of the Council that we spoke to. We were told of good cross working between planning and regeneration and housing services. For example, the Council is one of few nationally that make good use of section 215 notices. The Planning Service works closely with housing and environmental health colleagues to serve these 'untidy land' notices - helping improve the appearance of Hartlepool.

Areas for consideration

The Council should consider exploring the opportunities for partnership working with adjacent authorities to improve resource resilience. For example, the Council could investigate whether any neighbouring authorities might be able to share capacity to provide resilience to deal with peaks and troughs in workloads.

The Council should consider better partnership working with developers. It is common practice elsewhere to use regular developers forums and satisfaction surveys to identify what is working in the Service and what steps need to be taken to make improvements. And the Council could make better use of planning performance agreements by using them as a positive development tool rather than simply a mechanism for extending timelines.

In order to ensure Hartlepool has a meaningful role at the sub-regional level, there needs to be strong political engagement – outside the Council - on strategic planning and economic regeneration issues. This is important to ensure that the Council builds on its track record of attracting high levels of investment in the area. For example, the Council could benefit from exploring how to ensure its vision and the emerging Local Plan priorities are reflected in LEP priorities and strategies for spending.

3.5 Achieving outcomes

Strengths

The Council is pro-development and provides a good level of certainty for potential developers. The Council approved 94% of planning applications between 2011 and 2013. Compared to other councils in the sub-region, this was the highest level of approvals.

The planning service has proven technical ability in all aspects of planning activity. For example, the policy staff delivered a technically sound draft Local Plan that met all key inspector requirements such as a sound evidence base, deliverability and the duty to co-operate. However, there were some areas of policy that the new administration was not happy with.

The development control staff has significantly improved performance on dealing with planning applications. Last summer there was concern that the Council may be designated for 'special measures' based on the number of major applications determined within 13 weeks. However, the Planning Service has successfully improved its performance in this area. The Council determined over 80% of major applications within the thirteen week period during each of the last three quarters. And the Planning Service is confident that performance will remain well above the designation threshold in the future.

Areas for consideration

The Council does not give a clear message about what it has achieved. From what we observed, we believe that the Council has a good story to tell about the planning approvals it has given resulting in new housing, floor space, and new jobs created. However, we found it very difficult to find information about this success. It is important that the Council does make this information available to the public. And in particular, for developers to know that the Council is 'open for business' and dealings with the Council will be supportive, raise realistic expectations and give consistent advice to the developer and recommendations to committee.

In order for the new Local Plan to deliver the councillors desired outcomes, there needs to be effective joint working between councillors and officers in producing the plan. We feel that it is important that councillors feel fully confident that their vision and views are being appropriately built in to the new Local Plan. Some councillors are concerned that they feel remote from the plan making process and that they may not feel ownership of the resulting plan and the policies it contains. We feel that there is an opportunity to address this issue with a small but inclusive officer - councillor Local Plan working group that includes representation of 'backbench' councillors. Councillors also have a role to play in engaging the local communities as the new local plan emerges and of ensuring the buy in of the local community to the new strategy. Clear and transparent mechanisms are needed to ensure wider councillor ownership of the plan. It is important that policies reflect councillor aspirations and that councillors feel ownership of the policies - so that developers can be confident in spending the time and money to submit applications to the Council.

We perceive that there needs to be a wider, awareness of the direct and indirect financial benefits of development, alongside quality, to the long term sustainability of Hartlepool. For example, new development may bring in significant direct financial benefits from business

rates, section 106 funds and New Homes Bonus. There may also be significant indirect benefits, such as, more local people in work and more residents spending money locally. It is important that a wide range of councillors, planning and finance officers are aware of these wider financial implications and the important contribution that planning makes to place shaping and delivering council corporate priorities.

The planning service requires resource resilience to maintain the existing standards of service. This may require some internal restructuring to provide flexibility to redirect existing resources to where they are most needed. Or to add resources if necessary, for example, to overcome short term workload peaks, to enable plan production and determination of planning applications in a timely way.

The Council needs to be aware of the potential cost implications of losing appeals on planning applications that it has refused. The Council lost a high percentage of appeals between 2011-2013, when compared to other councils in its sub-region. Although Hartlepool refused fewer applications than other local authorities within the region, 38% of those refusals were appealed against (a higher rate than regional peers). Over the two year period, 21 appeals were determined, and 62% of those were allowed in favour of the appellant. This is significantly higher than the national average (around 35%). The Council would benefit from an analysis of why it loses proportionately more appeals than others. In our opinion, it needs to be able to have open, transparent and 'no blame' internal discussions about that learning -so that the Council can minimise such lost appeals, and associated costs, in the future.

It is important that officers and councillors are focussed on delivering the Council vision, and the forthcoming 'Hartlepool's Regeneration Masterplan'. With a clear vision, masterplan, and consistent supporting policies, it will be easier for councillors and officers to present a unified approach to planning applications, and this will help encourage applications from developers and minimise lost appeals.

Planning Advisory Service - recommended support

The Planning Advisory Service (PAS) offers a wealth of information, tools and activities.

Information is available at:

<http://www.pas.gov.uk>

Plan-making support

PAS can offer plan making support in a range of areas http://www.pas.gov.uk/plan-making/events-and-support1/-/journal_content/56/332612/15148/ARTICLE

A 'Getting Your Plan in Place' session for councillors on the Plan steering or working group; see http://www.pas.gov.uk/web/pas-test-site/events-and-support/-/journal_content/56/332612/4077334/ARTICLE

Local Plans checklist: PAS has updated the soundness self-assessment, and the plan making legal compliance checklists. These documents should help you to work through the soundness and legal requirements from the Act, Regulations, and NPPF.

<http://www.pas.gov.uk/pas/core/page.do?pagelId=109568>

Improvement/quality support

PAS can discuss how we might be able to help you with service improvements.

Planning Committee and Councillor support

Councillor briefings <http://www.pas.gov.uk/pas/core/page.do?pagelId=714986#contents-6>

Probity in Planning Guide

PAS has published a guide reflecting the changes in the Localism Act around probity in planning for councillors. This guide will help councillors to understand roles and responsibilities, and how to make sure they can be an effective councillor without getting into 'probity' difficulties.

<http://www.pas.gov.uk/pas/core/page.do?pagelId=296410x>

Development Management

PAS are working on a suite of documents to support the development management process, including pre-application advice, councillor involvement, and Planning Performance Agreements. These will be published in spring.



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PLANNING PEER CHALLENGE ACTION PLAN

Recommendations	Action	Timescale	Responsible Officer
<p>Improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the Planning Committee including visiting some others to compare and contrast good practice. In particular.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reduce the size of the Committee to around 12 • improve the layout and operation of the Committee to ensure clarity and transparency • build respect between Councillors and officers to present a more coherent approach to decision making • training for Councillors and Officers to ensure an understanding of respective roles, expected values and behaviours. 	<p>Council has agreed to reduce the numbers on the Planning Committee from 16 to 11 with no substitutes with effect from the new 2014/15 municipal year.</p> <p>Discussions to be held with the Chair of Planning Committee with a view to introducing a revised layout and operation of the Committee in the new municipal year.</p> <p>Introduce regular meetings between Members and Officers to discuss ongoing and forthcoming issues. This action will be enhanced following PSA/Members/ Officers Action Planning Day to be held in the new municipal year.</p> <p>Repeat and enhance training provided to all Planning Committee Members and to include Officers. An annual training programme will be prepared.</p>	<p>Completed</p> <p>New municipal year</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>June 2014</p>	<p>Monitoring Officer</p> <p>Assistant Director (Regeneration)/ Planning Services Manager in consultation with Chair of Planning Committee</p> <p>Assistant Director (Regeneration)/ Planning Services Manager in consultation with Chair of Planning Committee</p> <p>Assistant Director (Regeneration)/ Planning Services Manager in consultation with Chair of Planning Committee</p>

Recommendations	Action	Timescale	Responsible Officer
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> more pro-active legal advice in relation to governance and decision making bespoke training for Planning Committee Members linked to their specific needs to make real practical improvements to current practice 	<p>Chief Solicitor, or in his absence, the Commercial Solicitor to attend all Planning Committee meetings.</p> <p>Depth and intensity of current training to all Planning Committee Members to be enhanced with regular training throughout the year.</p>	<p>Immediate</p> <p>June 2014 initially and then ongoing</p>	<p>Chief Solicitor</p> <p>Assistant Director (Regeneration)/ Planning Services Manager/ Chief Solicitor</p>
<p>Introduce a systematic approach to performance and service management to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> regular reporting of key performance data across the whole team to Regeneration Services Committee regular reporting to Planning Committee of key performance data for the service to include more systematic analysis of what the data shows, for example, the outcome and learning from appeals, as well as progress against the Council's vision in terms of numbers of houses built etc regular review meetings between staff and team leaders to monitor progress on caseload 	<p>Already actioned through the introduction of quarterly reports which include performance data.</p> <p>Already actioned – as above.</p> <p>Already actioned.</p>	<p>Completed</p> <p>Completed</p> <p>Completed</p>	<p>Planning Services Manager</p> <p>Planning Services Manager</p> <p>Planning Services Manager</p>

Recommendations	Action	Timescale	Responsible Officer
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> regular meetings of the Planning Services Manager and team leaders to discuss strategic management issues across the Planning Service 	<p>Already actioned.</p>	<p>Completed</p>	<p>Planning Services Manager</p>
<p>Ensure Councillor / officer working group for the development of the new Local Plan is inclusive - including development control planners who will be delivering the plan and backbencher Councillors. The group needs to meet regularly and start early on in the process. Agree how the group then liaises with the rest of the Councillors.</p>	<p>Meetings already organised and taken place with Chairs of Policy Committees. A Officer/Member Working Group to include backbench Councillors to be established.</p>	<p>May/June 2014</p>	<p>Assistant Director (Regeneration) in consultation with the Leader</p>
<p>Implement a strategic review of service to include a:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> review of current and future staffing requirements to ensure continued flexible approach to use of staff across planning disciplines review of current and desired values and cultures and development of action plan to move from current to desired - to include officers and Councillors 	<p>Already actioned.</p> <p>Action Plan being developed and see other actions in respect of integration of Officers and Members regarding joint working and creation of respectful professional relationships.</p> <p>A rhetorical and continuous set of actions to be developed following Action Planning Day and beyond.</p>	<p>Completed</p> <p>Start immediately and ongoing</p>	<p>Assistant Director (Regeneration)/ Planning Services Manager</p> <p>Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods</p>

Recommendations	Action	Timescale	Responsible Officer
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> review of business processes using LEAN or similar approach to remove duplication and ‘hand offs’ and ensure a focus on customers review of whether existing IT is fit for purpose with recommendations for any necessary investment. 	<p>Business Process Reengineering to be introduced and on current processes and customer focus to be reinforced as the driver behind service provision. This action to be supported by appropriate outcomes.</p> <p>Review existing systems to ascertain whether they are fit for purpose and ensure current IT provision is utilised to the full through additional training for staff and interaction with C.I.C.T.</p>	<p>August 2014</p> <p>July 2014</p>	<p>Planning Services Manager</p> <p>Assistant Director (Regeneration)/ Planning Services Manager/ Assistant Chief Executive/Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods</p>
<p>Invest in staff with a developmental programme including political awareness and mentoring with a focus on strategic management and leadership</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Informal training to be undertaken by the Assistant Director (Regeneration) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop appropriate programme of training for planning staff to ensure succession management is embedded and by exposure to Members an understanding of political imperatives and priorities is obtained and respected. 	<p>June 2014 and ongoing</p>	<p>Assistant Director (Regeneration)/Planning Services Manager</p>
<p>Set up a major projects officer group, chaired by the Assistant Director, to include service managers from economic development and planning and other key staff to:</p>			

Recommendations	Action	Timescale	Responsible Officer
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • review key projects applications • monitor progress against Council vision • monitor planning inquiries and pre-application <p>maximise the potential planning and economic benefits for Hartlepool.</p>	<p>Mayor Project Officer Group to be established to review all key applications.</p> <p>Similar arrangements as above but to include Chief Executive and other senior officers and where necessary politicians.</p> <p>Continuous process already in place and part of the day job.</p> <p>The whole ethos already embedded within the Council of economic prosperity being inextricably linked with planning decisions and guidance will be reinforced through the Mayor Project Group and the actions described earlier.</p>	<p>Immediate</p> <p>Immediate and ongoing</p> <p>Immediate and ongoing</p> <p>Immediate and ongoing</p>	<p>Assistant Director (Regeneration)</p> <p>Assistant Director (Regeneration)</p> <p>Assistant Director (Regeneration)/ Planning Services Manager</p> <p>Assistant Director (Regeneration)/ Planning Services Manager</p>
<p>Ensure Leader and Chief Officers meeting agendas include update on key strategic planning and regeneration issues.</p>	<p>Already in operation and includes not only Leader but all Policy Chairs. CMT also meet all political groups, usually on a monthly basis, to outline all key strategic issues.</p>	<p>Completed and to be reinforced throughout the municipal year.</p>	<p>Chief Executive in consultation with political groups</p>
<p>Develop a pre-application protocol to include (where appropriate) involvement of key senior officers and Councillors as well as planning officers</p>	<p>Already agreed and implemented. Evidence of first two meetings has been positive and well received by potential developers/objectors and Members.</p>	<p>Actioned and ongoing.</p>	<p>Assistant Director (Regeneration)/ Planning Services Manager</p>