

REGENERATION SERVICES COMMITTEE AGENDA



Thursday 23 October, 2014

at 9.30 am

**in Committee Room B,
at the Civic Centre, Hartlepool.**

MEMBERS: REGENERATION SERVICES COMMITTEE

Councillors S Akers-Belcher, Cook, Cranney, Dawkins, Hargreaves, Morris and Payne.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

2. TO RECEIVE ANY DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST BY MEMBERS

3. MINUTES

- 3.1 To receive the minutes of the meeting held on 18 September 2014 (*previously published*)

4. ITEM FOR DISCUSSION

- 4.1 Tees Valley Unlimited – Managing Director's Update – *verbal report*.

5. OTHER ITEMS REQUIRING DECISION

- 5.1 Carr/Hopps Street Housing Regeneration Area Proposals – *Assistant Director, Regeneration*
5.2 2015 Library Service Review – *Assistant Director, Regeneration*
5.3 Constructing Hartlepool Strategy – *Assistant Director, Regeneration*
5.4 Mill House Leisure Centre – Review of Child to Adult Ratios for Swimming – *Director of Public Health*
5.5 Health and Safety Service Plan 2014/15 – *Director of Public Health*
5.6 Trading Standards Service Plan 2014/15 – *Director of Public Health*



6. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

- 6.1 Quarterly Update Report for Public Protection – *Director of Public Health*
- 6.2 Hartlepool Tree Strategy 2011 – 2016 Progress Report – *Assistant Director, Regeneration*
- 6.3 Tees Valley and Vale of Mowbray LEADER Programme Local Development Strategy – *Assistant Director, Regeneration*
- 6.4 Tees Valley Workforce Skills Project – Interim Report – *Assistant Director, Regeneration*

7. ANY OTHER BUSINESS WHICH THE CHAIR CONSIDERS URGENT

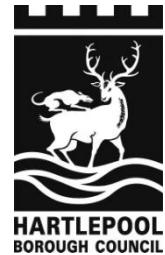
FOR INFORMATION:

Date of next meeting – Thursday 20 November 2014 at 9.30 am in the Civic Centre, Hartlepool.



REGENERATION SERVICES COMMITTEE

23rd October 2014



Report of: Assistant Director (Regeneration)

Subject: CARR/HOPPS STREET HOUSING REGENERATION
AREA PROPOSALS

1. TYPE OF DECISION/APPLICABLE CATEGORY

1.1 Non Key Decision.

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 2.1 To provide Members with a progress update on the implementation of the Carr/Hopps Street regeneration project including a full review of the acquisition process to date. The report will set out the recommended option for the conclusion of the scheme including proposals for selective demolition to commence in 2015.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Carr/Hopps housing regeneration area includes 188 residential terraced properties including 2 properties with a commercial element in the streets of Rodney Street (numbers 17-73 odds and 24-80 evens) Richardson Street, Blake Street (numbers 2-18 evens) Carr Street, Jobson Street and Hopps Street). The site is 1.56 hectares in size.
- 3.2 The issues associated with obsolete terraced properties have been prevalent in the central area of Hartlepool since the late 1990's. Problems such as antisocial behaviour, abandonment and sharp decline in owner occupation led to a severe decline in some neighbourhoods and attracted large scale speculation in the property market with buy to let. In response to these issues Hartlepool Borough Council developed a housing regeneration strategy and collaborated in the Tees Valley partnership to implement a 15 year programme of Housing Market Renewal (HMR). The Hartlepool Housing Regeneration strategy identified an oversupply of terraced properties, approximately 2000, due to housing market failure and changing aspirations. To date the housing regeneration schemes have delivered multi-million pound new build investment and successfully attracted owner occupiers back to the central area of the town by creating mixed tenure developments, sustainable communities and enhancing localism through community regeneration. To

date over 1000 obsolete properties have been demolished and approximately 500 new homes constructed on HMR sites. Development is ongoing on both the Alexandra Square and Headway sites.

- 3.3 The Carr/Hopps street regeneration site was located within the New Deal for Communities (NDC) area and was identified as an area for intervention through the NDC Community Housing Plan (CHP) an integrated part of Hartlepool's HMR programme. Following the end of the NDC programme in 2010 the Council became responsible for the delivery of this scheme and it became part of the HMR programme reported to Tees Valley Unlimited (TVU) and Government. The Carr/Hopps Street regeneration area is the last piece in the jigsaw of incremental housing regeneration and must be concluded to prevent the regeneration successes reversing into a rapid spiral of decline, to protect the investment made in surrounding areas and to help households who are trapped in properties that are in poor condition.
- 3.4 Given that the Carr/Hopps Street area was part of the NDC CHP, significant consultation has taken place over a number of years with local residents. Investment took place in the streets by the NDC programme with an offer which supported and encouraged owner occupiers to take up grants and loans to relocate to the area. This was a choice that few took up and the scheme failed to make an impact against the backdrop of decline in owner occupation and a rapid increase in property purchasing by speculative investors. Properties within the central block of the site were identified for acquisition and clearance to create open space; acquisition by agreement of all the private interests could not be achieved. Further research and consultation was undertaken in 2007 (this included individual visits to all occupants) which highlighted that the area had not improved since the NDC intervention, the area had declined significantly and a more substantial area for intervention was identified. Resident consultation highlighted that 90% wanted more significant intervention with 76% overall supporting the full scheme boundary, this was subsequently approved for intervention.
- 3.5 The approach to HMR programme 2008-12 previously agreed by Council was to focus on three sites within the core HMR areas of West Central and North Central Hartlepool the delivery of which was considered to be achievable within the short to medium term, the Carr/Hopps Street was identified as one of these sites. In selecting these sites Members were aware that, although there was not sufficient resources available within the 4 year funding programme to fully deliver the Carr/Hopps regeneration site, the HMR programme as a 15 year strategy to deal with obsolescence meant there were good prospects of further funding being made available in the period beyond March 2011 to allow this site to be delivered. Therefore acquisition from owner occupiers progressed on this site through to 2012.
- 3.6 The comprehensive spending review of 2011 effectively abolished the HMR programme by the removal of further funding. This was followed by significant pressure and lobbying from the areas affected and subsequently the Government made available a HMR Transition fund to allow the challenged pathfinders to complete an exit programme for regeneration schemes.

Cabinet approved reports on the 1st August 2011 and the 24th January 2012 approving a Hartlepool application to this fund, this application was subsequently successful.

- 3.7 Hartlepool Borough Council was awarded £2million transition funding to 'relocate trapped households and to complete a structured exit from the HMR programme'. On the 19th March 2012 Cabinet approved the HMR Transition Funding project plan which included consultation arrangements, tenant relocation packages, compensation packages for property owners and the timetable and phasing of acquisitions. Acquisition of properties has progressed since the plan was approved in March 2012 and Cabinet was presented with an update report on the 17th December 2012. At this stage the risks to project delivery were set out. These included owners unwillingness to sell and the financial risks associated with the outcome of the Raby Road Corridor Lands Tribunal.
- 3.8 A review report was presented to Members on the 24th October 2013 setting out progress in relation to property acquisition and options for future delivery of the scheme. The high risk of taking forward Planning Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) powers were outlined in the report and Committee endorsed the position in relation to CPO. It was determined that the Council would not use its CPO powers and that acquisition by agreement only of privately owned properties would continue with a review to be presented to Committee in October 2014. The report highlighted initial proposals for selective demolition and determined that this would need to be explored further post October 2014. It was also determined that Hart Lane would be excluded from the demolition boundary and a grant refurbishment scheme would be implemented to bring these properties up to decent standards.

4. CURRENT POSITION

- 4.1 Considerable resident consultation has been taken forward throughout the duration of the project implementation, mainly on a one to one basis with residents. Since the last report all owners have been contacted on numerous occasions informing them of the decision and timescales, communication and dialogue has continued throughout the 12 months.
- 4.2 Since this last report to Regeneration Services Committee on the 24th October 2013 acquisition of privately owned properties has been progressing well. To date 150 properties have been acquired (3 of which are in the agreed sale position pending legal completion) out of 175 properties within the scheme. This equates to 86% of the site acquired by Hartlepool Borough Council by agreement. Of the remaining properties one is an owner occupier. Officers have attempted to contact this owner occupier over a 12 month period without success; this owner has previously expressed his desire to remain in the property. The remaining properties are owned by non-resident owners with 13 of the 24 properties currently occupied by tenants. To date 17 of these have been inspected with formal offers to purchase made and no valuation has taken place on 7 properties as the owner has failed to secure

access or has not responded to contact from the Council. Owners are aware through various correspondence that the Council would be reviewing its acquisition process from October 2014 and this may lead to the Council ceasing acquisition on this scheme and progressing with selective demolition. **Appendix 1** demonstrates the overall ownership profile across the scheme.

- 4.3 Following the decision to remove Hart Lane from the demolition boundary, a grant refurbishment programme has begun. This is targeted for completion by the end of the financial year 2014/15. All owners have been contacted, a scope of works agreed and refurbishment work has commenced on 3 properties to date. Four properties acquired by the Council on Hart Lane have now been fully refurbished through the empty homes programme and are ready to let with tenants allocated.
- 4.4 The management of the scheme on the ground is now being carried out by the Council's Housing Services team. This includes weekly inspections, property security and liaison with owners and tenants. This role has previously been carried out by Housing Hartlepool and the handover of responsibilities forms part of the housing management transition arrangements from Housing Hartlepool to the Council to be complete by 31st March 2015. The past 12 months have seen an increase in complaints from surrounding residents due to the declining condition of the area as more properties become empty and boarded. There have been 35 instances of break-ins reported on the site within the past 12 months and Housing Standards Officers have investigated four housing conditions complaints from tenants. This demonstrates the increasing pressure on both local residents and Council services on managing the decline of this scheme which has added resource implications.

5. PROPOSALS

- 5.1 The report of the 24th October 2013 firstly requested a review in October 2014 and recommended that if acquisition by agreement could not be achieved by October 2014 then selective demolition should be considered. The Council is progressing well with acquisition on the site and the scheme is being delivered within the budget parameters however, of those properties remaining in private ownership it is considered unlikely that all interests will be acquired by agreement. It is therefore proposed that selective demolition is taken forward.
- 5.2 Given the extent of the Council's ownership on the site it is considered that a development programme of demolition, new build housing and property refurbishment would be the most suitable option moving forward. The ownership profile allows for a number of large blocks to be demolished and where private interests remain, the site will be demolished around these properties. Suitable remediation work is to be carried out to ensure all remaining properties are protected, secure and stable. This includes the rebuilding of gable end walls to all exposed properties. Where Council owned properties remain the refurbishment of these will need to be factored into a future overall business plan for the redevelopment of the site. It is

therefore proposed that the procurement of a demolition contractor is taken forward with the aim of demolition commencing in Spring 2015. It would therefore be prudent to extend the opportunity for owners to sell their property until the demolition contractor is procured to maximise owners opportunity to sell and maximise the Council's ownership profile prior to demolition.

- 5.3 The risks for selective demolition is that this is a more complicated redevelopment scheme and potentially more difficult to attract a developer, in order to carry out the scheme redevelopment. In addition owners of remaining properties would need to be encouraged and enforcement powers used where necessary to bring their properties back into use. However, initial market testing suggests that there would be interest from developers/ development companies in a selective demolition, new build and refurbishment scheme. Some initial scoping has been conducted to look at what is possible to achieve through a selective clearance, new build and selective refurbishment scheme. This work has suggested that a transformational change can be achieved and that this could be financially viable to deliver, in particular through an institutional investment model. Any such scheme would be based on the current footprint of roads and services.
- 5.4 This is supported by the Gillespies Tees Valley Housing Sites Urban Design Sketchbook (April 2013) which highlighted that selective demolition could mean options for redevelopment would be more limited, however, it would be possible to design a scheme which could transform the area whilst retaining some of the properties across the site, this study provided sketch layouts for a possible redevelopment based on the ownership profile at the time of writing.
- 5.5 When determining the future tenure of a redevelopment scheme it is important to review current demand for both private sale and rented accommodation in central Hartlepool. The Council is currently producing a revised Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) and this will provide valuable evidence on housing need and demand to plan for the future development of the scheme. Given the current number of new build schemes it is unlikely that there will be strong demand for new build properties to purchase within this area.
- 5.6 It is proposed that further work is conducted to explore future redevelopment options through a plan for development for the scheme. There are a number of options available for the future redevelopment but the scheme should be a planned approach with a viable business case and provide a transformational change to the area. The Council could consider advertising the site as a land sale opportunity with conditions on the future redevelopment of the scheme. The conditions should reflect the proposal for both new build on cleared areas of the site and property refurbishment of existing Council owned stock. The Council could also seek grant funding for the delivery of new build affordable housing accompanied with empty homes funding for property refurbishment. The benefits and risks of all options are to be explored.

6. FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 6.1 The option presented has a number of budget scenarios which have been modeled to determine the impact on the available budget. If the Council successfully acquires all properties on the scheme and carries out full scheme demolition (scenario 1) the estimated cost of this is £2,138,000. If the Council fails to acquire any further properties and demolishes its current stock holding on the site there is an estimated cost of £2,203,000. This scenario has factored site remediation costs and costs for refurbishing properties owned by the Council which are not identified for demolition. Table 1 below provides a brief overview of the budget.

Table 1.

Budget Overview	£000
Available Budget	£2,298
Scenario 1 (full scheme acquisition and demolition)	£2,138
Scenario 2 (Selective demolition of Council stock)	£2,203

- 6.2 The estimated costs of both scenarios can be accommodated within the existing approved funding. However, it should be noted that the cost estimates are based on modeling assumptions which are subject to risks and uncertainties and therefore could be subject to change. A contingency has been included to mitigate these risks where possible. The budget may fall somewhere between the two scenarios depending on acquisitions over the proposed extended acquisition period.

7. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY CONSIDERATIONS

- 7.1 There are no equality or diversity implications.

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

- 8.1 There are no Section 17 implications.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

9.1 Committee is requested to:

- 1) Note the contents of the report and in particular the budget position and delivery option presented.
- 2) Agree that selective demolition of Council owned property is to take place on the Carr/Hopps Street site and agree the recommendation to begin procurement of a demolition contractor and for demolition to commence when possible in early 2015.
- 3) Agree that the option for owners to sell the property to the Council be extended until the 24th December 2014 in line with the timetable for letting of the demolition contract.
- 4) Progress options for future scheme delivery with a focus on financial viability and delivering a scheme to meet current housing demand, which continues to regenerate with sustainable development plans for the area.

10. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 10.1 The recommendations provide the opportunity for the Council to progress further acquisition of the scheme whilst moving forward with a selective demolition programme on the scheme. This will not only reduce the Council's ongoing liability but provide more certainty to local residents and owners regarding the future of the area. Options for future scheme delivery can also be progressed and reflect on the findings of the updated Strategic Housing Market Assessment in relation to housing need and demand within the area.

11. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 11.1 Regeneration Services Committee Report 24th October 2013 – Carr/Hopps Street Area Regeneration Review.
http://www.hartlepool.gov.uk/meetings/meeting/3032/regeneration_services_committee

12. CONTACT OFFICER

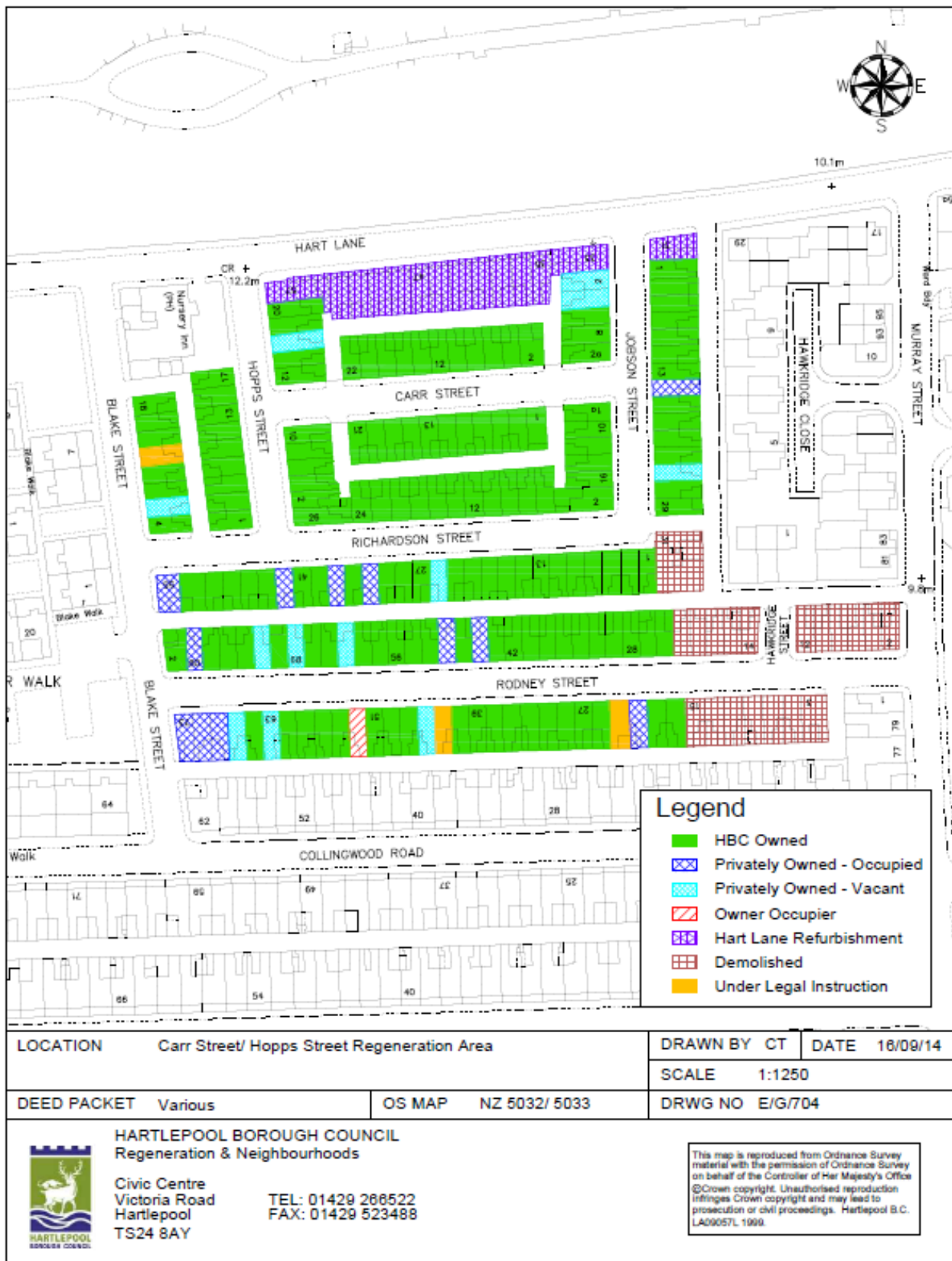
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Carr/Hopps Scheme Ownership Profile



REGENERATION SERVICES COMMITTEE

23rd October 2014



Report of: Assistant Director (Regeneration)

Subject: 2015 LIBRARY SERVICE REVIEW

1. TYPE OF DECISION/APPLICABLE CATEGORY

1.1 Non Key Decision.

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

2.1 The purpose of this report is to establish the scope of the 2015 Library Service review.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 At the Regeneration Services Committee Meeting on the 24 July 2014 Members were informed of the proposed Regeneration Division savings for 2015/16. Branch library closures do not form part of the proposed savings, however it was agreed that a Library Service review should be undertaken in anticipation of the need for future savings.
The Committee resolved that the potential closure of branch libraries should not form part of the review.

3.2 Details are provided in this report in relation to the;

- i. Proposed scope of the review.
- ii. Proposed consultation.
- iii. Associated risks and considerations.

3.3 Scope of the review

The review will consider a range of library operations; identifying new or alternate delivery methods to achieve improved services and/or identify potential savings.

The service areas under consideration as part of the review are as follows:-

3.3.1 Library opening hours

The current opening hours are:

	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
Headland	CLOSED	10-1 2-6	CLOSED	CLOSED	10-1 2-6	10-1
Owton Manor	10-1 2-6	10-1 2-6	10-1 2-6	10-1 2-6	CLOSED	10-1
Seaton Carew	10-1 2-6	10-1 2-6	CLOSED	10-1 2-6	10-1 2-6	10-1
Throston Grange	10-1 2-6	CLOSED	10-1 2-6	10-1 2-6	10-1 2-6	10-1
Central Library	10-6	10-6	10-6	10-6	10-6	10-2

The review will consider;

- reducing the level of opening hours across the branch network.
- the delivery of Saturday services.
- opening hours between Christmas and New Year.
- out of hours use of the Central Library's Community Room facilities.

3.3.2 Branch Library Delivery

The Library Service currently operates four part-time branch libraries. Throston Grange Library and Seaton Carew Library are purpose built facilities whilst Owton Manor Library is co-located with Owton Manor Community Centre and the Headland Library is located in the Borough Buildings.

The review will consider;

- The location and condition of the existing buildings.

The current branch network has been in existence since 1998 when the Headland Library was relocated from the Carnegie Building. The remaining libraries have not changed location for over 40 years during which time the communities have evolved and in many cases expanded. The review will consider whether the buildings are located in the best place to serve the current community needs.

- Opportunities for co-location within other Council or external buildings.

The review will consider the co-location of services, reporting on the potential for efficiencies and financial savings for operating within shared facilities. The suitability of alternative accommodation in terms of meeting current community needs will be included within the review.

- Relocation into commercial properties.

The availability of suitable property to replace each branch library and associated costs will be identified.

- New build.

There is an opportunity to look at the inclusion of a revised library service within the proposals for developing new shared community facilities within the Seaton Carew Masterplan. One of the priorities identified in the Seaton Carew Masterplan was to improve community facilities in Seaton, along with improvements to The Front and dealing with the Longscar Building. The inclusion of a revised library service as part of a new shared community building will be considered as part of the feasibility work that is to be carried out by the developers. The Regeneration Team will be overseeing this work liaising with the Library Team and other potential users of the building.

3.3.3 Outreach services

Outreach services support the static library network, delivering services directly into the community. Services include the mobile library, deposit collections to care homes and community groups and the Home Library Service.

The opportunities for these services to supplement or replace aspects of branch library service delivery are to be explored.

3.3.4 Bibliographical Services

The Bibliographical Service is responsible for the ordering and processing of library stock, maintaining the library catalogue and the operating the stock reservation service. It is proposed that the functions of the section be reviewed due to changes in the level of stock purchasing.

3.3.5 Volunteers

The Library Service has a proven track record in incorporating volunteer programs into service delivery. The review will look at the potential for extending volunteer opportunities in supporting or delivering library services.

3.3.6 E-services

The development of e-services has the potential to expand the library offer, providing 24 hours access to downloadable books. There are implementation and revenue costs associated with this alternative service provision. These will be reviewed alongside current library services.

3.5 **Consultation**

3.5.1 The consultation and engagement framework will be implemented over a six month period.

A consultation will comprise;

- public & staff surveys
- opportunity for written representations
- public consultation events

- focus groups

It is proposed that a formal twelve week consultation period starts in January 2015.

- 3.5.2 The findings of the consultation will inform the 2015 Library Service review report.

4. PROPOSALS

- 4.1 The proposed scope will form the framework for the 2015 Library Service review.
- 4.2 The outcome of the review, with associated recommendations, will be reported to the Regeneration Services Committee in July 2015.

5. FINANCIAL CONSIDERATION

- 5.1 The cost of consultation will be financed with existing Library Service budgets.

6. RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Too narrow a scope for the Library Service review will leave the Authority at risk of judicial challenge. See Section 7.

7 LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 7.1 The Public Library & Museum Act 1964 states the Local Authority has a statutory duty to provide a 'comprehensive and efficient' public library service.

There is no agreed definition of what comprises a 'comprehensive and efficient' service however there have been a number of high profile judicial challenges where Local Authorities have aimed to implement significant reductions in service delivery.

More recent cases have also questioned Authorities' obligations under the Public Sector Equality Duty as required by the Equality Act 2010.

- 7.2 To reduce the risk of challenge the 2015 Library Service review report will demonstrate an understanding of;
- the Council's local priorities and financial constraints
 - the profile and needs of different local communities and specific sectors of the community e.g. the elderly, pre-school children.

- delivery models and best practice from elsewhere.
- comparative impact of alternative approaches to delivering the service.
- identify communities that are able and willing to make a contribution.

The report will also address the following questions;

- are the current buildings fit for purpose in terms of access, condition etc.?
- can the facilities be used more flexibly?
- what other delivery partnerships could be formed inside and outside Hartlepool?
- is anyone else serving the needs of the target communities?
- is the current mode of delivery both meeting the demand and cost efficient?
- is a physical presence needed?
- what is being done to encourage use and maximize income?
- what scope is there for combining services?

- 7.3 The Library Service will consult with the public, staff, stakeholders and interested parties as part of the Library Service review process. A failure to consult effectively will leave the review open to judicial challenge.

8 STAFF CONSIDERATIONS

- 8.1 Reduced Staff morale during the review process. It is essential to engage with staff and ensure the mechanisms are in place to enable them to participate in the review process.

9. ASSET MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS

- 9.1 The library service will liaise with the Estates & Regeneration section with regard to;
- the existing library buildings.
 - opportunities for relocation and co-location.
 - scope for including library services in to future planning opportunities.

10. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY CONSIDERATIONS

- 10.1 A comprehensive equality impact assessment will be undertaken as part of the 2015 Library Service review.

**11. SECTION 17 OF THE CRIME AND DISORDER ACT 1998
CONSIDERATIONS**

11.1 None.

12. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 12.1 That Members of the Regeneration Services Committee;
- consider and agree the proposed scope of the Library Service review.
 - advise on further items for inclusion in the review.

13. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 13.1 To enable the timely implementation of the review and enable the early commencement of the necessary statutory consultation process.

14. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 14.1 Regeneration Service Committee 24th July 2014. Savings Programme 2015/16 Regeneration Division
- 14.2 Regeneration Services Committee 24th July 2014. Minutes and decision record.

15. CONTACT OFFICERS

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REGENERATION SERVICES COMMITTEE

23rd OCTOBER 2014



Report of: Assistant Director (Regeneration)

Subject: CONSTRUCTING HARTLEPOOL STRATEGY

1. TYPE OF DECISION/APPLICABLE CATEGORY

1.1 Non-Key Decision.

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

2.1 To seek approval for the implementation of the Constructing Hartlepool Strategy.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 The Construction Industry has always been considered as a key driver in stimulating and supporting the growth of a local area and it remains vital to the Tees Valley economy, with over 1,850 companies and 19,300 construction jobs across the sub-region. The sector also accounts for 10% of all enterprises in Hartlepool.

3.2 At a sub regional level, construction as a whole contributed around 9% of the Tees Valley Gross Value Added (GVA) and employed around 8% of the workforce. In the short to medium term, it is estimated that in the Tees Valley there will be a need for approximately 117,000 replacement jobs and 25,000 new jobs in growth sectors such as High Value Added Engineering and Construction.

3.3 At a national level, the Public Services Social Value Act 2012 now requires all public bodies in England and Wales to consider: -

- How, what is proposed to be procured might significantly improve the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of the relevant area, and;
- How, in conducting the process of procurement, it might act with a view to securing that improvement.

4. CONSTRUCTING HARTLEPOOL STRATEGY

- 4.1 Hartlepool Vision, Masterplan, Economic Regeneration Strategy and Housing Strategy provide the catalyst for revitalising the town and creating a more inclusive, prosperous and resilient economy which will attract new investment and major development, boost the business stock and increase the number of residents entering sustained employment.
- 4.2 To support the Construction of Hartlepool and capitalise on the role of the Council as a planning authority and facilitator of major developments requires the creation of a Constructing Hartlepool Strategy. This document will be developed by the Council in partnership with the Construction Industry Training Board (CITB), National Skills Academy for Construction (NSAfc).
- 4.3 Through the implementation of the Constructing Hartlepool Strategy, developers will be invited to advise the Council on how they plan to incorporate local supply chains and targeted, recruitment and training (TRT) clauses within their planning proposal which will support business growth and enable greater access to employment and skills for local residents.
- 4.4 This will be delivered through Employment and Skills Plans (ESPs) which will be created by the Council and the developer. This method adopts national best practice and the Council will look to gain NSAfc Client Based Approach (CBA) Status. This model for employment and skills has been developed by CITB in close liaison with the industry.
- 4.5 This Strategy will support the growth of the Borough by ensuring that all planning and procurement applications provide training and job opportunities for local residents which will make the area more attractive to future investors, prosperous and economically resilient.
- 4.6 A draft copy of the Constructing Hartlepool Strategy is shown in **Appendix 1**.

5. KEY BENEFITS

- 5.1 The Constructing Hartlepool Strategy will provide the following benefits to Hartlepool and its residents: -
- Creating skills and training opportunities (e.g. Apprenticeships or on the job training);
 - Creating employment opportunities for the long-term unemployed or NEETs;
 - Offering work placements to school students and adults;
 - Providing career advice and information for young people on specific careers, such as construction, architecture or engineering;

- Offering curriculum support to schools, with contractors sharing knowledge and expertise about their discipline;
- Providing opportunities for individuals or groups facing greater social or economic barriers and encouraging social mobility, and;
- Retaining and developing the existing workforce.

5.2 The Strategy will provide the Council with the following additional benefits as:

-

- The NSAfC Client Based Approach provides clear, end to end guidance as to how employment and skills can be embedded in Local Authority procurement and planning processes;
- It enables the Council to have an employment and skills framework which is based on industry Key Performance Indicator's and benchmarks and is employer led;
- The approach is free of charge and also includes a free licence to a Performance Management Tool. The tool enables Local Authorities to effectively record, monitor and evaluate the employment and skills outputs relating to developments in their area and generates reports which provide vital information such the industry's financial contribution to training, and;
- In line with the Government's Construction Strategy it realises the employment and skills dividend from construction procurement and supports the engagement with Small to Medium Enterprises through procurement on the employment and skills agenda.

5.3 The Strategy also has significant advantages for Contractors, Developers and SME's as: -

- The NSAfC CBA offers clarity and consistency to developers and (sub) contractors working on developments in Hartlepool in terms of employment and skills and it ensures that its employment and skills plans are reasoned, achievable and proportional, and;
- The approach also ensures effective engagement with the Council's supply chain/business community and enables them to be fully informed and benefit from CITB levy/grant scheme and comprehensive employer support.

6. TIMETABLE

6.1 A draft timetable for the implementation of the Constructing Hartlepool Strategy is shown below: -

- 23rd October 2014 – Seek approval from Regeneration Services Committee on implementation of the strategy.
- If approval is given:
 - i. Apply for National Skills Academy for Construction Client Based Approach status;
 - ii. Develop Art Work for Strategy;
 - iii. Market Strategy, and;
 - iv. Raise awareness of the Strategy to partners including major developers.

7. IMPLEMENTATION

7.1 The Constructing Hartlepool Strategy will be applied to all construction works procured externally by the Council and Section 106 developments through planning, where appropriate, within the contract value bandings of the NSAfC CBA through: -

- Section 106 Agreement;
- Hartlepool Borough Council Guide to Sustainable Procurement, and;
- Hartlepool Borough Council Contract Procedure Rules.

7.2 For each relevant procurement and development, the Council will create a development-specific ESP containing benchmarked outputs against fourteen key employment and skills areas. These benchmarks will be ratified by the National Skills Academy for Construction Group which is made up of key stakeholders including major construction contractors and federations.

8. MONITORING AND REPORTING

8.1 The Council will monitor the developer / contractor's progress against the ESP throughout the construction phase and will also provide support where appropriate. Early dialogue with the developer / contractor's will be established to ensure they fully understand their commitments and they will be required to provide quarterly reports to the Council. Furthermore, by using the NSAfC Performance Management Tool, the Council will be able to effectively and efficiently record, monitor and evaluate the employment and skills outputs relating to all construction projects.

9. STAFF, LEGAL AND FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 If approval is given and the strategy can be implemented, the financial and legal sections will be consulted in full to seek their views on whether there are any specific financial and legal implications.
- 9.2 In addition, key teams and officers within the Council such as Building Control, Planning and Housing will be consulted on this strategy to discuss operational implementation relating to systems, processes and procedures.

10. IMPACT ON CHILD / FAMILY POVERTY

- 10.1 This Strategy will positively contribute to tackling the longer term causes and consequences of child and family poverty by improving the economy and offering employment opportunities for local residents.

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

- 11.1 This Strategy will positively contribute to Section 17 by offering improved employment routeways for young people including those with an offending history.

12. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY CONSIDERATIONS

- 12.1 This Strategy will offer employment opportunities for young people, regardless of their background which will include 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;
 - Young people with mental health issues; and;
 - Young people with drug and alcohol misuse issues.

13. CONTRIBUTION TO OTHER COUNCIL PROJECTS AND PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

13.1 If implemented the Constructing Hartlepool Strategy will benefit other Council employment initiatives, such as the Hartlepool Youth Investment Project and Think Families, Think Communities.

13.2 Also, the initiative will positively contribute towards the following key indicators: -

- Improving the Overall Employment Rate;
- Increasing the Gross Value Added (GVA), and;
- Reducing the Unemployment Rate.

14. RECOMMENDATIONS

14.1 Members are recommended to approve the development and implementation of the Constructing Hartlepool Strategy.

15. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

15.1 The Constructing Hartlepool Strategy will: -

- Support the Hartlepool Vision, Masterplan, Economic Regeneration Strategy and Housing Strategy in revitalising the town and improving the economy;
- Provide local residents with additional employment and training opportunities by maximising the Council's procurement and planning processes, and;
- Support the Council's commitment to social value and tackling key priorities such as youth unemployment.

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Hartlepool Works

Constructing Hartlepool Strategy

Supporting the Hartlepool Vision, Masterplan & Economic Regeneration Strategy and Housing Strategy

September 2014

Hartlepool - Business at its Best

Foreword

Hartlepool Vision, Masterplan, Economic Regeneration Strategy and Housing Strategy provide the catalyst for revitalising the town and creating a more inclusive, prosperous and resilient economy which will attract new investment and major development, boost the business stock and increase the number of residents entering into sustained employment.

I am extremely pleased to support **Constructing Hartlepool Strategy** which complements the shared goals of these key documents and adds significant value by capitalising on the role of the Council as a planning authority and facilitator of major developments which in turn supports the Construction sector.

Through the implementation of this strategy, developers will be invited to advise the Council on how they plan to incorporate local supply chains and targeted, recruitment and training (TRT) clauses within their planning proposal which will support business growth and enable greater access to employment and skills for local residents.

This method adopts national best practice and I am very proud to announce that the Council has been awarded **National Skills Academy for Construction (NSAfC) Client Based Approach Status** thanks to the support given by the Construction Industry Training Board (CITB). This NSAfC Client Based Approach model for employment and skills has been developed by CITB in close

liaison with industry. Developers/Contractors welcome the Council's approach in creating a framework in which planned future construction projects must provide detail of how they will support local growth and employment/training opportunities which will contribute towards a long term, sustainable economy for Hartlepool

Councillor Christopher Akers-Belcher – Leader

Introduction

The Construction Industry has always been considered as a key driver in stimulating and supporting the growth of a local area and it remains vital to the Tees Valley economy, with over 1,850 companies and 19,300 construction jobs across the sub-region. The sector also accounts for 10% of all enterprises in Hartlepool¹.

The Borough continues to witness how major regeneration programmes; whether in highways, housing, regeneration or other types of construction have provided significant training and job creation opportunities and made the area more attractive to future investors, prosperous and economically resilient.

This strategy sets out how it will further support the growth of the Borough by providing guidance to major construction developers on how Constructing Hartlepool Strategy will require *Employment and Skills Plans (ESPs)*, where appropriate, as part of planning and procurement process, in line with the NSAfC Client Based Approach robust and comprehensive employment and skills KPI's and benchmarks.

As part of this strategy, a framework has been designed using the National Skills Academy for Construction (NSAfC) Client Based Approach (CBA) guide that ensures that all relevant construction projects provide a detailed ESP which will show realistic and relevant employment, apprenticeships, volunteering, work trials and training opportunities that will be offered to local people as part of the overall project. The CBA has been recommended as good practice by key stakeholders such as the National Apprenticeship

¹ CITB – Construction Supporting the Tees Valley LEP Area (March 2014)

Service² who see the true value that this approach has in areas such as boosting local apprenticeships through public sector procurement.

This document also references the benefits of adopting this approach by a developer.

Councillor Robbie Payne – Chair of Regeneration Services Committee

² National Apprenticeship Service 'Working Together to boost local Construction apprenticeships through public procurement' (2013)

Policy Background

At a national level, the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012 now requires all public bodies in England and Wales within the defined context to consider:

- How what is proposed to be procured might improve the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of the relevant area
- How, in conducting the process of procurement, it might act with a view to securing that improvement.

Social value can encompass; education, training and skills, work, income, living standards, health, participation and social wellbeing (a positive physical, social and mental). Under EU procurement law; the Public Contracts Regulations (2006), and the developing case law in conducting the procurement process to deliver wellbeing improvements, Councils can only consider matters which are relevant and proportionate. Therefore, it is important that Council's have a policy which defines wellbeing and social value priorities.

The NSAfC Client Based Approach supports the [Government's Construction Strategy](#) through:

- Maximising the employment and skills outputs from construction procurement
- Supporting engagement with SMEs through procurement on the employment and skills agenda.

- Supporting clients to gain a knowledge of the construction industry and how to embed apprenticeships, skills and employment into procurement

At a sub-regional level, construction as a whole contributed around 9% of Tees Valley Gross Value Added (GVA) and employed around 8% of the workforce. Across the Tees Valley, it is estimated that there will be a need for approximately 117,000 replacement jobs and 25,000 new jobs created in the short to medium term specifically in growth sector areas such as High Value Engineering and Construction. These jobs will be created via increasing self-employment rates, business stock levels, expansion of existing businesses and through major regeneration programmes such as the £6.5 billion in new infrastructure projects which are planned across the Tees Valley, including a nuclear power station in Hartlepool valued at £5.5 billion. Alongside this, across the Tees Valley there will be:

- £689 million construction investment with £8.8 billion planned.
- £969 million in commercial construction planned.
- £528 million in non-housing construction planned.
- £754 million in new housing planned (including 507 residential and commercial units in Darlington valued at over £29 million³).

³ CITB – Constructing Supporting the Tees Valley LEP Area (March 2014)

As in most sectors, the Construction Industry suffers from skills shortages which will have a negative impact on its future growth unless action is taken. Hartlepool Economic Assessment identified that high priority should be placed on increasing skills within occupational areas such as Civil Engineering and Instrumental Artificer's. Given the future demand for skilled workers in this sector is vital, the Council implemented the Economic Regeneration Strategy (ERS) which vision is for:

'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.'

Through the ERS, the Council will aim to maximise opportunities such as procurement and planning arrangements to create new employment and training opportunities for local people. This will have significant benefits in tackling the Council's key priorities of worklessness and youth unemployment and strengthen the supply chain by having better qualified and higher skilled workers who can support major developers. In addition, it will also contribute to the Council's Hartlepool Youth Investment Project by offering new job and training opportunities for young people and bringing schools, training providers and employers closer together to provide individuals with an insight into the world of work.

In its commitment to support social value and tackling key priorities such as youth unemployment, the Council has now adopted the NSAfC CBA which will assist in the implementation of ESPs.

Key Benefits of Adopting the Client Based Approach

The Key benefits of adopting the CITB NSAfC Client Based Approach:

For Hartlepool and its residents:

Supporting the principles of the Social Value Act, the comprehensive and robust NSAfC Employment and Skills KPI's for major construction developments will maximise the employment and skills benefits for Hartlepool residents including:

- Creating skills and training opportunities (e.g. Apprenticeships or on the job training)
- Creating employment opportunities for the long-term unemployed or NEETs
- Offering work placements to school students and adults
- Providing career advice and information for young people on specific careers, such as construction, architecture or engineering
- Offering curriculum support to schools, with contractors sharing knowledge and expertise about their discipline;
- Providing additional opportunities for individuals or groups facing greater social or economic barriers and encouraging social mobility
- Retaining and developing the existing workforce

For Hartlepool Borough Council:

- The NSAfC Client Based Approach provides clear, end to end guidance as to how employment and skills can be embedded in Local Authority procurement and planning processes.

- It enables Hartlepool Borough Council to have an employment and skills framework which is based on industry KPI's and benchmarks and is employer led.
- The approach is free of charge and also includes a free licence to a Performance Management Tool. The tool enables Local Authorities to effectively record, monitor and evaluate the employment and skills outputs relating to developments in their area and generates reports which provide vital information such the industry's financial contribution to training.
- In line with the Government's Construction Strategy it realises the employment and skills dividend from construction procurement and supports the engagement with SMEs through procurement on the employment and skills agenda.

For Contractors, Developers and SME's:

- The NSAfC CBA offers clarity and consistency to developers and (sub)contractors working on developments in Hartlepool in terms of employment and skills and it ensure that its employment and skills plans are reasoned, achievable and proportional.
- The approach also ensures effective engagement with the Local Authority's supply chain/business community and enables them to be fully informed and benefit from CITB levy/grant scheme and comprehensive employer support.

Objectives

The objectives of the employment and skills strategy are to:

- Contribute towards the council's commitment to the Social Value Act 2012
- Supporting the construction sector to meet future recruitment needs
- Ensuring the impacts from procurement activities benefit the local economy
- Deliver employment training and apprenticeship opportunities for young people and unemployed adults through physical developments
- Contribute towards tackling worklessness and youth unemployment
- Supporting the delivery of the Hartlepool Youth Investment Project and Economic Regeneration Strategy
- Develop links between construction activities and the education sector at all levels.

Scope

This employment and skills strategy will be applied to all construction works procured externally by Hartlepool Borough Council and Section 106 developments through planning, where appropriate, within the contract value bandings of the National Skills Academy for Construction Client Based Approach.

Implementation

The strategy will be applied to both procurement and planning within the above scope where possible, including through:

- Section 106 agreement
- Hartlepool Borough Council guide to sustainable procurement
- Hartlepool Borough Council contract procedure rules.

For each relevant procurement and development, Hartlepool Borough Council will create a development-specific ESP containing benchmarked outputs against fourteen employment and skills areas (see Appendix A available at [PUT IN HBC WEBSITE](#)). The

benchmarks have been developed ratified by the National Skills Academy for Construction Group which is made up of key stakeholders including major construction contractors, federations and a Local Authority.

Additional local measures relating to local employment and local spend will also be included in the development-specific ESP. It is a contractual requirement on the developer/contractor to use this approach as a basis to create an ESP for their development. The ESP will set out how Hartlepool Borough Council's benchmarked outputs will be met over the duration of the construction and will have to be approved by Hartlepool Borough Council prior to proceeding to site.

Monitoring and Reporting

Hartlepool Borough Council will monitor the developer/contractor's progress against the ESP throughout the construction phase and will also provide support where appropriate. Early developer/contractor dialogue will be established where possible to ensure developers/contractors fully understand their commitments. Hartlepool Borough Council in conjunction with CITB and relevant partners will provide ongoing support to developers/contractors to ensure the successful achievement of employment and skills outputs. Developers/contractors will be required to provide quarterly reports to the Council on a regular basis. Furthermore, using the NSAfC Performance Management Tool SPONSA will enable HBC to effectively and efficiently record, monitor and evaluate the employment and skills outputs relating to all construction projects adopting this CBA.

Further Information

To aid future developers, the following two key documents are available on the Councils website (Put in address):

- Constructing Hartlepool Strategy – Informal guidance on Employment and Skills Plans
- Employment and Skills Plan Blank Template

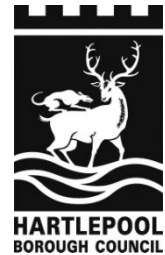
Contact

For further information, please do not hesitate to contact:

NAME and NUMBER (TO BE CONFIRMED)

REGENERATION SERVICES COMMITTEE

23rd October 2014



Report of: Director of Public Health

Subject: MILL HOUSE LEISURE CENTRE - REVIEW OF
CHILD TO ADULT RATIOS FOR SWIMMING

1. TYPE OF DECISION/APPLICABLE CATEGORY

Non Key Decision.

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 2.1 The report seeks approval from Regeneration Services Committee for a revision to the child to adult swimming ratio policy applicable to the pool use for casual swimming at Mill House Leisure Centre. This is following the issue of revised guidance from the Chartered Institute for the Management of Sport and Physical Activity (CIMSPA).
- 2.2 The report provides information on the existing policy in place which was approved by the Culture, Leisure and Tourism Portfolio Holder at a meeting held on November 16th 2010.
- 2.3 It also gives details of the new guidance note GN014 published by CIMSPA in July 2014 which provides a framework which all pool operators are advised to use in formulating their own pool policies.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 CIMSPA was launched in 2011 and is the professional development body for the UK's sport and physical activity sector and was the successor to the Institute of Sport and Recreation Management (ISRM). It provides leadership, support and a single unified voice for professionals working in the sport and physical activity field as well as advice and guidance for the sector as a whole.

- 3.2 As Committee will be aware, there is a potential risk of drowning to users of swimming facilities and in particular, to young children. As a consequence, all pool operators are required to manage swimming pools safely and in accordance with the recommendations and guidelines set out with the Health and Safety Executives publication HSG179 “Managing Health and Safety in Swimming Pools”.
- 3.3 In accordance with these guidelines as well as industry standards as recommended by the professional body, a swimming admissions policy for children taking part in un-programmed public sessions has therefore been in operation at Mill House Leisure Centre for some time now.
- 3.4 This was last reviewed and adopted by the Council in 2010 as a result of new guidance issued that year by the ISRM. The policy currently in place is therefore as follows:-
A responsible person must accompany all children under the age of eight years as follows:-
- *Between the ages of four and seven years, children must be accompanied by a minimum of one adult to two children.*
 - ***In the Main Pool**, children aged under the age of four years must be accompanied on a one to one basis.*
 - ***In the Learner Pool only**, children aged under the age of four years can be accompanied on a one adult to two children basis, but both children must wear floatation devices.*
- 3.5 In July 2014, CIMSPA published new guidance in relation to child supervision arrangements in their publication “Parental and Operator guidance for child supervision policies in swimming pools” and this advised that pool operators needed to take account of the following factors in determining an admissions policy:-
- The physical environment
 - The activities being undertaken
 - The participants – age, maturity and swimming ability
 - Any equipment in use
 - A “Risk Assessment” taking into account swimming pool hazards specific to the operator’s facilities, water depth, physical obstructions, pool capacities and surface area.
- 3.6 As a result, an assessment of the pool facilities at Mill House Leisure Centre has taken place which has allowed for new policy guidance to be drawn up. This obviously now takes account of the new pool configuration at the site which also includes a pool boom facility.

4. PROPOSALS

- 4.1 The review and reassessment of the pool management plan undertaken in accordance with the new CIMSPA guidance highlights the following:-
- All three pools fall into categories easily identified within the Health and Safety Executives document HSG179.

- Having the three distinct types of pools allows the site to cater for a range of swimming capabilities in each of the pools. This further allows pool capacities and trigger points to be more easily managed.
- A supervision ratio of one adult to a maximum of three children under the age of eight is recommended for swimming within “designated safe areas”.
- For any other pool areas, this ratio should reduce to one adult to one child.
- Any children who are weak or non-swimmers should be wearing the appropriate flotation devices.

- 4.2 As a result, the Learner pool and the 20 metre pool up to the depth of 1.5 metres have been categorised as “designated safe areas” for poorer / non-swimmers and it is proposed that the revised swimming admissions policy in relation to our pools should be the following:-

A responsible person must accompany all children under the age of eight years as follows:-

Learner Pool and 20metre Pool (up to 1.5m)

*Children aged under the age of 8 years must be accompanied on a **one adult up to a maximum of three children** under eight years basis within these pool areas.*

20 metre Pool (1.5m to 1.8m) and 25 metre Pool

*Children aged under the age of 8 years must be accompanied on a **one adult to one child** under eight years basis within these pool areas.*

In all cases, floatation devices such as armbands must be worn by these children if they are either weak or non-swimmers.

A responsible person is someone of at least sixteen years of age who must go into the water with the child(ren), maintaining a constant watch over them. They are responsible for remaining in close contact with them and for ensuring that floatation devices are worn by those children requiring them.

- 4.3 This revision is in accordance with the best practice health and safety guidelines and industry standards available. The risk assessment upon which these proposed policy guidelines have been based has also been endorsed by the Council’s Health, Safety and Wellbeing Team.
- 4.4 The proposals will actually improve accessibility arrangements for children under the age of eight from the current arrangements as highlighted in paragraph 3.4 of the report and Officers anticipate that this will bring a positive reaction from customers.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 5.1 Officers would recommend that Committee approves the adoption of the revised child to adult ratios at Mill House Leisure Centre as highlighted in paragraph 4.2 of the report.
- 5.2 Given that Committee approves the adoption of the new policy guidelines, that this is put into effect from November 29th 2014 to allow sufficient time to produce promotional materials to advise customers of the new arrangements as well as allow for staff briefings to take place.

6. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.1 To ensure compliance with the latest guidance on child supervision arrangements in swimming pools as provided by the industry body CIMSPA.

7. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Culture, Leisure and Tourism Portfolio, Mill House Leisure Centre - Review of Swimming Admissions Policy for Children, November 16th 2010.

CIMSPA Guidance Note GN014 - Parental and Operator guidance for child supervision policies in swimming pools – July 2014

Managing Health and Safety in Swimming Pools (HSG179) – Health & Safety Executive

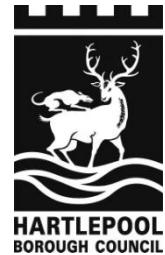
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REGENERATION SERVICES COMMITTEE

23rd October 2014



Report of: Director of Public Health

Subject: HEALTH & SAFETY SERVICE PLAN 2014/15

1. TYPE OF DECISION/APPLICABLE CATEGORY

Non-Key Decision

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 2.1 To consider the Health & Safety Service Plan for 2014/15, which is a requirement under Section 18 of the Health and Safety at Work etc. act 1974.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Health & Safety Executive has a key role in overseeing local authority enforcement activities. They have duties to set and monitor standards of local authorities as well as carry out audits of enforcement activities to ensure that authorities are providing an effective service to protect public health and safety.
- 3.2 The Health & Safety Executive has issued guidance to local authorities, which provides information on how local authority enforcement service plans should be structured and what they should contain. Service plans developed under this guidance will provide the basis on which local authorities will be monitored and audited by the Health & Safety Executive.
- 3.3 The service planning guidance ensures that key areas of enforcement are covered in local service plans, whilst allowing for the inclusion of locally defined objectives.
- 3.4 The Health & Safety Service Plan for 2014/15 is attached as **Appendix 1** and takes into account the guidance requirements. The Plan details the Service's priorities for 2014/15 and highlights how these priorities will be addressed.

4. PROPOSALS

- 4.1 The Service Plan for 2013/14 has been updated to reflect last year's performance.
- 4.2 The Service Plan covers the following:
- (i) Service Aims and Objectives;
 - (ii) The background to the Authority, including the scope and demands on the health and safety service;
 - (iii) Service delivery, including inspection programmes, service requests, complaints, advice, liaison and promotion;
 - (iv) Resources, including financial allocation, staff allocation and staff development;
 - (v) Quality assessment; and
 - (vi) Details of the review of the Plan.

5. SUMMARY OF MAIN ISSUES RAISED IN THE PLAN

- 5.1 During 2013/14 the service completed health and safety interventions in a total of 358 premises equating to 68% of all programmed interventions planned for the year. The shortfall arose as a result of prioritising resources in relation to undertaking food hygiene interventions and an unprecedented amount of reactive work across all aspects of work undertaken by the Public Protection service. The outstanding interventions will be added to the programme for 2014/15.
- 5.2 In addition to the planned interventions officers carried out 75 revisits to monitor compliance with contraventions identified during these interventions. They also undertook a range of interventions, which involved working with 79 new businesses during the year.
- 5.3 During 2013/14 the Authority undertook 691 enforcement visits to assess compliance with smoke free legislation which came into force on 1st July 2007, a proportion of which were carried out in conjunction with health and safety inspections.
- 5.4 Promotional/campaign work was undertaken in respect of the following:
- National LPG Inspection Campaign;
 - To Engage with the Public Health Agenda;

- 5.5 Survey of Hygiene in Hairdressers and Beauty Salons. This survey aimed to use microbiological methods to assess the general cleanliness and hygiene standards in place in hair and beauty premises. Eighteen premises in total were visited during the sampling period.

The survey involved taking swabs from hand and equipment contact surfaces and disposable items, such as nail files. Water samples were also collected of tap water used for hand washing and shower water. All results came back satisfactory, with the exception of one wash hand basin water sample which had a raised coliform bacteria count. This is an indicator of poor hygiene and cleaning. Advice was given and a re-sample was taken. A satisfactory result was achieved for the re-sample.

- 5.6 During the year the service carried out 18 visits in response to complaints / service requests relating to health and safety conditions and working practice. The initial response to these requests have been undertaken all within our target of 2 working days
- 5.7 The service received 47 accident notifications during the year. All were responded to within 1 working day. These notifications generated 9 visits by enforcement staff.
- 5.8 During 2013/14 it was necessary to serve 6 Prohibition Notices and 6 Improvement Notices. Four Prohibition Notices were served to prohibit the use of unguarded machinery (a food slicing machine and an air receiver) and two Prohibition Notices were served regarding the restriction of window openings. A further six Improvement Notices were served, four of which related to a petrol filling station. No legal proceedings or Simple Cautions were undertaken however summonses were laid in relation to health and safety offences.
- 5.9 Currently we are the enforcing authority for 1,307 premises in Hartlepool. In planning our intervention programme for 2014/15 we have had regard to the 'National Local Authority Enforcement Code Health and Safety at Work England, Scotland & Wales'. The Code was developed by HSE as an outcome of the Government's Red Tape Challenge on Health and Safety and was issued in 2013.
- 5.10 The Code is given legal effect as HSE guidance to LAs under section 18(4) (b) of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and is designed to ensure that LA health and safety regulators take a more consistent and proportionate approach to enforcement.
- 5.11 We recognise that we have a vital role to play in ensuring that the regulatory system is focused on better health and safety outcomes and not purely technical breaches of the law. During 2014/15 we will carry out a range of interventions based on risk, local intelligence, performance history, RIDDOR reports, complaints and local occupational health data.

- 5.12 The Code states that proactive inspection must only be used to target the high risk activities in those sectors specified by HSE or where intelligence suggests risks are not being effectively managed. For this purpose HSE have published a list of high risk sectors (and the key activities that make them such) that are to be subject to proactive inspections by LAs.
- 5.13 The Code provides flexibility for LAs to address local priorities alongside the national priorities set by HSE. During interventions officers will focus on specific risks which are the key causes of workplace accidents, injuries and ill health. We have identified the following local priorities which can be addressed during our contact with businesses, including through other areas of work e.g. food inspections and licensing visits.

Local Priority	Estimated no of premises that topic is applicable to
Legionella in residential Care Homes	32
Asbestos Management	352
Gas Safety in Commercial Kitchens	99
Deliveries / Workplace Transport	132
Cellar Safety	37
Occupational Disease e.g. Dermatitis	46
Managing Risks from Legionella	3
Violence at Work	27
Falls from Height	18

- 5.14 The Section 18 Standard places a requirement on councils to assess whether there is sufficient capacity within the authority to undertake their statutory duties and to deliver an effective service. The Service Plan sets out the resources determined necessary to deliver the health and safety service in 2014/15. Whilst we have determined that with the existing compliment of staff we have adequate capacity to discharge our duty under the Standard we are facing unprecedented budget pressures and will therefore need to monitor whether the Authority can continue to service its workload and fulfil its requirements under the Standard.
- 5.15 The Public Protection Section continues to face significant financial pressures due to ongoing Council savings and, as such, the need to prioritise service delivery and maximise effectiveness remains paramount.
- 5.16 During 2014/15 we will carry out work with colleagues to secure improvement in Public Health through the Health Protection and Improvement Elements of the Core Public Health Strategy.
- 5.17 In particular we will target our resources effectively using a range of interventions, including providing advice to businesses, with the aim of influencing behaviours and improving the management of health and safety risks which will have impact on wider public health outcomes. We plan to continue a programme of sampling to monitor and raise awareness in relation to occupational health and will continue to explore how we can

contribute to the Public Health Outcomes Framework and access funding streams to support this area of work.

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

6.1 There are no implications under Section 17.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 That the Regeneration Services Committee approves the Health & Safety Service Plan for 2014/15.

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Hartlepool Borough Council

Health & Safety Service Plan 2014/15

HEALTH & SAFETY SERVICE PLAN 2014/15

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INTRODUCTION

This Service Plan details how the Health and Safety service will be delivered by Hartlepool Borough Council.

The Plan accords with the requirements of the mandatory guidance issued by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) under Section 18 of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 (HSWA).

The HSE and Local Authorities (LAs) both have a statutory duty to 'make adequate arrangements for enforcement' under Section 18 of HSWA. In 2012 the National Local Authority Enforcement Code Health and Safety at Work England, Scotland and Wales was published. The Code sets out what is meant by 'adequate arrangements for enforcement'.

This Code replaces the earlier S18 Standard and concentrates on the following four objectives:

- a) Clarifying the **roles and responsibilities** of business, regulators and professional bodies to ensure a shared understanding on the management of risk;
- b) Outlining the **risk-based regulatory approach** that LAs should adopt with reference to the Regulator's Compliance Code, HSE's Enforcement Policy Statement and the need to target relevant and effective interventions that focus on influencing behaviours and improving the management of risk;
- c) Setting out the need for the **training and competence** of LA H&S regulators linked to the authorisation and use of HSWA powers; and
- d) Explaining the arrangements for collection and publication of LA data and peer review to give an **assurance on meeting the requirements of this Code**.

This Plan sets out the Council's aims in respect of its health and safety enforcement service and the means by which those aims are to be fulfilled.

Whilst focussing primarily on the year 2014/15, where relevant, longer-term objectives are identified. Additionally, there is a review of performance for 2013/134 and this aims to inform decisions about how best to build on past successes and address performance gaps.

The Plan is reviewed annually and has been approved by the Regeneration Services Committee.

1 SERVICE AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

1.1 Service Aims and Objectives

Hartlepool Borough Council aims:

- to carry out our enforcement duties and deliver high quality services through the efficient and effective use of resources;
- to supplement our enforcement role by providing targeted education and advice;
- to encourage innovation through actively seeking out best practice and working in partnership with other agencies;
- to actively contribute towards achieving nationally agreed strategic aims and objectives; and
- to ensure our actions are consistent, proportionate and targeted and that we are transparent and open about what we do.

In its delivery of the service the Council will have regard to directions from the Health and Safety Executive, Health and Safety / Local Authority Liaison Committee (HELA), Approved Codes of Practice, the Regulators' Compliance Code, and any other relevant guidance.

1.2 Links to Corporate Objectives and Plans

This service plan fits into the hierarchy of the Council's planning process as follows:

- Hartlepool's Community Strategy - the Local Strategic Partnerships (the Hartlepool Partnership)
- Corporate Plan
- Public Protection Service Plan
- Health and Safety Enforcement Service Plan - sets out how the Council aims to deliver this statutory service and the Consumer Services section's contribution to corporate objectives.

Overall Aim / Vision

The Council's overall aim is:

“To take direct action and work in partnership with others, to continue the revitalisation of Hartlepool life and secure a better future for hartlepool people.”

The Council's aim is based on, and virtually identical to, the Hartlepool Partnership's long term vision, agreed in July 2008, looking 20 years ahead, which is:-

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

The Council has adopted eight themes that the Partnership has agreed forms part of the sustainable Community Strategy:-

- Jobs and the Economy
- Lifelong Learning and Skills
- Health and Wellbeing
- Community Safety
- Environment
- Housing
- Culture and Leisure and Community Learning
- Strengthening Communities

The Council has a ninth theme, which covers what the Council is doing to sustain its capacity to deliver excellent, value for money services in the future:-

- Organisational Development

To contribute to the Council's overall aim/vision, through this Food Law Enforcement Service Plan, the Commercial Services team has made a commitment to ensure the safe production, manufacture, storage, handling and preparation of food and its proper composition and labelling.

This Food Law Service Plan contributes towards the main themes in the following ways:

- **Jobs and the Economy**

By providing advice and information to new and existing businesses to assist them in meeting their legal requirements with regard to health, safety and welfare, and avoid potential costly action at a later stage;

- **Lifelong Learning and Skills**

By providing advice as regards to what training is appropriate for particular jobs. This advisory role is supplemented with enforcement action where necessary to ensure that the appropriate training is provided to employees. The team also provides seminars on current health and safety issues to the wider community;

- **Health and Wellbeing**

By ensuring that businesses meet their obligations as regards health and safety the well being of both employees and the public will be protected;

- **Community Safety**

By encouraging awareness amongst businesses of the role they can play in reducing problems in their community by keeping premises in a clean, tidy and safe condition;

- **Environment**

By encouraging businesses to be aware of environmental issues which they can control, such as proper disposal of hazardous waste;

- **Culture and Leisure and Community Learning**

By exploring ways to promote high standards of compliance with health, safety and welfare law in hotels, other tourist accommodation, public houses and other catering and retail premises. This also applies to ensuring events to which the public are admitted are held safely.

- **Strengthening Communities**

By developing ways of communicating well with all customers, including proprietors of businesses whose first language is not English, and ensuring that we deliver our service equitably to all.

- **Organisational Development**

To contribute towards the key outcomes of improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the organisation and to deliver effective customer focussed services, meeting the needs of diverse groups and maintaining customer satisfaction.

The Council is committed to the principles of equality and diversity. The Health and Safety Service Plan consequently aims to ensure that the same high standards of service is offered to all, and that recognition is given to the varying needs and backgrounds of its customers.

2 BACKGROUND

2.1 Profile of the Local Authority

Hartlepool is situated on the North East coast of England. The Borough consists of the town of Hartlepool and a number of small outlying villages. The total area of the Borough is 9,390 hectares.

Hartlepool is a unitary authority, providing a full range of services. It adjoins Durham County Council to the north and west and Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council to the south. The residential population is 92,028 of which ethnic minorities comprise 3.4% (2011 census).

The borough contains a rich mix of the very old and the very new. Its historic beginnings can be traced back to the discovery of an iron-age settlement at Catcote Village and the headland, known locally as “Old Hartlepool” is steeped in history. On the other hand, the former South Docks area has been transformed in to a fabulous 500-berth Marina.

The tourist industry impacts upon recreational opportunities, shopping facilities and leisure facilities, including the provision of food and drink outlets. There are currently 1307¹ businesses in Hartlepool for which the Council is the enforcing authority.

2.2 Organisational Structure

Hartlepool Borough Council is a democratic organisation. Following a referendum held on 15th November 2012, Hartlepool Borough Council has agreed a revised Constitution which sets out how the Council operates, how decisions are made and the procedures which are followed to ensure that these are efficient, transparent and accountable to local people.

The Council has moved from operating under an Elected Mayor and Cabinet model of governance to a new arrangement based on Committees of 32 elected Councillors who are responsible for agreeing policies about provision of services and how the Council's money is spent.

Under the Council's new governance arrangements, most day-to-day decisions are taken by five Policy Committees. These Policy Committees cover the following main service areas:

- Finance and Policy Committee
- Adult Services Committee
- Children's Services Committee
- Neighbourhood Services Committee
- Regeneration Services Committee

The Regeneration Services Committee provides political oversight for health and safety law enforcement.

The Council is made up of four Departments:

- Chief Executives
- Child and Adult Services
- Regeneration and Neighbourhoods
- Public Health

¹ Total number of premises as at 01/4/2014
14.10.23 - RSC - 5.5 - Health and Safety Service Plan 2014-15 - Appendix 1

The health and safety service is delivered through the Public Protection section of the Public Health Department.

2.3 Scope of the Health and Safety Service

The Council's Commercial Services team is a constituent part of the Regeneration Division and is responsible for delivery of the health and safety service.

Service delivery broadly comprises:

- Carrying out interventions including inspections;
- Investigating complaints regarding health and safety and associated issues;
- Investigating workplace accidents, diseases and dangerous occurrences;
- Providing advice and information;
- Taking action (formal and informal) to ensure compliance with legislation;
- Responding to asbestos notifications;
- Registering premises and persons offering personal treatments e.g. body piercing, tattooing, acupuncture etc;
- Acting as a Statutory Consultee for applications made under the Licensing Act 2003; and
- Enforcing smoke free legislation in public places.

To achieve strategic aims and objectives it is necessary to work in partnership with other local authorities, the Health and Safety Executive and businesses. The Council aims to ensure that these joint working arrangements are in place and that officers of the service contribute and are committed to the ongoing development of these arrangements.

2.4 Demands on the Health and Safety Service

The Health and Safety Executive and Local Authorities are the principal enforcing authorities for Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 (HSWA) in Great Britain.

The primary purpose of the HSWA is to control risks from work activities. The role of the HSE and LAs is to ensure that duty holders manage and control these risks and thus prevent harm to employees and to the public.

The type of premises/nature of work activity falling to local authorities for enforcement is dictated by Health and Safety (Enforcing Authority) Regulations 1989 with further guidance provided by Health and Safety / Local Authority Liaison Committee (HELA) which is the formal enforcement liaison committee between the HSE and LAs.

There are currently 1,307 premises in Hartlepool for which the Council is the Enforcing Authority for Health and Safety. Such premises include: retailers, wholesalers, offices, catering premises (including hotels and guest houses),

leisure and consumer services and residential care homes. The businesses are predominantly small, medium and micro businesses (employing less than 10 employees).

Other premises within the borough, including premises within local authority control, are within the enforcing remit of the Health & Safety Executive (HSE).

The table below provides a profile of the premises within the borough.

Premises Type	No of Premises (As at 01/04/14)
Retail Shops	423
Wholesale	22
Offices	147
Catering Services	235
Hotel/residential	16
Residential Care Homes	38
Leisure and Cultural	218
Consumer Services	203
Other (Miscellaneous)	5
Total	1307

The delivery point for the health and safety enforcement service is at:

Civic Centre
Victoria Road
Hartlepool
TS24 8AY

Telephone: (01429) 266522

Members of the public and businesses may access the service at this point from 08.30 - 17.00 Monday to Thursday and 08.30 - 16.30 on Friday.

A 24-hour emergency call-out also operates to deal with Environmental Health emergencies which occur out of hours. Contact can be made on (01429) 869424.

2.5 Enforcement Policy

The Council has signed up to the Enforcement Concordat and has in place a Public Protection Enforcement Policy, which was approved by the Adult and Public Health Services Portfolio Holder in June 2011. This policy covers health and safety enforcement.

The Health and Safety Executive Enforcement Management Model (EMM) will be used to inform the service's decision making process. Officers also have reference to the HSE's Enforcement Guide and the Work Related Deaths Protocol.

3 SERVICE DELIVERY

The Council is committed to meeting its obligations under Section 18 of the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974.

3.1 Regulatory Reform

There have been significant changes in regulatory approach over the last few years, and these have escalated since the Coalition Government came into power. The key objective is to free up business growth by transforming regulatory enforcement.

In his report “Reclaiming health & safety for all: An independent review of health and safety legislation”, commissioned by the then Minister for Employment, Professor Lofstedt recommended that HSE be given a stronger role in directing Local Authority (LA) health & safety inspection and enforcement activity.

In response to this recommendation and as an outcome of the Red Tape Challenge on Health and Safety the ‘National Local Authority Enforcement Code Health and Safety at Work England, Scotland & Wales’ was developed and issued in 2013. The Code is given legal effect as HSE guidance to LAs under section 18(4) (b) of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and is designed to ensure that LA health and safety regulators take a more consistent and proportionate approach to enforcement.

The Code acknowledges that whilst the primary responsibility for managing health and safety risks lies with the business who creates the risk, LA health & safety regulators have an important role in ensuring the effective and proportionate management of risks, supporting business, protecting their communities and contributing to a wider public health agenda.

The Code provides direction to LAs on meeting these requirements, and reporting on compliance.

In drawing up this service plan we are setting out the approach we intend to take to comply with the Code and ensure that we use a risk-based, targeted and proportionate approach to our interventions and enforcement in accordance with the principles of good regulation which requires enforcement to be demonstrably targeted, proportionate, consistent, transparent and accountable.

The Service Plan sets out the risks which we consider we need to address and the range of interventions which we will use to influence behavioural change in the way business manages or undertakes its work.

Enforcement Officers will ensure that every effort will be made to reduce administrative burdens on businesses. At the same time they will take efficient, effective and proportionate enforcement, concentrating on poor performers who present the highest risk to the health and safety of workers and the public.

Hartlepool Council is an active member of the Tees Valley Health and Safety Liaison Group. Through this group the five local authorities have collectively identified targeted work areas for 2013/14 based on:

- national priorities
- local intelligence and evidence

A joint work plan has been prepared and we aim to deliver this along with other interventions that are a required at a local level.

This service plan sets out the activities that the service intends to carry out in 2013/14 to meet this requirement within the resources available. The programme will be delivered using the following interventions:

3.2 Interventions

There are 11 types of proactive intervention, including inspections and 2 types of reactive interventions. These are.

a. Proactive interventions:

1. partnership
2. motivating senior managers
3. supply chain
4. design and supply
5. sector and industry wide initiatives
6. working with those at risk
7. education and awareness
8. proactive inspection (restricted to activities/sectors specified by HSE or where there is evidence that risks are not being effectively managed)
9. intermediaries
10. best practice
11. recognising good performance

b. Reactive interventions:

1. incident and ill-health investigation
2. dealing with issues of concern that are raised and complaints

Health and safety interventions are carried out in accordance with the Council's policy and standard operating procedures and relevant national guidance i.e. the National Code.

Information on premises liable to health and safety interventions is held on the APP computerised system. An intervention programme is produced from this system at the commencement of each reporting year.

During 2013/14 we will carry out a range of interventions based on risk, local intelligence, performance history, RIDDOR reports, complaints and national occupational health data.

3.2.1 Proactive Interventions including Inspections

The Code states that proactive inspection must only be used to target the high risk activities in those sectors specified by HSE or where intelligence suggests risks are not being effectively managed. For this purpose HSE have published a list of high risk sectors (and the key activities that make them such) that are to be subject to proactive inspections by LAs.

3.2.2 Delivery of local and national priorities

The Code provides flexibility for LAs to address local priorities alongside the national priorities set by HSE. Having identified their evidence-based priorities LAs are directed to address them using the whole range of regulatory interventions but preserve proactive inspection only for activities/sectors specified by HSE or where there is evidence that risks are not being effectively managed.

a) National Priorities

The HSE set a list of national priorities, which this year includes the following activities/sectors:

No	Hazards	High Risk Sectors	High Risk Activities
1	Legionella infection	Premises with cooling towers/evaporative condensers	Lack of suitable legionella control measures
2	Explosion caused by leaking LPG	Premises (including caravan parks) with buried metal LPG pipework	Buried metal LPG pipe work (For caravan parks to communal/amenity blocks only)
3	e.coli/cryptosporidium infection esp. in children	Open Farms/Animal Visitor Attractions	Lack of suitable micro-organism control measures
4	Fatalities/injuries resulting from being struck by vehicles	Tyre fitters*/ MVR* (as part of Car Sales) High volume Warehousing/Distribution	Use of two-post vehicle lifts Workplace transport
5	Fatalities/injuries resulting from falls from height/ amputation and crushing injuries	Industrial retail/wholesale premises e.g. steel stockholders, builders/timber merchants	Workplace transport/work at height/cutting machinery /lifting equipment

6	Industrial diseases (occupational asthma/deafness)	MVR*(as part of Car Sales) Industrial retail/wholesale premises e.g. steel stockholders, builders/timber merchants	Use of Isocyanate paints Noise and dust
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No	Hazards	High Risk Sectors	High Risk Activities
7	Falls from height	High volume Warehousing/Distribution	Work at height
8	Crowd control & injuries/fatalities to the public	Large scale public events/sports/leisure facilities e.g. motorised leisure pursuits including off road vehicles and track days	Inadequate consideration of public safety e.g. poor organisation and/or supervision of high speed or off-road vehicle movements
9	Carbon monoxide poisoning	Commercial catering premises using solid fuel cooking equipment	Lack of suitable ventilation and/or unsafe appliances
10	Violence at work	Premises with vulnerable working conditions (lone/night working/cash handling e.g. betting shops/off-licences/care settings) and where intelligence indicates that risks are not being effectively managed	Lack of suitable security measures/procedures

b) Regional Priorities

The Authority has agreed to work in partnership with the other Tees Valley Authorities and HSE where appropriate to deliver local awareness based initiatives and enforcement focused on:

- Gas Safety in Commercial Catering Premises
- To Engage with the Public Health Agenda

All members of the Tees Valley Health and Safety Liaison Group have agreed to seek opportunities to engage with the public health agenda with particular emphasis on improving health in the workplace. Best practice and opportunities for partnership work with regards to public health will be shared.

c) Local Priorities

We recognise that we have a vital role to play in ensuring that the regulatory system is focused on better health and safety outcomes and not purely technical breaches of the law. During interventions officers will focus on

specific risks which are the key causes of workplace accidents, injuries and ill health. Using local based intelligence we have identified the following priorities which can be addressed during our contact with businesses, including through other areas of work e.g. food inspections and licensing visits.

Priority Topics	Estimated no of premises that topic is applicable to
Legionella in care homes	32
Asbestos Management	352
Gas Safety in Commercial Kitchens	99
Deliveries / Workplace Transport	132
Cellar Safety	37
Occupational Disease e.g. Dermatitis	46
Managing Risks from Legionella	3
Violence at Work	27
Work at heights	18

It is anticipated that consistent, high quality interventions by the service will, over time, result in a general improvement in standards, reducing the frequency for recourse to formal action.

An estimated 10% of interventions are of premises where it is more appropriate to conduct interventions outside the standard working time hours. Arrangements are in place to inspect these premises out of hours by making use of the Council's flexible working arrangements, lieu time facilities and, if necessary, paid overtime. In addition, these arrangements will permit the occasional intervention at premises which open outside of, as well as during standard work time hours.

Revisits will be carried out to check compliance with all statutory notices and where contraventions have been identified which may lead to risks to health and safety. Revisits other than for statutory notices will be made at officer's discretion.

The intervention programme for 2014/15 is expected to generate 75 revisits. A number of these premises revisits will be undertaken outside standard working hours and arrangements are in place to facilitate this.

The performance against targets for all health and safety interventions is reported quarterly as part of the Regeneration & Neighbourhoods Department internal performance monitoring. In addition, performance against targets is reported quarterly to the Regeneration Services Department as part of the Regeneration & Neighbourhoods department plan update.

3.2.3 Unrated Premises

During 2011/12 substantial work was carried out updating our premises database and this generated a significant number of unrated premises. Currently there is no national guidance on how to address unrated premises, with the exception that premises must not receive an inspection without a reason.

We aim to identify businesses that fit in with national, regional and local priorities (e.g. by business directories, information from business rates and other intelligence) so that we can focus our interventions on those that present the greatest risk.

3.2.4 Combined Food & Health and Safety Interventions

A joint statement by Food Standards Agency, Local Regulation and Health and Safety Executive was published on 23 February 2011 providing clarification on implementing the Lord Young recommendation to combine food safety and health safety inspections. This statement emphasised that this approach should not result in an increase of inspections in accordance with government mandate.

We currently provide a combined food safety and health and safety service and have done so for many years to maximize resource use. We will continue with this approach and will where appropriate carry out targeted interventions.

3.3 Reactive Interventions

3.3.1 Health and Safety Complaints and Service Requests

In order to target those businesses that are poor performers and not meeting the requirements under health and safety legislation we will place significant emphasis on reactive work such as dealing with complaints, accidents and incidents.

It is intended that every complaint / request for service is responded to within 2 working days. The initial response is determined after assessment of the information received, and is based on the risk arising from the conditions that are the subject of the complaint.

Complaints are investigated in accordance with established procedures. The potential actions that are available vary from the provision of advice, often after liaison with the business, to full prosecution procedures in line with the Council's Public Protection Enforcement Policy. Officers also have regard to the Enforcement Management Model (EMM) when making enforcement decisions.

This reactive work is variable and unpredictable in nature and volume and includes complaints about poor working conditions, safety concerns and smokefree complaints. Based on the previous two years data it is estimated that 20 complaints / service requests will result in a visit being carried out.

3.3.2 Dealing with Matters of Evident Concern

The Code acknowledges that there will be other reasons that LAs undertake site visits to businesses, for example food hygiene or licensing, and there will be circumstances when officers may become aware of a significant health and safety issue. LAs are directed to deal with such matters at the time of the initial visit wherever possible and factor it into their assessment of how the company is managing its risks, rating the premises accordingly.

Responding to matters of evident concern may involve Authorised Officers using Flexible Warrants in premises where HSE is the enforcing authority, where appropriate.

Information relating to action taken in dealing with matters of evident concern has not previously been recorded as it forms part of the officer's role, but it is estimated as likely to require reactive health and safety interventions during approximately 30% of food safety inspections.

3.3.3 LPG Campaign Visits

As in previous years, under the direction of the HSE, visits will be made to sites as part of the co-ordinated national campaign to address LPG underground pipework in response to Lord Gill's recommendation. Officers will continue to inspect LPG installations in commercial premises and ensure that action will be taken to address potentially dangerous underground pipework.

3.3.4 Accident/Disease/Dangerous Occurrences Investigations

Some accidents, diseases and dangerous occurrences must be reported under the provisions of the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995. To co-ordinate the reporting of these incidents nationally is the Incident Contact Centre, which receives notification and arranges for these to be notified to the appropriate enforcing authority.

Once a notification is received it is accessed from a secure website. This work involves administrative resource to filter, download, direct and redirect incidents. Once accepted a decision by a senior officer is made as to whether the matter requires further investigation using selection criteria. The investigation selection criteria are based on national guidance.

In some cases incidents can have a considerable impact on planned work as there is a need to react immediately. For example, accidents involving a fatality, major and/or multiple injury and those likely to affect the public will require immediate response, including out of hours if necessary.

The following data from the last three years gives some indication of the likely workload:

	10/11	11/12	12/13	13/14
Number of reported Accidents	78	61	54	47
Number requiring investigation	28	16	14	9

NB. Investigations may take several months to complete and can span financial years.

3.3.5 Supporting Businesses & Others

In support of local economic development and growth the Council considers that providing advice and support to business, especially new business start-ups, to help them to comply with the requirements of legislation, is one of our core activities. For health and safety issues the Council has a policy of offering comprehensive and usefully tailored advice to any business for which we are, or are likely to become, the enforcing authority. Feedback from businesses indicates that they value this type of contact.

Advice will be available during the course of routine visits and interventions, through information publications such as leaflets and booklets and in response to queries. We will signpost individuals/businesses to the Council and/or HSE website accordingly.

Advisory visits which are undertaken are distinct from regulatory visits and are made at the convenience of the business without recourse to the section 20 regulatory powers of entry provided by the HSWA. Our focus may be broader than specific health and safety outcomes as advice and support given can impact on wider public health outcomes/health inequalities. In 2013/14 we worked with 79 new businesses.

3.3.6 Public Health Promotional/Campaign Work

- **Estates Excellence**

Estates Excellence is a non enforcement initiative which is delivered through a partnership of the HSE, Local Authorities, Fire and Rescue Service and industry partners. The initiative provides support to local business raising awareness to help businesses identify and manage their health and safety risks and protect their employees. The initiative also promotes good health and wellbeing among employees by providing training, which could reduce the risk of accidents as well as providing free occupational health screening to promote a healthy productive workforce.

There is a range of support available to businesses through participation in the initiative, including a free assessment of the workplace, free information, advice and health and safety workshops. The initiative is delivered locally, totally free of charge.

The initiative will be launched on the 14th April 2014. Visiting officers from Hartlepool Borough Council and partner agencies will carried out promotional visits during the first week of the initiative. It was identified that the local authority had responsibility for health and safety enforcement in 49% of the businesses on the estate, with the remainder being HSE enforced.

- **Tattoo Hygiene Scheme**

The scheme, which is voluntary, is designed to inform members of the public about the hygiene standards in individual premises, drive up standards and help combat the risk of incidents of infection and of transmission of infectious disease from tattooing.

Under the scheme, tattoo studios undergo a rigorous inspection from council environmental health officers before being rated in one of four categories. These are '1 - Needs Improvement', '2 - Satisfactory', '3 - Good' and '4 - Very Good'.

- **Saving Our Skins**

The scheme aims to raise awareness of the risk of skin cancer by developing strategies and planning interventions to tackle the incidence of skin cancer.

This involves:

- Promoting sun safe behaviour,
- Environmental measures including structural changes to provide protection from the sun by adequate shading
- Ensuring the safety of sun tanning establishments 7 controlled use of equipment

3.3.7 Sampling

In addition to focussing on specific health and safety outcomes we will carry out a programme of sampling to provide useful data to enable more objective assessment of factors which can impact on wider public health outcomes / health inequalities.

Samples may be taken in response to health and safety concerns e.g. in relation to *Legionella* or water quality.

During 2014/15 the service intends to participate in a cross regional survey assessing water quality in spa pools co-ordinated by the Public Health England's York Food, Water & Environmental Microbiology Laboratory

3.4 Complaints against our Staff

Anyone who is aggrieved by the actions of a member of staff is encouraged, in the first instance, to contact the employee's line manager. Details of how and who to make contact with are contained in the inspection report left at the time of an inspection.

Formal complaints are investigated in accordance with the Council's corporate complaint procedure.

3.5 Liaison Arrangements

The Council actively participates in local and regional activities and is represented on the following:

- Tees Valley Health and Safety Liaison Group;
- Tees Valley Public Protection Heads of Service Group;
- North East Public Protection Partnership;
- North of England Regulatory Liaison Group.

The Authority receives and takes cognisance of guidance from a number of bodies but principally the Health and Safety Executive, Local Authority Unit the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health.

The service acts as a Statutory Consultee for applications relating to Premises Licences made under the Licensing Act 2003 and are consultees for commercial planning applications.

3.6 Lead Authority Partnership Scheme (LAPS) / Primary Authority Scheme

It is the Council's policy to comply with HSE's mandatory guidance in respect of the Lead Authority Partnership Scheme (LAPS) and Primary Authority Scheme.

In particular the Council will contact the Lead/Primary Authority and liaise over:

- issues arising in connection with inspection plans
- any proposed formal enforcement action
- service of Prohibition Notices
- shortcomings in the companies policies that have wide implications
- death, major injury, work related ill health or dangerous occurrences reportable under the Reporting of injuries Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations

In Hartlepool, there are currently no formal Primary Authority arrangements in place however we continue to work closely with local businesses on an informal basis.

The level of resourcing will have to be reviewed if an opportunity to enter into a formal Primary Authority arrangement arises.

4. RESOURCES

4.1 Financial Resources

The annual budget for the Consumer Services section in the year 2014/15 is given overleaf:

2014/15 Budget

	£000.0
Employees	475.0
Other Expenditure	121.8
Income	(20.6)
Net Budget	576.2

This budget is for other services provided by this section including Food, Animal Health, Trading Standards and licensing resources are allocated in accordance with service demands.

4.2 Staffing Allocation

Under Section 18 of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 the Authority is required to set out their commitment, priorities and planned interventions; and put in place the capacity, management infrastructure, performance and information systems to deliver an effective service and comply with their statutory duties; operate systems to train, appoint, authorise, monitor and maintain a competent inspectorate.

The Director of Public Health has overall responsibility for the delivery of the health and safety service. The Head of Public Protection has responsibility for ensuring the delivery of the Council's Public Protection service, including delivery of the health and safety service, in accordance with the service plan.

The Head of Public Protection, with the requisite qualifications and experience, is designated as lead officer in relation to the health and safety function and has responsibility for the management of the service.

The resources determined necessary to deliver the service in 2014/15 are as follows:

1 x 0.20 FTE Head of Public Protection (with responsibility also for Food, Licensing, Trading Standards, Environmental Standards & IT)

1 x 0.33 FTE Commercial Services Manager (with responsibility also for Food and Animal Health)

3 x 0.25 FTE EHO (with requisite qualifications and experience)

1 x 0.10 FTE Part-time EHO

1 x FTE Technical Officer (Health & Safety)

These are considered to be the minimum resources required to deliver the commitments set out in this Plan and to comply with the S18 Standard.

The Head of Public Protection has responsibility for planning service delivery and management of the Health and Safety Service, Food, Licensing, Public Health, Water Quality, Trading Standards, Animal Health and Welfare, Environmental Protection and I.T. as well as general management responsibilities as a member of the Public Health Management Team.

The Commercial Service Manager has responsibility for the day to day supervision of the Health and Safety Service, Food, Public Health, Water Quality and Animal Health and Welfare.

The EHO's are responsible for carrying out the health and safety premises intervention programme as well as the delivery of all other aspects of the health and safety service and will undertake complex investigations. In addition these officers undertake food and other enforcement work.

The Technical Officer (Health and Safety) is responsible for interventions including inspections, as well as revisits, investigation of less complex complaints, investigation of accidents and the provision of advice.

Administrative support is provided by the Public Protection Support Services team.

All staff engaged in health and safety law enforcement activity are suitably trained and qualified and appropriately authorised in accordance with guidance and internal policy.

4.3 Staff Development

The Council is committed to the training and personal development of its employees through the Investors in People (IIP) process and has in place Personal Development Plans for all members of staff.

The Staff Personal Development Plan Scheme allows for the formal identification of the training needs of staff members in terms of personal development linked with the development needs of the service on an annual basis.

To assess competence standards in respect of regulatory skills and knowledge and identify development needs, officers will also use the HSE's web-based Regulators' Development Needs Analysis (rDNA) tool for inspectors.

It is a mandatory requirement for officers of the health and safety service to maintain their professional competency. This is achieved in a variety of ways including through attendance at accredited short courses, seminars or conferences, by vocational visits, directed reading and e-learning and via access to the Guidance to Regulator's Information Point (GRIP).

A Personal Development Plan that clearly prioritises training requirements of individual staff members will be developed and reviewed bi-annually. Detailed records are maintained relating to all training received by officers.

4.4 Equipment and Facilities

A range of equipment and facilities are required for the effective operation of the health and safety service.

The service has a computerised performance management system, Authority Public Protection (APP). This is capable of maintaining up to date accurate data relating to the activities of the health and safety service. A documented database management procedure has been produced to ensure that the system is properly maintained, up to date and secure. The system is used for the generation of the inspection programmes, the recording and tracking of all health and safety activities, the production of statutory returns and the effective management of performance.

5. QUALITY ASSESSMENT

The Council is committed to quality service provision. To support this commitment the health and safety service seeks to ensure consistent, effective, efficient and ethical service delivery that constitutes value for money.

A range of performance monitoring information will be used to assess the extent to which the health and safety service achieves this objective and will include on-going monitoring against pre-set targets, both internal and external audits and stakeholder feedback.

Specifically the Commercial Service Manager will carry out accompanied visits with officers undertaking inspections, investigations and other duties for the purpose of monitoring consistency and quality of the inspection and other visits carried out as well as maintaining and giving feedback with regard to associated documentation and reports.

It is possible that the Health and Safety Executive may at any time notify the Council of their intention to carry out an audit of the service.

6 REVIEW OF 2013/14 HEALTH & SAFETY SERVICE PLAN

6.1 Review against the Service Plan

It is recognised that a key element of the service planning process is the rational review of past performance. In the formulation of this service plan a review has been conducted of performance against those targets established for the year 2013/14.

This service plan will be reviewed at the conclusion of the year 2014/15 and at any point during the year where significant legislative changes or other relevant factors occur during the year.

It is the responsibility of the Head of Public Protection to carry out that review with the Director of Public Health.

The service plan review will identify any shortfalls in service delivery and will inform decisions about future staffing and resource allocation, service standards, targets and priorities.

Any relevant amendments to the Council's Corporate Plan will be incorporated into the service plan.

Following any review leading to proposed revision of the service plan Member approval will be sought.

6.2 Performance Review 2013/2014

This section describes performance of the service in key areas.

6.2.1 Health & Safety Interventions

Due to prioritising resources in relation to food hygiene interventions and an unprecedented volume of reactive work the health and safety intervention programme for 2013/14 did not reach the target of 100%.

In total interventions were carried out at 358 premises equating to 68.1% of the intervention programme. These were risk based and multiple priority topics were covered during some visits. The outstanding interventions will be added to the 2014/15 programme.

Below is a summary of the topics which were covered during the intervention visits:

Topic	Estimated no of premises that topic is applicable to	No of interventions achieved
Asbestos Management	335	244
Gas Safety in Commercial Kitchens	153	144
Deliveries / Workplace Transport	158	219
Cellar Safety	60	27
Occupational Disease e.g. Dermatitis	68	42
Managing Risks from Legionella	4	15
Falls from Height in Social Care Settings	32	26
Violence at Work	36	109
Falls from Height	155	254

In addition officers made 75 revisits to monitor compliance with contraventions identified during planned interventions. This equated to more than a threefold increase from 2012/13 when 21 revisits were carried out.

It appears that the credit crunch is continuing to have an impact on standards. Financial pressures as a result of the recession has resulted in some businesses failing to carry out essential maintenance / repairs, consequently there has been an increase in the number of contraventions found. We anticipate that this trend of reduction in standards is likely to continue until the economic climate improves.

During 2013/14 the Authority undertook 691 enforcement visits to assess compliance with smoke free legislation which came into force on 1st July 2007, a proportion of which were carried out in conjunction with health and safety inspections. No complaints were received regarding this legislation.

6.2.2 Promotional/Campaign Work

During 2013/14 the following promotional/campaign work was undertaken:

a) National LPG Inspection Campaign

We did not receive any referrals from the HSE in relation to the LPG Inspection Campaign.

b) Work to Engage with the Public Health Agenda

Work was undertaken in the following areas.

Tattoo Hygiene Rating Scheme

Work was carried out in preparation for the launch of a scheme to rate the hygiene standards in tattoo studios on 1 April 2014.

Although a Tattoo Hygiene Rating Scheme (THRS) has been running in Wales since September 2013, Hartlepool Council will be the first local authority in England to launch such a scheme.

The scheme, which is voluntary, is designed to inform members of the public about the hygiene standards in individual premises, drive up standards and help combat the risk of incidents of infection and of transmission of infectious disease from tattooing.

Under the scheme, tattoo studios undergo a rigorous inspection from council environmental health officers before being rated in one of four categories. These are '1 - Needs Improvement', '2 - Satisfactory', '3 - Good' and '4 - Very Good'.

The large majority of tattoo studios in Hartlepool have agreed to sign up to the scheme and the first four to be inspected have all been given the top rating of '4 - Very Good'. These are Intravenous Ink, Wishful Inkin, Spy Monkey, and Copes Studio.

A strategy is also being developed to tackle "Scratchers" who are unregistered, unqualified individuals who will carry out a tattoo anywhere with no regard for hygiene. This often results in a poor quality tattoo, infection and people being scarred for life.

Under this new scheme, anyone wanting a tattoo will have access to the ratings and then be able to make an informed choice as to where to have their tattoo done. Once inspected, tattoo studios receive a certificate and a window sticker which clearly shows what their grading is. Studios can also appeal if they do not think that their grading is a fair one.

Public Health England in the North East will be supporting the scheme. When tattooists or body-piercers don't use sterile equipment there is a risk that infections can pass from one client to another. These can range from skin infections to serious blood-borne viruses, including HIV and hepatitis B and C.

Estates Excellence

Work was carried out in preparation for the delivery of the Estates Excellence initiative. Estates Excellence is a multi-agency initiative which aims to improve health and safety practices within individual businesses as well as promoting good health among employees.

The scheme which will run during April/May 2014 offers free help to businesses. It will be launched in an area of Hartlepool covering the Longhill and Sandgate Industrial Estates which incorporates dozens of businesses in areas such as Burn Road, Mainsforth Terrace, Green Street and Bertha Street.

The first initiative in Hartlepool is covering the Longhill and Sandgate Industrial Estates which incorporates dozens of businesses in areas such as Burn Road, Mainsforth Terrace, Green Street and Bertha Street.

It involves numerous organisations working together providing support, training and assistance to local companies in the area. The organisations include Hartlepool Borough Council, Health and Safety Executive (HSE), Public Health England, Cleveland Fire Brigade, Northumbrian Water, Seymours Civil Engineering, EDF, North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Trust.

Local firm Seymour Civil Engineering is assisting and also providing a base for the project while EDF Energy will be one of the organisations delivering the free training to companies.

Paul Baldwin of the Health and Safety Executive, added: "HSE is delighted to bring this initiative to Hartlepool. This is not a traditional health and safety inspection. The aim is to support local, small businesses by raising awareness of the common health and safety challenges they face in their workplace, providing a range of support, free information, advice and health and safety training workshops.

"This will all be delivered locally, at a time convenient to the business and totally free of charge. This is designed to help them improve the health, safety and wellbeing of their employees and their business."

6.2.3 Health and Safety Complaints & Requests for Service

During the year the service carried out 18 visits in response to complaints / service requests relating to health and safety conditions and working practice. The initial response to these requests have been undertaken all within our target of 2 working days; however, they have had some effect on performance of the intervention programme.

Officers responded to all statutory consultations relating to applications made under the Licensing Act 2003.

6.2.4 Complaints against Our Staff

No complaints were made against our staff during 2013/14.

6.2.5 Compliments about our Staff

The Public Protection Service regularly consults with users of the Service to establish whether the contact had been helpful and fair.

In 2013/14 the final satisfaction figure was 85% (in 2012/2013 the figure was 81%). As a figure of 100% would mean every customer being very satisfied with both the fairness and helpfulness of the officer concerned a final figure of 85% is a very good result and a testament to the work of the team.

6.2.6 Accidents/Diseases/Dangerous Occurrences Investigations

The service received 47 accident notifications during the year. All were responded to within 1 working day. These notifications generated 9 visits by enforcement staff.

6.2.7 Formal Enforcement Action

During 2013/14 It was necessary to serve 9 Prohibition Notices and 5 Improvement Notices. Seven Prohibition Notices were served in relation to window openings in care homes, one in relation to a missing machinery guard and one relating to a vehicle lift. A further five Improvement Notices were served, two of which related to windows, two regarding LPG storage and one in relation to a passenger lift. No Simple Cautions were issued.

In December 2013 legal proceedings were taken against the landlord of the public house, in relation to an accident involving a member of the public. The case was heard at Teesside Crown Court in December 2013 the defendant pleaded 'Not Guilty' to two charges. The jury returned a 'Not Guilty' verdict in respect of both charges.

6.2.8 Improvement Proposals 2013/14

The following areas for improvement were identified in the 2013/14 Health and Safety Service Plan.

1. The Public Protection Section continues to face significant financial pressures due to ongoing Council savings and, as such, the need to prioritise service delivery and maximise effectiveness remains paramount.

We have made make best use of our resources by

- Carrying out combined interventions wherever possible

- Targeting interventions according to risk
 - Using staff flexibly across teams
2. During 2013/14 we will carry out work with colleagues to secure improvement in Public Health through the Health Protection and Improvement Elements of the Core Public Health Strategy. In particular we will target our resources effectively using a range of interventions, including providing advice to businesses, with the aim of influencing behaviours and improving the management of health and safety risks which will have impact on wider public health outcomes.

During 2013/14 We have started work on a number of projects linked to improving public health

- 3 We will review and update our standard operating procedures to reflect current guidance.

This work has not been completed and therefore remains a priority for 2014/15.

7. KEY AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT & CHALLENGES FOR 2014/15

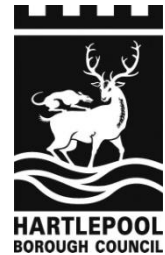
In addition to committing the service to specific operational activities such as performance of the inspection programme, the service planning process assists in highlighting areas where improvement is desirable.

Detailed below are specifically identified key areas for improvement that are to be progressed during 2014/15 and some of the main challenges facing the service.

1. The Public Protection Section continues to face significant financial pressures due to ongoing Council savings and, as such, the need to prioritise service delivery and maximise effectiveness remains paramount.
2. During 2014/15 we will continue to carry out work with colleagues to secure improvement in Public Health through the Health Protection and Improvement Elements of the Core Public Health Strategy. In particular we will target our resources effectively using a range of interventions, including providing advice to businesses, with the aim of influencing behaviours and improving the management of health and safety risks which will have impact on wider public health outcomes. We plan to continue a programme of sampling to monitor and raise awareness in relation to occupational health and will continue to explore how we can contribute to the Public Health Outcomes Framework and funding streams to support this area of work.
3. We will review and update our standard operating procedures to reflect current guidance.

REGENERATION SERVICES COMMITTEE

23rd October 2014



Report of: Director of Public Health

Subject: TRADING STANDARDS SERVICE PLAN 2014/15

1. TYPE OF DECISION/APPLICABLE CATEGORY

Non-Key Decision.

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

2.1 To consider and approve the Trading Standards Service Plan for 2014/15.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Trading Standards operates within the Public Protection Service and has a wide range of enforcement responsibilities including product safety, underage sales, weights and measures and counterfeiting. It also plays a significant role in, amongst other things, the detection and prevention of doorstep crime, illicit tobacco, cowboy roofers and builders and other scams and cons.
- 3.2 The Trading Standards Service publishes an annual Service Plan detailing the previous performance of the Service, the main challenges facing it and a plan of work to be undertaken in the forthcoming year.
- 3.3 The Service Plan details the Service's priorities for 2014/15 and highlights how these priorities will be addressed.
- 3.4 The Service Plan for 2014/15 is attached as **Appendix 1**.

4. PROPOSALS

- 4.1 The Service Plan for 2014/15 has been updated to reflect last year's performance.

4.2 The Service Plan covers the following:

- (i) Service Aims and Objectives;
- (ii) The background to the Authority, including the scope and demands on the Trading Standards Service;
- (iii) Service delivery, including inspection programmes, service requests, complaints, advice, liaison and promotion;
- (iv) Resources, including financial allocation, staff allocation and staff development;
- (v) Quality assessment; and
- (vi) Details of the review of the Plan.

5. SUMMARY OF MAIN ISSUES RAISED IN THE PLAN

- 5.1 During 2013/14 the Service completed interventions in a total of 357 premises equating to 59% of all programmed interventions planned for the year. The shortfall arose as resources were frequently re-allocated to complaints and other issues that required an immediate response. The outstanding interventions will be added to the programme of work for 2014/15.
- 5.2 In addition to the planned interventions officers also carried out 172 enforcement visits to assess compliance with smoke free legislation which came into force on 1st July 2007.
- 5.3 During 2013/14 the Service received 364 complaints from members of the public and local traders. These complaints related to, amongst other things, the false description of goods and services, product safety, rogue traders and cowboy roofers, counterfeit goods and misleading pricing.
- 5.4 The Service carried out a number of specific projects last year targeting areas previously identified as being of concern, These included:
- Halloween clothing and novelties
 - E-cigarette chargers
 - Easter novelty toys
 - Cigarettes for 'Ignition Propensity' testing (All cigarettes must now be manufactured in such a way that they will self-extinguish if they are not regularly used once lit)
 - E-liquid nicotine content

5.5 The Service carried out underage sales test purchase operations to identify whether premises were selling age restricted products to children. Seven sales were made during the year – 2 sales of alcohol and 5 of tobacco.

5.6 Resources will continue to be allocated according to identified priorities. In 2013/14 these priorities are:

5.7 High Priority

Rogue Traders – Doorstep crime, cowboy builders and other types of scam can cost local residents hundreds or even thousands of pounds. Trading Standards work closely with a number of agencies to help protect the vulnerable from this type of crime.

Tackling Underage Sales - The illegal sale of alcohol and other age-restricted products to children not only contributes significantly towards anti-social behaviour in Hartlepool but can also represent a serious risk to the health and well-being of the children involved.

Product Safety – Consumers are entitled to assume that all products they purchase will be safe. Trading Standards is responsible for the monitoring, sampling and testing of consumer products to ensure they do not pose a risk.

5.8 Medium Priority

Scams and Cons – Unscrupulous traders routinely prey on the vulnerable and elderly by taking advantage of their goodwill. Most people regularly receive unsolicited letters or e-mails offering services that are ‘too good to be true’. Sadly, on some occasions, consumers are drawn into these scams and pay for goods or services that either never arrive or are not what was initially described. In many cases, making one purchase opens up the consumer to many, many other scams and problems can escalate. Trading Standards aims to identify common scams and notify consumers through press releases and other mass media such as the internet and ‘Ringmaster’.

False Descriptions – Most consumer purchases are made on the basis of the description they are given by either the manufacturer or retailer. In some cases descriptions are deliberately or negligently misleading – causing consumers to make purchase decisions that they may not have made otherwise. Once money has been handed over it can, on occasion, be very difficult to get back other than to go through the court system. Trading Standards investigates complaints about traders who falsely describe goods and look for the accuracy of descriptions during routine interventions.

Counterfeiting and illicit tobacco – The illegal copying of DVD’s, computer software, designer clothing and jewellery continue to be a significant issue in Hartlepool. Counterfeiting is bad for business – it takes money away from local retailers who sell genuine products and puts it into the hands of local

and national criminals – with little or no local benefit for the town. Counterfeiting is often carried out by large organised crime units who are also engaged in other types of criminal activity such as drugs and smuggling.

Trading Standards works closely with HMRC, the Police and trade mark holders to identify and prosecute those who sell counterfeit products.

5.9 Low Priority

Loan Sharks – Working in partnership with the National Illegal Money Lending Team Trading Standards identifies and prosecutes those who prey on the vulnerable by illegally lending money at extortionate interest rates. This is categorised as a low priority as there is a bespoke National enforcement team that now exclusively targets illegal money lending and, as such, the need for direct local resourcing has been reduced.

Weights and Measures – Many products are still sold by either weight or by length and consumers expect that they will receive the quantity stated. For some products, such as petrol, the value of goods is so high that even a small error in the accuracy of a measuring machine may lead to significant consumer loss.

Trading Standards officers are 'Weights and Measures Inspectors' and routinely carry out checks on weighing and measuring equipment.

Misleading Pricing – Most products are now sold with no price marking on them – bar codes having replaced price stickers. This has made it extremely difficult to check whether the price stated on a shelf is actually the price charged at the checkout. For some purchases, there may be 'hidden extras' that can significantly inflate the final price of goods or services.

5.10 The Public Protection Section continues to face significant financial pressures due to ongoing Council savings and, as such, the need to prioritise service delivery and maximise effectiveness remains paramount.

5.11 In particular resources will be targeted using a range of interventions, including providing advice to businesses, with the aim of influencing behaviours and improving the management of risks which will have impact on wider public health outcomes.

6. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

6.1 That the Regeneration Services Committee approves the Trading Standards Service Plan for 2014/15.

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Hartlepool Borough Council

Trading Standards Service Plan

2014/15

TRADING STANDARDS SERVICE PLAN 2014/15

INTRODUCTION

1. SERVICE AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

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- 6.10 Complaints against our Staff
- 6.11 Compliments

7. AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT / KEY CHALLENGES FOR 2014/15

INTRODUCTION

This Service Plan details how the Trading Standards Service will be delivered by Hartlepool Borough Council.

The Plan sets out the Council's aims in respect of its Trading Standards Service and the means by which those aims are to be fulfilled.

Whilst focussing primarily on the year 2014/15, where relevant, longer-term objectives are identified. Additionally, there is a review of performance for 2013/14 and this aims to inform decisions about how best to build on past successes and address performance gaps.

1 SERVICE AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

1.1 Service Aims and Objectives

Hartlepool Borough Council aims:

- To carry out our enforcement duties and deliver high quality services through the efficient and effective use of resources;
- To supplement our enforcement role by providing targeted education and advice;
- To encourage innovation through actively seeking out best practice and working in partnership with other agencies;
- To actively contribute towards achieving nationally agreed strategic aims and objectives; and
- To ensure our actions are consistent, proportionate and targeted and that we are transparent and open about what we do.

In its delivery of the service the Council will have regard to directions and examples of best practice as disseminated by Local Government Regulation, Trading Standards Institute and Central Government.

1.2 Links to Corporate Objectives and Plans

This service plan fits into the hierarchy of the Council's planning process as follows:

- Hartlepool Council's Plan - details the Council's vision, aims and objectives.
- Hartlepool's Health & Wellbeing Strategy - this sets out how the Health & Wellbeing Board for Hartlepool intends to achieve its ambition to '*Improve health and wellbeing and reduce health inequalities among the population of Hartlepool.*'

- Trading Standards Service Plan - sets out how the Council aims to deliver this statutory service and the Trading Standards Service's contribution to corporate objectives.

Overall Aim / Vision

The Council's overall aim is:

“To take direct action and work in partnership with others, to continue the revitalisation of Hartlepool life and secure a better future for Hartlepool people.”

The Council's aim is based on, and virtually identical to, the Hartlepool Partnership's long term vision, agreed in July 2008, looking 20 years ahead, which is:-

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

The Council has adopted a number of themes that form part of its Sustainable Community Strategy and the Trading Standards Service contributes towards these in the following ways:

Jobs and the Economy

By providing advice and information to new and existing businesses to assist them in meeting their legal requirements with regard to Trading Standards related matters and thus help avoid potential costly action at a later stage.

Health and Wellbeing

By ensuring that businesses supply safe products and through the prevention of the supply of age restricted products to children.

Community Safety

By encouraging awareness amongst businesses of the role they can play in reducing problems in their community by keeping premises in a clean, tidy and safe condition. By preventing the supply of alcohol to children who may go on to cause anti social behaviour or raise the fear of crime for residents.

Environment

By encouraging businesses to be aware of environmental issues which they can control, such as energy efficiency in commercial and domestic premises.

Culture and Leisure

By exploring ways to promote high standards of consumer confidence in local traders including hotels, other tourist accommodation, public houses and other catering and retail premises.

Strengthening Communities

By developing ways of communicating well with all customers, including proprietors of businesses whose first language is not English, and ensuring that we deliver our service equitably to all.

The Council is committed to the principles of equality and diversity. This Trading Standards Service Plan consequently aims to ensure that the same high standards of service is offered to all, and that recognition is given to the varying needs and backgrounds of its customers.

2 BACKGROUND

2.1 Profile of the Local Authority

Hartlepool is situated on the North East coast of England. The Borough consists of the town of Hartlepool and a number of small outlying villages. The total area of the Borough is 9,390 hectares.

Hartlepool is a unitary authority, providing a full range of services. It adjoins Durham County Council to the north and west and Stockton on Tees Borough Council to the south. The residential population is 92,028 of which ethnic minorities comprise 3.4% (2011 census).

The borough contains a rich mix of the very old and the very new. Its historic beginnings can be traced back to the discovery of an iron-age settlement at Catcote Village and the headland, known locally as “Old Hartlepool” is steeped in history. On the other hand, the former South Docks area has been transformed into a fabulous 500-berth Marina.

The tourist industry impacts upon recreational opportunities, shopping facilities and leisure facilities, including the provision of food and drink outlets that include restaurants, bars and cafes.

2.2 Organisational Structure

Hartlepool Borough Council is a democratic organisation. Following a referendum held on 15th November 2012, Hartlepool Borough Council has agreed a revised constitution which sets out how the Council operates, how decisions are made and the procedures which are followed to ensure that these are efficient, transparent and accountable to local people.

The Council has moved from operating under an Elected Mayor and Cabinet model of governance to a new arrangement based on Committees taken from its 33 elected councillors who are responsible for agreeing policies about provision of services and how the Council's money is spent.

Under the Council's new governance arrangements, most day-to-day decisions are taken by five Policy Committees. These Policy Committees cover the following main service areas:

- Finance and Policy Committee
- Adult Services Committee
- Children's Services Committee
- Neighbourhood Services Committee
- Regeneration Services Committee

The Regeneration Services Committee provides political oversight for Trading Standards law enforcement.

The Council is made up of four Departments:

- Chief Executives
- Child and Adult Services
- Regeneration and Neighbourhoods
- Public Health

As of 5th August 2013 the Trading Standards Service is positioned within the Public Health Department.

2.3 Scope of the Trading Standards Service

Service delivery broadly comprises:

- Carrying out programmed interventions;
- Investigating complaints relating to consumer protection issues;
- Carrying out programmed test purchase exercises to monitor trader compliance with relevant legislation – including underage sales;
- Taking samples of consumer products for testing and analysis
- Providing advice and information to both consumers and traders;
- Taking action (formal and informal) to ensure compliance with legislation;
- Acting as a statutory consultee for applications made under the Licensing Act 2003; and
- Enforcing smoke free legislation in public places.

To achieve its strategic aims and objectives it is necessary to work in partnership with other organisations and agencies such as local authorities, Cleveland Police, Her Majesties Revenues & Customs (HMRC) and local businesses. The Council aims to ensure that these joint working

arrangements are in place and that officers of the Service contribute, and are committed to, the ongoing development of these arrangements.

2.4 Demands on the Trading Standards Service

The Trading Standards Service is the principal enforcing authority for approximately 500 statutory instruments relating to consumer protection.

In early 2014, a Viewpoint survey was conducted to establish resident's views on a range of Trading Standards responsibilities. The results are detailed in the table below: -

		Very high priority %	High priority %	Medium priority %	Low priority %	Very low priority %	Overall score (Priority order) %
A	Underage sales (e.g. cigarettes, solvents, alcohol) (N=1362)	59	28	10	2	1	85 (3)
B	Toy and product safety (1338)	38	38	19	5	0.8	77 (5)
C	Weights and measures (e.g. short weights) (N=1307)	21	32	35	9	2	65 (9)
D	Counterfeit goods (e.g. pirate videos, computer games) (N=1347)	29	29	30	9	3	68 (8)
E	Rogue traders (e.g. cowboy builders, bogus charities & persistent problem traders) (N=1352)	72	23	3	0.5	0.6	91 (1)
F	False description on goods and services (e.g. car clocking & holiday brochures) (N=1358)	34	37	23	5	1	75 (6)
G	Misleading prices and bogus sale events (N=1349)	33	36	24	5	1	74 (7)
H	Loan sharks and consumer credit (N=1343)	66	21	9	3	1	87 (2)
I	Phoney prize winning letters and home working scams (N=1359)	54	25	14	6	1	81 (4)

It can be seen from the above that the majority of Trading Standards functions were considered to be either very high or high priority.

With a staff compliment of only four full time officers (plus a shared manager) it has been necessary to prioritise its proactive work and this has been done by the development of a 'Resource Allocation Matrix'. This takes account of a range of factors including public concerns (as identified above), business concerns, degree of risk to the public, complaint trends, government concerns at a national level (as expressed through the National Trading Standards Board) and local councillors concerns – each of which helps establish which enforcement areas should take priority over others.

Using this matrix the current priority areas for the Trading Standards Service are: -

High Priority

Rogue Traders – Doorstep crime, cowboy builders and other types of scam can cost local residents hundreds or even thousands of pounds. Trading Standards work closely with a number of agencies to help protect the vulnerable from this type of crime.

Tackling Underage Sales - The illegal sale of alcohol and other age-restricted products to children not only contributes significantly towards anti-social behaviour in Hartlepool but can also represent a serious risk to the health and well-being of the children involved.

Trading Standards and licensing officers work closely with Cleveland Police and other agencies to target premises that are thought to sell to children and uses underage volunteers to identify where offences are being committed.

Product Safety – Consumers are entitled to assume that all products they purchase will be safe. Trading Standards is responsible for the monitoring, sampling and testing of consumer products to ensure they do not pose a risk.

Medium Priority

Scams and Cons – Unscrupulous traders routinely prey on the vulnerable and elderly by taking advantage of their goodwill. Most people regularly receive unsolicited letters or e-mails offering services that are 'too good to be true'. Sadly, on some occasions, consumers are drawn into these scams and pay for goods or services that either never arrive or are not what was initially described. In many cases, making one purchase opens up the consumer to many, many other scams and problems can escalate. Trading Standards aims to identify common scams and notify consumers through press releases and other mass media such as the internet and 'Ringmaster'.

Where a company can be identified, formal action would be commenced against them.

False Descriptions – Most consumer purchases are made on the basis of the description they are given by either the manufacturer or retailer. In some cases descriptions are deliberately or negligently misleading – causing

consumers to make purchase decisions that they may not have made otherwise. Once money has been handed over it can, on occasion, be very difficult to get back other than to go through the court system. Trading Standards investigates complaints about traders who falsely describe goods and look for the accuracy of descriptions during routine interventions.

Counterfeiting and illicit tobacco – The illegal copying of DVD's, computer software, designer clothing and jewellery continue to be a significant issue in Hartlepool. Counterfeiting is bad for business – it takes money away from local retailers who sell genuine products and puts it into the hands of local and national criminals – with little or no local benefit for the town. Counterfeiting is often carried out by large organised crime units who are also engaged in other types of criminal activity such as drugs and smuggling.

Trading Standards works closely with HMRC, the Police and trade mark holders to identify and prosecute those who sell counterfeit products.

In April 2010 the Trading Standards Service appointed a tobacco control enforcement officer funded by grant monies made available for two years from the Department of Health. This post has subsequently been continued using non-recurring funding made available through public health grants. The postholder's responsibilities include working with regional and sub-regional organisations to identify sources of illicit and counterfeit tobacco and to prevent its supply.

Low Priority

Loan Sharks – Working in partnership with the National Illegal Money Lending Team Trading Standards identifies and prosecutes those who prey on the vulnerable by illegally lending money at extortionate interest rates. This is categorised as a low priority as there is a bespoke National enforcement team that now exclusively targets illegal money lending and, as such, the need for direct local resourcing has been reduced.

Weights and Measures – Many products are still sold by either weight or by length and consumers expect that they will receive the quantity stated. For some products, such as petrol, the value of goods is so high that even a small error in the accuracy of a measuring machine may lead to significant consumer loss.

Trading Standards officers are 'Weights and Measures Inspectors' and routinely carry out checks on weighing and measuring equipment.

Misleading Pricing – Most products are now sold with no price marking on them – bar codes having replaced price stickers. This has made it extremely difficult to check whether the price stated on a shelf is actually the price charged at the checkout. For some purchases, there may be 'hidden extras' that can significantly inflate the final price of goods or services.

Trading Standards staff routinely check the accuracy of price indications in shops and respond to complaints about misleading price indications.

2.5 Intelligence Operating Model

In addition to the identification of local priorities, the Trading Standards Service also contributes towards the development of regional and national priorities through Regional and National Tasking Groups.

The purpose of these groups is to identify those specific areas of concern that have a cross border impact and which, if tackled on a regional or national level, can benefit consumers everywhere.

The Intelligence Operating Model introduces a national intelligence framework to support regional and national enforcement through the collection and utilisation of information and data to inform work planning processes. Hartlepool Trading Standards will be both contributing and benefiting from this Model.

2.6 Enforcement Policy

The Public Protection Enforcement Policy was updated and revised in 2011.

The Trading Standards Service will take account of the 2014 Regulator's Code when carrying out its interactions with the business community.

3 SERVICE DELIVERY

3.1 Proactive Work

3.2 Trading Standards Interventions

The Trading Standards Service operates a risk based priority programme of business interventions to ensure ongoing compliance with relevant legislation.

Business types are categorised according to a national risk framework with local officers then attaching an additional element based on the businesses likelihood of compliance with statutory requirements. For example, those traders that have demonstrated a clear understanding of their legal obligations and implemented procedures and practices to comply with them will receive less scrutiny than a trader who deliberately or negligently flouts their obligations.

Premises are classified using a new, national risk rating scheme that was introduced in 2013.

As of April 2014, the number of premises liable to programmed intervention during 2014/15 is as follows: -

Risk Category	Frequency of Intervention	Number of Interventions
High	Not less than 12 months	4
Upper Medium	24 months	7
Lower Medium	5 years	0
Low	5 years	96
Unrated	Not less than 12 months	164
Total		271

Information on premises liable to Trading Standards interventions is held on the APP computer system. An intervention programme is produced from this system at the commencement of each reporting year.

Whilst the low risk premises can be targeted by non-inspection interventions such as mail shots, self assessment questionnaires or training events this approach can be resource intensive and have limited impact.

The target for 2014/15 is to inspect 100% of High risk and 'Upper Medium' risk premises that are due for intervention and to concentrate remaining resources on those premises that are currently categorised as 'unrated' in order to ensure that potentially high/ medium risk premises are identified and inspected.

It is anticipated that consistent, high quality programmed interventions by the service will, over time, result in a general improvement in standards, reducing the frequency for recourse to formal action.

Revisits will be carried out to check compliance where contraventions have been identified.

The performance against intervention targets for all Trading Standards inspections is reported quarterly as part of the quarterly report to the Regeneration Services Committee.

3.3 Advice and Guidance

The Trading Standards Service works closely with the national Consumer Advice helpline which is now being operated by the Citizen's Advice Bureau, to provide a comprehensive advice and guidance service. Consumers in need of advice regarding the civil law will be serviced by Citizen's Advice but where issues are raised that may have a broader local impact the local Trading Standards Service will be alerted and, if appropriate, an investigation commenced.

In most cases the Trading Standards Service will look to work in partnership with local businesses to ensure they are fully aware of their legal obligations and how best to achieve legal compliance. Such advice is offered free of charge and can be made available at a time to suit the trader.

Trading Standards staff also regularly provide advice sessions to local community groups on issues such as doorstep crime, loan sharks/illegal moneylending, rogue traders and 'the work of Trading Standards'.

Recent surveys carried out by the Government have indicated that businesses and retailers value visits by Trading Standards staff as being an important source of up to date advice and information.

The Council considers that assistance to business, in order to help them to comply with the requirements of legislation, is one of our core activities. For Trading Standards issues the Council has a policy of offering comprehensive advice to any business for which it is, or is likely to become, the enforcing authority.

Advice will be available during the course of routine visits and interventions, through information leaflets and booklets, in response to queries and through the Council's website.

- 3.4 Acting as Statutory Consultee** – Trading Standards is a statutory 'Responsible Authority' under the Licensing Act 2003. This means that every application for a licence to supply alcohol or offer other regulated entertainment must be submitted to the Trading Standards Service who will consider the application in terms of its likely impact on the Act's 'licensing objectives'. For Trading Standards this primarily means the protection of children from harm and officers use their expertise in detecting and preventing underage sales to work with prospective licensees and ensure operating procedures are put in place to prevent the sale of alcohol to children.

3.5 Local programmes/initiatives

Trading Standards will be conducting a range of projects and surveys during 2014/15 in order to improve consumer protection and to raise consumer confidence. These will include: -

Tobacco – In 2015 the current ban on the display of tobacco products in large supermarkets will be extended to all tobacco retailers. Officers will be working with businesses prior to this change to ensure the transition works smoothly and that all businesses will be compliant.

Doorstep Crime – There has been a steady increase in complaints about rogue roofers and builders who have targeted the elderly and vulnerable and scammed them out of money for poor quality or, sometimes, non-existent work. Trading Standards officers will be treating this as a high priority in

2014/15 and will be working to raise awareness amongst targeted groups and identifying and prosecuting the traders involved.

Sun Safety – In addition to the testing of a range of sunglasses and suntan lotions, officers will be visiting sunbed shops to ensure that the bulbs being used are safe and within the standards stipulated by law.

Cosmetic Products – With the increase in online purchases, counterfeit products can be hard to identify until they have been delivered and, in some cases, they may contain chemicals or other substances that may be hazardous to the user. Officers will make test purchases of a range of cosmetic products and have them checked by the trade mark holder to ensure Hartlepool consumers are getting the legitimate products that they have paid for.

3.6 **E-Crime** – Using the internet to buy goods and services is now commonplace and rogue traders have used this as an opportunity to sell counterfeit and dangerous goods to the unsuspecting public.

Trading Standards has secured national funding to purchase specialist equipment that will allow local officers to identify and target rogue e-traders operating in Hartlepool.

Officers will be conducting regular monitoring of internet sites that have a Hartlepool connection and, working with other agencies, specifically the Regional Scambusters team, test purchases will be made to generate evidence for formal legal action where such steps are considered appropriate.

3.7 **Sampling**

In order to protect the public it is essential that potential problems, particularly safety related, can be identified before they cause damage or harm.

One way of achieving this is through the regular sampling of consumer products to ensure they comply with relevant safety standards or with the descriptions being applied to them.

In most cases samples are sent to the testing laboratory at the Tees Valley Measurement Centre in Middlesbrough where they can be screen tested to identify any obvious faults. Where potential problems are identified samples may then be sent to Testing Houses for more formal testing for evidential purposes.

A sampling plan has been prepared for 2014/15 which will target, amongst other things, the following consumer products: -

Sunglasses. These must comply with the relevant British standard as darkened glasses that do not restrict UV light can actually serve to open the pupils further – allowing more, dangerous, UV light into the eye.

Sunbeds. There is evidence from various surveys conducted across the country that indicate that many sunbeds used by the public may be unsafe – both because of faulty electrical wiring and the safety of the bulbs being used. Specialist testing equipment will be used to ensure sunbeds being made for hire or use are safe.

E-Liquids. Nicotine replacement products, such as e-cigarettes, are being marketed as a safe alternative to smoking tobacco and are becoming increasingly popular with the general public. Pure nicotine can be extremely dangerous yet it is being sold to members of the public for use with e-cigarettes and similar devices.

To ensure that members of the public are sufficiently protected, the Trading Standards team will be buying nicotine products and having them tested for compliance with national safety standards.

Cigarettes. Modern manufactured cigarettes must now be made in such a way that they will self extinguish if not being actively smoked. This is aimed at preventing fires, particularly house fires, where the smoker leaves a cigarette unattended or perhaps falls asleep with a cigarette in their hand. Officers will be purchasing cigarettes to ensure this standard is being maintained.

3.8 Reactive Work

3.9 Trading Standards Complaints and Service Requests

It is intended that every complaint / request for service is responded to within 2 working days.

The majority of consumer complaints are forwarded to the Trading Standards Service via 'Citizen's Advice Consumer Service' (CACS) – a national consumer hotline funded by central government. CACS provide scripted advice that can resolve many of the simplest complaints but the more complex matters, or those requiring a potential criminal investigation, are referred on to the local Trading Standards department.

The initial response is determined after assessment of the information received, and is based on the risk arising from the conditions that are the subject of the complaint.

The potential actions that are available vary from the provision of advice, often after liaison with the business, to full prosecution procedures in line with the Public Protection Enforcement Policy.

364 complaints were received by the Trading Standards Service during 2013/14.

3.10 Complaints against our Staff

Anyone who is aggrieved by the actions of a member of staff is encouraged, in the first instance, to contact the employee's line manager. Details of how

and who to make contact with are contained in the inspection report left at the time of an inspection.

Formal complaints are investigated in accordance with the Council's corporate complaint procedure.

3.11 Liaison Arrangements

The Council actively participates in local and regional activities and is represented on the following:

- Tees Valley Public Protection Heads of Service Group
- North East Public Protection Partnership (NEPPP)
- North East Trading Standards Association (NETSA)
- Various multi-agency intelligence networks

3.12 Regional Enforcement

Hartlepool is a partner in the North Eastern Trading Standards Association (NETSA) and contributes to the regional enforcement activity planned by it.

In addition there is a National Illegal Money Lending Team (IMLT) funded through the Government's Business Innovation and Skills Department and a 'Scambusters' team that targets scams and cons that were being perpetrated across the North East.

To assist with the work of these two teams NETSA also manages the work of a Regional Intelligence Analyst whose role is to gather and disseminate intelligence to NETSA members, the IMLT and Scambusters.

3.13 Primary Authority Scheme

It is the Council's policy to comply with the Local Better Regulation Office's Primary Authority Scheme.

In particular the Council will contact the Primary Authority and liaise over:

- any proposed formal enforcement action
- service of Notices
- shortcomings in the companies policies that have wider implications

In Hartlepool, there are currently no formal Primary Authority arrangements in place with a Hartlepool based trader however the service works closely with some local businesses on an informal basis.

The level of resourcing will have to be reviewed if an opportunity to enter into a formal Primary Authority arrangement arises.

4. RESOURCES

4.1 Financial Resources

The annual budget for Public Protection for 2014/15 is:

	£ 000.0
Employees	475
Other Expenditure	121.8
Income	(20.6)
Net Budget	576.2

This budget is for other services provided by this section including Health & Safety, Food and resources are allocated in accordance with service demands. The figures do not include the budget for administrative / support services which are now incorporated into the overall budget.

4.2 Staffing Allocation

The Director of Public Health has overall responsibility for the delivery of the Trading Standards Service and for ensuring the delivery of the Council's Trading Standards Service in accordance with the Service Plan.

The Public Protection Manager has responsibility for planning service delivery and management of the Trading Standards Service, Food, Licensing, Public Health, Water Quality, Health & Safety, Animal Health and Welfare, Environmental Protection and I.T. as well as general management responsibilities as a member of the Public Health department.

The Trading Standards & Licensing Manager has responsibility for the day to day supervision of the Trading Standards and Licensing Service and, having the requisite qualifications and experience, is designated as the authority's Chief Inspector of Weights and Measures.

Senior Trading Standards officers are responsible for carrying out the Trading Standards premises intervention programme as well as the delivery of all other aspects of the Trading Standards service and will undertake complex investigations.

The Technical Officer (Trading Standards) is responsible for interventions, as well as revisits, investigation of less complex complaints and investigation of accidents.

Administrative support is provided by a dedicated Support Services team.

All staff engaged in Trading Standards law enforcement activity will be suitably trained and qualified and appropriately authorised in accordance with guidance and internal policy.

The resources determined necessary to deliver the Trading Standards Service in 2014/15 are as follows:

1 x 0.2 FTE Public Protection Manager (with responsibility also for Food, Licensing, Health & Safety, Environmental Standards & IT)

1 x 0.5 FTE Principal Trading Standards & Licensing Officer (with responsibility also for Licensing)

3 x Senior Trading Standards Officers

1 x FTE Technical Officer (Public Health)

4.3 Staff Development

The Council is committed to the training and personal development of its employees and has in place Personal Development Plans for all members of staff.

The Staff Training Plan allows for the formal identification of the training needs of staff members in terms of personal development linked with the development needs of the service on an annual basis.

The Training Plan clearly prioritises training requirements of individual staff members will be developed and reviewed bi-annually. Detailed records are maintained by the service relating to all training received by officers.

4.4 Equipment and Facilities

A range of equipment and facilities are required for the effective operation of the Trading Standards Service.

The service has a computerised performance management system, Authority Public Protection (APP). This is capable of maintaining up to date accurate data relating to the activities of the Trading Standards Service. A documented database management procedure has been produced to ensure that the system is properly maintained, up to date and secure. The system is used for the generation of the intervention programmes, the recording and tracking of all Trading Standards activities, the production of statutory returns and the effective management of performance.

Hartlepool is also one of four unitary councils that operate the Tees Valley Measurement Centre in Middlesbrough. The Centre performs all of the Council's statutory Weights and Measures functions (such as the holding and maintenance of weighing and measuring equipment) and carries out the routine testing of industrial weighing machines and petrol pumps.

The Centre also operates a testing laboratory that can conduct both physical and chemical testing of samples. The laboratory is used to 'screen' samples before they are sent to more expensive Test Houses. Only those samples that fail a 'screen test' are sent for further testing – saving both time and expense.

5. QUALITY ASSESSMENT

The Council is committed to quality service provision. To support this commitment the Trading Standards Service seeks to ensure consistent, effective, efficient and ethical service delivery that constitutes value for money.

A range of performance monitoring information will be used to assess the extent to which the Trading Standards Service achieves this objective and will include on-going monitoring against pre-set targets, both internal and external audits and stakeholder feedback.

Specifically the Trading Standards & Licensing Manager will carry out accompanied visits with officers undertaking interventions, investigations and other duties for the purpose of monitoring consistency and quality of the intervention as well as maintaining and giving feedback with regard to associated documentation and reports.

6 PERFORMANCE 2013/14

6.1 Overview - It is recognised that a key element of the service planning process is the rational review of past performance. In the formulation of this service plan a review has been conducted of performance against those targets established for the year 2013/14.

This service plan will be reviewed at the conclusion of the year 2014/15 and at any point during the year where significant legislative changes or other relevant factors occur during the year.

It is the responsibility of the Public Protection Manager to carry out that review with the Director of Public Health.

The service plan review will identify any shortfalls in service delivery and will inform decisions about future staffing and resource allocation, service standards, targets and priorities.

Any relevant amendments to the Council's Corporate Plan will be incorporated into the service plan.

Following any review leading to proposed revision of the service plan Member approval will be sought.

6.2 Trading Standards Interventions

During 2013/14 the Trading Standards Service carried out 100% of its planned High risk interventions and 59% of other interventions that were scheduled.

During 2013/14 the Service also carried out 160 enforcement visits to assess compliance with smoke free legislation which came into force on 1st July 2007.

6.3 Tobacco Control

In April 2010 a tobacco control enforcement officer was employed on a two year contract funded through the Department of Health. Additional non-recurring funding was then secured to allow the post to continue until at least April 2015. The officer's primary responsibility is to identify and target premises and retailers who are supplying illicit tobacco – whether from traditional retail premises or from private homes – commonly known as 'tab houses'.

The officer also began a programme of retailer education to help ensure that they were not deliberately or unintentionally supplying illicit or counterfeit tobacco. During 2013/14 this officer visited 172 premises to check for compliance with smoke free legislation. Measures taken to prevent the sale of tobacco products to under 18's were also discussed with all retailers. Tobacco products in all premises visited have been tested with equipment that detects that they are not counterfeit with 100% compliance observed.

6.4 Underage sales

During 2013/14 seven premises supplied age restricted products to underage volunteers – five tobacco and two alcohol. Five simple cautions were issued and there was one prosecution resulting in a fine of £600 and a £950 costs order against a licensee who also had his personal licence revoked.

6.5 Sampling

During 2013/14 Trading Standards sampled a number of products to ensure compliance with safety regulations. These included: -

- Halloween clothing and novelties
- E-cigarette chargers
- Easter novelty toys
- Cigarettes for 'Ignition Propensity' testing (All cigarettes must now be manufactured in such a way that they will self-extinguish if they are not regularly used once lit)
- E-liquid nicotine content

Whilst no serious faults were discovered that posed an immediate risk to health, a number of samples were found to be non-compliant with national or international standards in relation to labelling and/or packaging.

In addition to routine sampling, other products were sent for testing following complaints or receipt of other intelligence.

Laughing Dolls – A local market trader was found to be selling plastic dolls that had been the subject of previous national concerns due to the presence

of a chemical used to soften plastics known as 'phthalates'. 31 dolls were seized from the stall and a sample of them sent for formal testing where the presence of phthalates was confirmed.

A town wide recall was issued and the trader was issued with a warning.

Halloween Ties – A discount shop in the shopping centre was found to be selling novelty Halloween ties that caught fire easily and posed a serious safety concern. Samples of the tie were tested and following receipt of the results a press release was issued warning of the dangers and a video showing the flammability of the product was posted on the Hartlepool Mail website.

6.6 Promotional/Campaign Work

During 2013/14 the Trading Standards Service carried out 4 presentations to community groups and other associations – informing members of their consumer rights and advising them of the work carried out by Trading Standards on their behalf. This also included a number of training events for Neighbourhood Policing Teams to ensure that officers fully understood the role that Trading Standards can play in relation to doorstep crime, cowboy roofers and builders and distraction burglary.

6.7 Weights & Measures – Trading Standards officers carry out a statutory weights and measures responsibility and are in a unique position to protect consumers who may be receiving short weight or measure without their knowledge.

In 2013/14 officers checked a wide range of products being supplied by supermarkets and other premises to ensure that product weights matched what was indicated on the packaging.

6.8 Formal Enforcement Action

On some occasions it is necessary to prosecute for serious or repeat offences. In 2013/14 one prosecution was brought by the Trading Standards team in relation to animal welfare legislation and five Simple Cautions were issued as a consequence of underage sales test purchases.

6.9 Responding to Complaints

The Trading Standards Service received a total of 364 complaints from both consumers and traders relating to a wide range of issues. In many cases these complaints can be resolved through the provision of advice or by re-direction to another agency but, in some cases, criminal investigations are necessary.

The receipt of intelligence through complaints made by the general public is invaluable to the Trading Standards Service and the Team's telephone number is always quoted in press releases.

6.10 Complaints against Our Staff

No complaints were made against our staff during 2013/14.

6.11 Compliments about Our Staff

The Trading Standards Team regularly consults with traders who have been contacted by the Service to establish whether the contact had been helpful and fair.

In 2013/14 the final satisfaction figure was 85% (an increase from 81% in 2012/13). As a figure of 100% would mean every trader being very satisfied with both the fairness and helpfulness of the officer concerned a final figure of 85% is an excellent outcome and a testament to the work of the team, especially when it is recognised that sometimes the contact may be with a suspect in a criminal investigation or with a trader who is being made to invest resources to achieve required legal compliance.

7. KEY AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT & KEY CHALLENGES FOR 2014/15

1. The Public Protection Section continues to face significant financial pressures due to ongoing Council savings and, as such, the need to prioritise service delivery and maximise effectiveness remains paramount.
2. There are significant changes taking place at a national level as the Government presses forward with regulatory reform. A new National Trading Standards Policy Board has been established which identifies national priorities and increases Regional and Sub-Regional co-ordination. The effect of this on local Service delivery will be monitored closely during 2014/15.
3. The Government has published a revised Code of Practice for underage sales test purchase work and this has the potential of significantly restricting this activity.

The Code recommends that test purchase operations must be intelligence led and that there should be no 'fishing' for problem premises. This approach assumes that all underage sales result in complaints from the public and ignores the fact that alcohol consumption by young people does not always result in complaints about anti social behaviour. Many young people consume alcohol away from the public gaze but it can still lead to risky sexual behaviour, unwanted teen pregnancies and the potential for abuse. None of these

activities are likely to come back to Trading Standards as usable intelligence.

The Association of Chief Police Officers and representatives of the Trading Standards profession are still in discussion with the Government to have this code changed.

4. In addition to the above, the Government has also launched its new 'Regulator's Code' which attempts to redefine the role of regulators from 'enforcers' to 'advisors'.

The impact of this new code will be monitored closely during the year.

REGENERATION SERVICES COMMITTEE

23rd October 2014



Report of: Director of Public Health

Subject: QUARTERLY UPDATE REPORT FOR PUBLIC PROTECTION

1. TYPE OF DECISION/APPLICABLE CATEGORY

Non-key decision.

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 2.1 To update the Regeneration Services Committee on performance and progress across key areas of the Public Protection service.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Public Protection service consists of three discrete teams: Commercial Services, Environmental Protection and Trading Standards and Licensing.
- 3.2 The Commercial Services Team carries out inspections, complaint investigations and sampling to ensure that food is safe and fit to eat and that workplaces are safe.
- 3.3 The Environmental Protection Team is involved with noise and pollution related matters as well as providing a comprehensive service for pest control and managing and promoting the open market.
- 3.4 The Trading Standards and Licensing Team ensures that the business sector complies with a wide range of trade and consumer legislation. The team also issues and carries out enforcement relating to a large variety of licences, including alcohol, entertainment, takeaways, taxis, gambling and fireworks.

- 3.5 This report provides an update on performance and progress across key areas of the Public Protection service during the period of April-June 2014/15.

4. OUTLINE OF WORK

- 4.1 The work carried out by the Public Protection Service falls into three distinct areas:

1. Planned work. This consists predominately of programmed interventions, sampling and projects.
2. Reactive work. This involves responding to matters such as accident notifications, complaints and infectious disease notifications.
3. Licensing. The processing and issue of licences and permits.

5. PROGRAMMED WORK

- 5.1 The majority of the work programmed for 2014/15 for the Food, Health and Safety at Work and Trading Standards service areas is detailed in their respective service plans.
- 5.2 Planned Work. All interventions carried out by the service are risk based in accordance with national guidance. The table below details the number of inspections carried out in each area of work.

Interventions	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total
Food Hygiene	62				62
Food Standards	36				36
Feed Hygiene	2				2
Animal Health	2				2
Health and Safety	48				48
Trading Standards	16				16
Licensing	15				15
Prescribed Processes	0				0
Smoke Free	69				69

SAMPLING

- 5.3 A programme of sampling has been drawn up to assess the microbiological quality, composition and labelling of food, water and environmental surfaces. Details of the programme are included in the Food Law Enforcement and Health and Safety Service Plans.

The table detailed below provides the details of the samples taken.

Sample Details	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total
Microbiological Water *	56				56
Microbiological Food & Environmental	40				40
Food Labelling & Composition	9				9
Water Chemical	6				6

Microbiological water samples are taken from swimming pools, spa pools, private water supplies and mains supplies.

5.4 The Tees Valley Authorities have been successful in their bid to receive funding as part of the Food Standards Agency National Coordinated Food sampling Programme 2014 -15.

5.5 Sampling projects include:

- **Cream cake sampling** – during this quarter a survey was undertaken to look at the microbiological standard of cream cakes on sale in the borough. 19 samples of either fresh or mock cream cakes were taken. Of the 19 samples, 9 were deemed to be satisfactory, 6 unsatisfactory and 4 borderline. (Borderline results indicating further investigation required).

The unsatisfactory results obtained, originated from two premises of which one was outside of Hartlepool. For the premises in Hartlepool, advice has been given relating to cleaning and handling practices. Re-samples have been taken and follow up work is ongoing. The other results were referred to Durham County Council environmental health department for further investigation.

- **Safety of Sunglasses.** Sunglasses must comply with the relevant British Safety Standard as dark glasses which are not manufactured correctly can actually do more harm to the eye than wearing no glasses at all – this is because they will dilate the pupils, allowing more, not less, ultra violet light to enter the eye.

20 sunglasses found locally available were tested and found to be safe, but a significant number did not have the correct labelling. Officers have been in discussion with other Trading Standards departments to ensure that these labelling matters are resolved in future. The labelling errors do not pose any risk to the public.

- **E-Cigarette Safety.** E-cigarettes, and other nicotine delivery systems, are becoming increasingly popular and therefore the sale of pure nicotine for use in these products has increased significantly also.

Trading Standards officers purchased 18 e-liquid samples in June and found one of these contained less nicotine than was advertised while all 18 did not comply with the correct labelling requirements.

Officers have been in discussion with other Trading Standards departments to ensure that these labelling matters are resolved in future.

PROJECTS

5.6 The following projects are being carried out this year.

- **Doorstep Crime and Scams** A priority for the Trading Standards Service during 2014/15 is to target those responsible for doorstep crime and to protect those who fall victim to their scams.

Working in partnership with Cleveland Police a number of criminal investigations have begun into those that have targeted the elderly and several vulnerable residents have been provided with miniature CCTV cameras that will video record any further contact they may have with these criminals

- **Takeaways.** Work has started with Planning on mapping takeaway premises, recording information on opening times, licences, etc, to inform the Health Weight Healthy Living Lives Strategy.
- **Underage sales.** 14 premises were visited as part of the Trading Standards Service's work to stop the sale of alcohol to children. Two 15 year old boy volunteers were used and no illegal sales were made to them.

Despite the positive results of the tests carried out during the first quarter of 2014, one trader was prosecuted for a sale that had taken place the previous year. The trader alleged, as part of his defence, that the volunteer girls used by Trading Standards were not of the build that he was familiar with in his culture and, as such, presumed they were older than they in fact were.

The Magistrates were not impressed by this mitigation and fined the licensee £600, ordered to pay £950 costs and his personal licence was revoked.

- **UKFSS Superuser Status.** UKFSS is a national system used for recording food and feed samples taken throughout the country. It allows sample data to be sent direct to a laboratory and results are then fed back into the system by that laboratory, providing a quick, paper-free solution. National sampling data can be interrogated and the software provides a comprehensive recording system for all food and feed samples taken. It is administered by the Food Standards Agency.

The Commercial team's application to be awarded Superuser status for UKFSS was successful and we received confirmation of this in May 2014. The team can now provide training and advice to the many other local authorities who use the system, ensuring that they can use UKFSS correctly. This Superuser status attracted a one-off grant payment from the Food Standards Agency of £2,934.14.

- **Out Of Hours Noise.** The Public Protection Section provided an out of hours noise service between 10:00pm and 3:00am every Friday and Saturday night from Friday 6th June 2014 through to Sunday 31st August 2014. The service dealt with a total of 25 calls during June. The majority of the calls concerned noise from parties and amplified music. All of the complaints were resolved informally with the individuals concerned.
- **Odour Monitoring.** Over this quarter we have continued the odour monitoring exercise in partnership with the Environment Agency around a number of waste sites. The exercise involved establishing a number of pre-selected monitoring sites at relevant locations around the identified waste sites and a daily monitoring programme was established. The monitoring was undertaken four times a day, twice every morning and twice every afternoon and twice a day over the weekend. The information from the monitoring exercise was collated with the weather conditions over the monitoring period in particular the wind speed and direction. This exercise has provided us with valuable information concerning the potential sources of odours that can give rise to complaints and has also established that these are not necessarily always emanating from the waste sites. Works to complete the capping of a landfill site and completion of a land reclamation scheme on Coronation Drive were still ongoing but were nearing completion. As the works progress the frequency of our monitoring exercise will be reduced and will be re assessed once the works are complete.

REACTIVE WORK

- 6.1 The reactive work carried out by the Public Protection service is in the main complaint related. Other reactive work relates to accident and infectious disease notifications. Details of all reactive work are given in the table below.

Number of Complaints by Service Area	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total
Food	23				23
Health & Safety at Work	14				14
Pest Control - Rats	181				181
Pest Control - Mice	18				18
Pest Control - Insects/other pests	145				145
Noise	148				148
Air Pollution	28				28
Trading Standards	114				114
Accident Notifications	17				17
Licensing	2				2
Infectious Disease Notifications	41				41

7. LICENSING

- 7.1 The number of licences and permits issued by the service are detailed in the table below. The majority are issued under delegated powers, however if an objection is received during the consultation process or the applicant does not meet the necessary criteria the application will be determined by a Licensing Sub Committee.

Number of Licenses / Permits Issued	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total
HC / PH - Drivers	117				117
HC / PH - Vehicles	87				87
Operators Licenses	2				2
New Licensing Act Applications	4				4
Licensing Act - Variations	4				4
Licensing Act - Personal licenses	20				20
Licensing Act - Temporary Events Notice	27				27
Licensing Act (Other)	18				18
Street Trading applications	8				8
Other	2				2

8 ENFORCEMENT

- 8.1 During this period two deferred prohibition notices were served under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974. Both related to storage on internal roofs.

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

- 9.1 There are no implications under Section 17.

10. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 10.1 That the Regeneration Services Committee notes the content of the report and the progress made across key areas of the Public Protection service.

11. CONTACT OFFICER

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REGENERATION SERVICES COMMITTEE

23rd October 2014



Report of: Assistant Director (Regeneration)

Subject: HARTLEPOOL TREE STRATEGY 2011 – 2016
PROGRESS REPORT

1. TYPE OF DECISION/APPLICABLE CATEGORY

For information only.

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 2.1 This report provides an update on progress in relation to the Hartlepool Tree Strategy 2011 - 2016.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Hartlepool Tree Strategy 2011 – 2016 was adopted by Members on 7th February 2011. Its overall aim is to enhance the role and status of trees in the borough and to ensure the sustainability of its tree population. The tree strategy seeks to realise this aim by achieving the following three objectives:

1. Retain and protect the borough's existing trees.
2. Maintain the borough's publicly owned trees using good arboricultural management and ensure the safety and wellbeing of the public through the assessment and management of risk associated with trees.
3. Increase the number of trees in the borough.

A comprehensive action plan was created in response to the overall aim and objectives of the tree strategy. This report provides an update on progress in relation to that action plan.

4. PROGRESS ON IMPLEMENTING THE TREE STRATEGY

- 4.1 The information in this report has been collected through monitoring and recording of the activities in relation to trees of a number of Council sections

including Landscape Planning and Conservation, Parks and Countryside, Neighbourhood Management, and Engineering Design and Management.

4.2 **Objective 1: ‘Retain and protect the borough’s existing trees’.**

4.2.1 *Action 1: ‘Protect privately owned trees of amenity value using Tree Preservation Orders where appropriate’.*

The Council has continued to make Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) to protect privately owned trees of high amenity value from unnecessary felling or disfigurement. It has also used its planning powers to ensure that all works undertaken on protected trees has been carried out in accordance with arboricultural best practice.

Nine new TPOs have been made either as a result of development proposals, disposal of Council property or in response to receipt of a notice to fell trees within a conservation area. Planning conditions are applied, where necessary and appropriate, to tree works approvals in order to ensure that pruning works to TPO trees are carried out in accordance with the recommendations contained in BS3998:2010 ‘Recommendations for tree work’.

4.2.2 *Action 2: ‘Keep the borough’s Tree Preservation Orders under review and revoke and remake Orders as necessary’.*

In addition to making new Orders where necessary, the Council has kept its existing TPOs under review, regularly revoking and remaking or varying out-of-date Orders as appropriate. By doing this the Council seeks to reduce ambiguity and ensure that the borough’s TPOs can be enforced should legal action become necessary. Twenty-three new TPOs have been made as a result of TPO reviews.

The table below provides a brief summary in relation to the review of TPOs since adoption of the new tree strategy.

Year	Orders reviewed	Orders revoked	Orders varied	New Orders made
2011-2012	3	3	0	14
2012-2013	5	5	0	7
2013-2014	3	3	1	2

4.2.3 *Action 3: ‘Make full use of the Council’s powers of enforcement with regard to TPOs, trees in conservation areas and planning obligations with regard to trees by responding to complaints and proactively monitoring outcomes’.*

Unauthorised works to protected trees within the borough is not a common occurrence and no cases of unauthorised works to trees subject to TPO have arisen since 2011. There have been five cases of unauthorised works to trees that are located within conservation areas but not covered by a TPO, and in all cases a letter has been sent to the tree owner informing them that an offence may have been committed, and reminding them of the need to

first submit notice to the Council before carrying out works to trees in conservation areas. It is considered that, given the individual circumstances of each case, this approach has been the correct and proportionate response to the offence in each case.

- 4.2.4 *Action 4: 'Ensure that, through effective engagement in the planning process, existing trees are retained on development sites where appropriate and that they are adequately protected'.*

Since adoption of the tree strategy approximately thirty comprehensive arboricultural impact assessments have been submitted in support of planning applications, many of them major applications (an arboricultural impact assessment is the document that is required to support planning applications for development that affects existing trees). This has led to the effective retention and protection of many trees on development sites that may otherwise have been irreparably damaged by construction works in their vicinity.

In order to aid in effective engagement in the planning process a Trees and Development Guidelines Supplementary Planning Document has been produced. The document, which forms part of the Hartlepool Local Development Framework, provides an outline of the procedures and design criteria necessary to achieve the successful integration of existing and new trees, shrubs, hedges and hedgerows into new developments. The document was formally adopted by Members on 6th June 2013.

Informal advice on the requirements in relation to trees and development is provided either through the 'One Stop Shop' planning advisory service or at any time upon request.

- 4.2.5 *Action 5: 'Explore the potential to further develop the use of the corporate GIS for the administration of Tree Preservation Orders'.*

The Council is currently developing a web based GIS service which is intended to provide public access to a range of information held on the corporate GIS. Significant progress has been made in preparing the TPO related data in GIS for inclusion in the web based service, and as the functionality of the service increases it is anticipated that the TPO information will be successfully integrated.

- 4.3 **Objective 2: 'Maintain the borough's publicly owned trees using good arboricultural management and ensure the safety and wellbeing of the public through the assessment and management of risk associated with trees'.**

- 4.3.1 *Action 1: 'Develop the use of the corporate GIS for the management of all publicly owned trees'.*

Locational data relating to publicly owned trees has been held on corporate GIS for a number of years, however until recently there was no attribute data

associated with each feature (i.e. there were no details such as tree species, age class, DBH range, condition, management recommendations etc.).

'In the field' attribute data collection and update is now carried out using a handheld mobile computer with GPS capability. This development of the corporate GIS for the management of publicly owned trees has made enhanced use of existing software and systems as an alternative to procurement of specific tree management software.

4.3.2 Action 2: *'Develop and implement an integrated programme of cyclical inspection and maintenance of all publicly owned trees'*

Since adoption of the tree strategy a cyclical programme of tree inspection including trees in parks, recreation grounds, cemeteries, public open space and adjacent to highways has been implemented.

The programme of tree inspections has been developed taking account of current tree risk management guidance recently produced by the National Tree Safety Group and published by the Forestry Commission. In accordance with this and other guidance, a three year ongoing cycle of inspection was judged to be appropriate for the borough due to the number and location of publicly owned trees and the resources available to the Council.

In addition to implementing the cyclical programme of inspection, and in order to formalise and record the way that publicly owned trees in Hartlepool are inspected and maintained, a Tree Risk Evaluation and Management Policy has been produced. As a supplement to the tree strategy, the Tree Risk Evaluation and Management Policy sets out the Council's approach to managing the risks associated with the trees that it has responsibility for.

The table below provides a summary of the numbers of trees inspected, and the number of trees it has been necessary to remove for reasons relating to their condition.

Year	HIGHWAY TREES		PARKS & COUNTRYSIDE TREES	
	No. of trees inspected	No. of trees removed	No. of trees inspected	No. of trees removed
2011-2012	3492	23	4014	65
2012-2013	3095	10	1469	17
2013-2014	3653	N/A	1222	N/A

4.3.3 Action 3: *'Ensure that, wherever practical and appropriate, publicly owned trees that must be felled are replaced with a new tree in the same location or nearby'*

From time to time it is necessary to fell healthy publicly owned trees, in many cases to facilitate improvements to highways. Where this situation occurs the Council seeks to provide appropriately located replacement trees as part of the overall highway improvement scheme. It is acknowledged that young

newly planted trees can not readily replace the loss of a mature tree, however over time it is considered that any temporary loss of public visual amenity can be effectively offset.

The table below provides information on recent highway improvement schemes that have required the removal of mature or semi-mature trees and the nature of the replacements provided.

Site	Reason	No. of trees removed	Type	No. of replacement trees	Type	Size at planting
Owton Manor Lane./ Catcote Road Junction	Junction widening	4	Mature Whitebeam	7	Norway Maple	Extra heavy standard
Elwick Road / Catcote Road Junction	Junction widening	2	Mature Apple	2	Ornamental Pear	Extra heavy standard
York Road (Elwick Road to Lister Street)	Road Improvements	0	N/A	5	London Plane	Extra heavy standard
Elwick Rise	Bus layby improvements	2	Semi-mature Ash	3	Great White Cherry	Extra heavy standard

4.3.4 Action 4: ‘Carry out a quantative assessment of, and using a recognised valuation method place a value on, the borough’s publicly owned tree resource’.

The CAVAT (Capital Asset Value for Amenity Trees) method expresses the value of a publicly owned tree population in monetary terms in a way that is directly related to the public benefit that the trees provide, drawing upon objective evidence and published data as well as expert arboricultural input. It is intended to facilitate management of the tree stock as a whole as if it were a financial asset of the community.

Data collection for the purposes of CAVAT is included as part of the cyclical programme of tree inspections outlined at 4.3.2 above. Therefore, upon completion of a full round of tree inspections and of analysis of the CAVAT related data; it should be possible to place a monetary value upon the borough’s publicly owned tree population.

4.3.5 Action 5: ‘Investigate the feasibility of a Council tree budget and report the findings to the appropriate committee’.

The Council currently has a maintenance budget of £20,000 which was identified as a budget pressure in 2012/13 and any cost in relation to the strategies recommended within this report will be met from the existing budget provision. Note that the Council also incurred £16,000 as a one off to pay for tree replacement.

In asset management terms it is considered appropriate to allocate a budget figure that is a percentage of the asset's total overall value to the management of the resource. This is recognised as prudent to maintain the resource efficiently and avoid increased costs associated with lack of maintenance and asset degradation.

In practice, with regard to the maintenance of the borough's publicly owned trees, this would mean allocating an annual budget for the maintenance of trees which is commensurate with the value of the tree stock as calculated using the method outlined at 4.3.4 above.

4.3.6 Action 6: *'Prepare management plans for all publicly owned woodlands'*.

Publicly owned woodlands within the borough are managed and maintained by staff and volunteers based within the Parks and Countryside section. Comprehensive management plans have been formulated and implemented for Burn Valley Family Wood and Summerhill Country Park. The development of formal management plans for other smaller areas of publicly owned woodland are expected to be completed prior to the final review of the 2011 – 2016 tree strategy.

4.3.7 Action 7: *'Conduct a biennial assessment of the tree strategy and report the findings to the appropriate committee'*.

This report is the product of the biennial assessment and provides an update for decision makers on progress in implementing the tree strategy. It is hoped that in addition to highlighting achievements, the assessment will identify where improvements could be incorporated into a future edition of the borough's tree strategy.

4.4 Objective 3: **'Increase the number of trees in the borough'**.

4.4.1 Action 1: *'Prepare potential future tree planting plans for the borough and pursue their implementation'*.

A number of tree planting initiatives have been undertaken recently across the borough. This has resulted in the planting of around 2600 new trees in the borough's parks, cemeteries, open spaces, and highway verges.

The table below provides a summary of tree planting undertaken by the Council since 2011.

Council Portfolio	Site	Sponsored	No.	Type (Species)	Size at Planting
Highways	Merlin Way	Minor works North area	23	Lime	Extra heavy standard
Highways	Easington Road	Minor works North area	9	Ornamental Pear	Extra heavy standard
Highways	Clavering estate	Minor works North area	8	Great White Cherry	Extra heavy standard
Highways	Wilshire Way	Minor works North area	4	Ornamental Pear	Extra heavy standard

Council Portfolio	Site	Sponsored	No.	Type (Species)	Size at Planting
Highways	Throston Grange Estate	Minor works North area	6	Ornamental Pear	Extra heavy standard
Parks & Countryside	Stranton Cemetery	Woodland Trust (Friends of Stranton Cemetery)	500	British Native	Whip (woodland)
Parks & Countryside	Clavering Park	Big Tree Plant	250	British native	Extra heavy standard
Parks & Countryside	Seaton Park	Woodland Trust	840	British native	Whip (hedgerow)
Parks & Countryside	Ward Jackson Park	Woodland Trust	250	British native	Whip (hedgerow)
Parks & Countryside	Seaton Park	'Plant a tree in February'	30	Alder & Willow	Extra heavy standard
Parks & Countryside	Waverley Terrace Garden	Woodland Trust	200	British native	Whip (hedgerow)
Parks & Countryside	Waverley Terrace Garden	Cllr S Akers Belcher	2	Rowan & Maple	Extra heavy standard
Parks & Countryside	West View Cemetery	Woodland Trust / Ahmadiyya Group	420	British native	Whip (hedgerow)
Parks & Countryside	Hart Primary School	Woodland Trust	42	British native	Whip (woodland)
Parks & Countryside	Burn Valley Gardens	Unknown	2	Copper Beech	Extra heavy standard
Parks & Countryside	Burn Valley Gardens	Unknown	2	Sweet Chestnut	Extra heavy standard
Parks & Countryside	Ward Jackson Park	HBC staff	1	Tulip tree	Extra heavy standard
Parks & Countryside	Summerhill	HBC staff	1	Wych Elm	Extra heavy standard
Neighbourhood Management	Meadowsweet Drive	Members budget	15	Ornamental Pear, Silver Birch	Extra heavy standard
Neighbourhood Management	Throston Grange	Members budget	25	Ornamental Pear, Silver Birch, Whitebeam	Extra heavy standard
TOTAL			2630		

4.4.2 Action 2: 'Through effective engagement in the planning process require tree planting wherever it is appropriate in relation to new developments'.

Section 6 of the newly adopted Trees and Development Guidelines Supplementary Planning Document deals with the requirements for landscaping schemes for new developments within the borough and stresses the importance of allowing for the planting of new trees when designing new developments.

The planting of roughly 1000 new trees located within public areas and private residential gardens across the borough have been approved as part of landscaping schemes for new development. Examples of these would include the developments at Middle Warren, Headway, Easington Road, Sidings Close and at Wynyard.

4.4.3 *Action 3: 'Through effective engagement in the planning process encourage tree planting in association with new highway infrastructure'.*

The guidance contained in the Trees and Development Guidelines Supplementary Planning Document applies equally to highway infrastructure. Recent and current examples of new or upgraded highway infrastructure that has had tree planting incorporated would include the York Road improvement scheme, the transport interchange at Upper Church Street and the forthcoming Hart Lane/Raby Road junction widening scheme.

4.4.4 *Action 4: 'Encourage and assist landowners to take up grant aid for tree planting and woodland establishment and management, and monitor level of take up'.*

Little progress has been made under this action to date. Unfortunately the Forestry Commission English Woodland Grant Scheme has recently been suspended therefore the primary source of grant funding for woodland creation in England is no longer available.

Alternative sources of funding for tree planting on publicly owned land, such as through the Woodland Trust, have been accessed by various resident groups around the borough, and assistance in making applications for funding has been provided by staff within the Regeneration and Neighbourhoods Department.

Information with regard to the woodland and forestry industry sector within the borough was recently fed into a consultation process as part of the Rural Development Programme 2014 – 2020.

4.4.5 *Action 5: 'Seek residents support and encourage suggestions for further tree planting through relevant neighbourhood forums'.*

The Friends of Stranton Cemetery group have recently undertaken tree planting at the cemetery with trees provided by the Woodland Trust as part of the Queen's Diamond Jubilee celebrations. Officers oversaw the planting and advised on planting locations and density in conjunction with the countryside volunteers.

A further recent example involves a proposal for the development of a community orchard on land at Masefield Road. This proposal has been resident initiated and led, with tree related input from the Council's Arboricultural Officer.

The majority of the trees planted as outlined in the table under 4.3.1 above have been planted as a result of resident requests through neighbourhood forums or friends groups.

4.4.6 *Action 6: 'Review and update tree related information on the Council's website'.*

A number of changes in relation to the Council's powers and responsibilities with regard to trees, as well as changes to the Council's own guidance and policies in relation to trees, have been implemented since adoption of the tree strategy. For example a new Trees and Development Guidelines Supplementary Planning Document has recently been adopted. As these changes occur, the relevant pages on the website are updated by the Council's Arboricultural Officer.

Through ongoing experience, feedback gained from residents and research of best practice the tree related information, advice and guidance available on the Council's website continues to be improved. Examples of this include the publishing of information notes on the Council's powers in relation to dangerous trees on private land, common questions that prospective homebuyers have about protected trees, and how trees are vulnerable to damage from development activities and to aid in the understanding of why it is important to protect them from such activities.

4.4.7 *Action 7: 'Review annually and where necessary re-issue tree related information leaflets'.*

As a result of an action contained in the Strategy For Trees in Hartlepool 2005 – 2010 two tree related information leaflets, one entitled 'Right Tree, Right Place' and one entitled 'Trees and Development', were issued during 2007. These leaflets were subject to annual review and due to some elements of the advice and guidance contained in the leaflets becoming out of date they have since been withdrawn.

Tree related information notes, some examples of which are outlined in the section above, are now made available for download via the Council's website. This method of publishing information saves on the cost of production and printing. These information notes can also be printed and sent by post when requested.

5. CONCLUSION

- 5.1 It is considered that since adoption of the Hartlepool Tree Strategy 2011 – 2016 good progress has been made in its implementation. The result of the assessment outlined in this report demonstrates that the borough's tree population is steadily increasing in quantity and diversity through the Council's activities in relation to publicly and privately owned trees and the guiding principles set out within the tree strategy.

6. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY CONSIDERATIONS

- 6.1 There are no equality or diversity implications.

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

7.1 There are no Section 17 implications.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1 It is recommended that Members note the content of this report.

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

[Hartlepool Tree Strategy 2011 – 2016](#)
[Trees and Development Guidelines Supplementary Planning Document](#)
[Tree Risk Evaluation and Management Policy](#)

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REGENERATION SERVICES COMMITTEE

23rd OCTOBER 2014



Report of: Assistant Director (Regeneration)

Subject: TEES VALLEY AND VALE OF MOWBRAY LEADER
PROGRAMME LOCAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

1. TYPE OF DECISION/APPLICABLE CATEGORY

1.1 For information only.

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

2.1 The purpose of this report is to inform members of the Tees Valley & Vale of Mowbray LEADER Programme Local Development Strategy 2015 – 2020.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 The LEADER model uses local knowledge to promote a joined-up approach for community-led delivery of Rural Development Programme grants. In England this is being delivered by Local Action Groups (LAG) and it targets rural areas with specific needs and priorities.

3.2 LAGs bring together individuals from public, private and civil society organisations that have been delegated powers of strategy and delivery. Through an agreed Local Development Strategy, LAGs are able to tackle important local priorities by offering funding to specific, innovative and participative projects.

3.3 The Tees Valley and Vale of Mowbray has been identified as a transition area for Rural Development Funding. Therefore, a broad based LAG Steering Committee has been developed who possess a diverse range of skills and experience. This includes Tees Valley Rural Community Council, Tees Valley Unlimited, Darlington, Stockton, Hartlepool and Middlesbrough Unitary Authorities, Hambleton District Council, the Tees Valley and the Federation of Small Business.

3.4 The Tees Valley and Vale of Mowbray LAG covers a broad lowland agricultural area linking the northern area of Hambleton District with the Tees Valley. It extends from (but excludes) the market town of Northallerton and across towards Stokesley, linking through Darlington to Stockton and

Hartlepool and touching the area south of Middlesbrough. Redcar has chosen to form part of the North Yorkshire Moors, Coast and Hills LEADER Programme as Redcar was already part of this alliance from the previous LEADER Programme 2007 – 2013.

- 3.5 The LAG has developed a Local Development Strategy 2015 – 2020 which sets out how the LEADER programme will be delivered. The strategy has been developed through extensive grass roots consultation over the last two years in conjunction with a range of partners with an interest in rural and community development, through an ongoing series of consultation events and workshops.
- 3.6 The Rural Development Programme in England is jointly-funded by the EU and the Government and will spend £3.5bn nationally over the seven years from 2014 to 2020. The Tees Valley and Vale of Mowbray LEADER Programme will provide funding to projects which: -
- Improve rural life and businesses;
 - Promote environmentally friendly ways of managing land, or;
 - Sustain existing and create new areas of woodlands.
- 3.7 Through the establishment of a LEADER programme across both areas this programme aims to make the sum greater than the parts, through shared learning and experience. The programme will link to Teesside University, the Centre for Rural Economy, Newcastle University, Food and Environment Research Agency at Sand Hutton, York and other institutions / organisations to source support for innovative projects.

4. STRATEGY VISION

- 4.1 The Tees Valley & Vale of Mowbray LEADER Programme Local Development Strategy 2015 – 2020 vision is:

“To discover and bring out the latent potential of the Tees Valley and Vale of Mowbray; nurturing new and growing existing enterprise, to market and promote the products and services of its rural economy to a wider local, national and international market of consumers, businesses and visitors. To capitalise on the vitality of the area, integrate our Rural and Urban economies and put in place enabling actions to bring long term, sustainable benefits to our rural communities and businesses.”

5. FUNDING PROPOSAL

- 5.1 The Tees Valley and Vale of Mowbray LEADER Programme Local Development Strategy was submitted to Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) in September 2014 which proposed a £1,318,000 three year programme with an additional three month completion period. Projected expenditure on projects will be £1,080,760 and the programme aims to fund a total of 43 projects which will create 53 jobs over the three years of the programme. Overall this averages out at £25,133 per project

funded and the cost per job created is £20,391. The full projected targets, results and outputs are shown in **Appendix 1**.

- 5.2 It is anticipated that the programme will lever in a minimum additional private or other match funding of £1.3 million bringing a total investment of around £2.6 million over three years. Whilst in kind or volunteer help will continue to be a valuable additional resource to some projects, it should be noted that this will not count as match funding. It should also be noted that all projects will require match funding from a source other than public sector and the DEFRA funding from other Rural Development Programme for England (RDPE) schemes cannot be used. If, during the full programme period, further funding becomes available, or if the allocation is increased, the LAG will be keen to extend and / or expand the programme.
- 5.3 If the programme is approved by the National Selection Panel the LAG will deliver a strong growth oriented programme which will develop a range of innovative projects which bring out the overlooked competences and strengths of rural areas. This will provide opportunities for businesses to meet the challenges and opportunities of developing and growing the rural economy in both a rural and urban fringe environment - linking the beautiful and productive rural hinterland with a large urban and industrial market through enhanced supply chain development.
- 5.4 The management and administration of the Programme will be led by Tees Valley Rural Community Council working in conjunction with Darlington Borough Council as the accountable body. This will ensure that a clear separation of responsibilities will be in place and maintained for the lifetime of the Programme. TVRCC will market and promote the Programme across the designated geographical areas. Rural Action Yorkshire, as a key partner with experience of working with four LEADER programmes, will support the programme.
- 5.5 The LAG will separate into two groups, the full LAG and an Executive Group which is made up of key partners. Both groups will meet on a quarterly basis however the Executive Group will meet to approve projects and the full LAG will oversee the delivery of the Local Development Strategy and set the strategic direction of the programme. Hartlepool Borough Council will be a member of the LAG and will be an observer on the Executive Group with no voting rights.

6. TIMETABLE

- 6.1 A draft programme timetable has been developed which is shown below: -
- October 2014 – Start activity to raise awareness of the programme and start to identify pipeline projects that can quickly be brought forward and develop governance procedures for the LAG.
 - November 2014 – Final approval received from DEFRA on LEADER Programme Local Development Strategy.

- December 2014 – A website and social media accounts will be launched so that potential applicants can access information on the programme directly.
- December 2014 – Guidance will be published on potential project funding and will explain the key points of the programme, local priorities and how to take a project forward. These will be distributed direct to potential projects as well being made available to partners to promote in their networks.
- January 2015 – A launch event will be held with a range of organisations to promote the programme and the opening of the grant scheme.
- March to April 2015 – The first grants will be approved by the Executive Group and this process will continue on a quarterly basis.

7. LEGAL AND FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 There are no legal or financial implications as Hartlepool Borough Council are not the accountable body for this programme.

8. IMPACT ON CHILD / FAMILY POVERTY

- 8.1 This programme will positively contribute to tackling the longer term causes and consequences of child and family poverty by awarding funding for project which will improve the economy and offer employment opportunities for local residents.

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

- 9.1 This programme will positively contribute to Section 17 through the awarding of funding for projects which will offer improved employment routeways for young people.

10. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY CONSIDERATIONS

- 10.1 This programme will offer employment opportunities for young people, regardless of their background which will include 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;
 - Young people with mental health issues; and;

- Young people with drug and alcohol misuse issues.

11. CONTRIBUTION TO OTHER COUNCIL PROJECTS AND PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

- 11.1 If successful this programme will benefit other Council employment initiatives, such as the Hartlepool Youth Investment Project and Think Families, Think Communities.
- 11.2 Also, the initiative will positively contribute towards the following key indicators: -
- Improving the Overall Employment Rate;
 - Increasing the Gross Value Added (GVA), and;
 - Reducing the Unemployment Rate.

12 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 12.1 Members are recommended to note the contents of this report. Further update reports will be provided to this Committee as the Programme develops.

13. CONTACT OFFICER

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Projected Targets, Results and Outputs

LEADER Policy Priority	RDPE Expenditure per FTE Job Created (£)	Average RDPE Grant Size (£)	Relevant CMES Output Indicators for LDS Application	End of Programme Forecast (by December 2020)
Support for increasing farm productivity	61,011	29,884	Total RDPE Expenditure No of Projects Supported Jobs Created (FTE)	£225,000 7 4
Support for micro and small enterprises and farm diversification	11,931	19,951	Total RDPE Expenditure No of Projects Supported Jobs Created (FTE)	£440,000 22 37
Support for rural tourism	32,477	31,764	Total RDPE Expenditure No of Projects Supported Jobs Created (FTE)	£200,000 6 6
Support for culture and heritage activity	55,991	28,165	Total RDPE Expenditure No of Projects Supported Jobs Created (FTE)	£55,760 1 2
Provision of rural services	33,272	23,378	Total RDPE Expenditure No of Projects Supported Jobs Created (FTE)	£85,000 3 3
Support for increasing forestry productivity	77,045	21,788	Total RDPE Expenditure No of Projects Supported Jobs Created (FTE)	£75,000 4 1

REGENERATION SERVICES COMMITTEE

23rd OCTOBER 2014



Report of: Assistant Director (Regeneration)

Subject: TEES VALLEY WORKFORCE SKILLS PROJECT –
INTERIM REPORT

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 on the progress of the European Social fund Tees Valley Workforce Skills project.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 In May 2013 the Skills Funding Agency (SFA) contacted the Adult Education service to announce that they had been successful in the bidding process and that they would issue a contract for the service to manage and deliver the project across the Tees Valley. The bid was led by Hartlepool Borough Council on behalf of the five Local Authorities Adult Education services and their respective Economic Regeneration teams

3.2 The Skills Support for the Workforce project is designed to provide a range of training to assist employed individuals to:

- Enhance their skills in order to become more successful in the labour market
- Advance their career prospects
- Reduce the risk of long term unemployment and welfare dependency.

The project is designed to target SMEs in key sectors where skill weaknesses have been identified.

3.3 In addition to the activities to deliver the training requirements an additional funding allocation was offered to produce a Local Response Fund (LRF) action plan to respond to emerging needs identified by the Local Enterprise partnership.

- 3.4 The offer of the contract for this project was approved at the Regeneration Services Committee on 20th June 2013.
- 3.5 The project is now at the end of its first year and an interim report has been prepared to describe the progress of the project to date. The interim report also highlights some of the strengths and areas for improvement which have been identified during the first year of operation. The full report is included in **Appendix 1**

4. PROGRESS TO DATE.

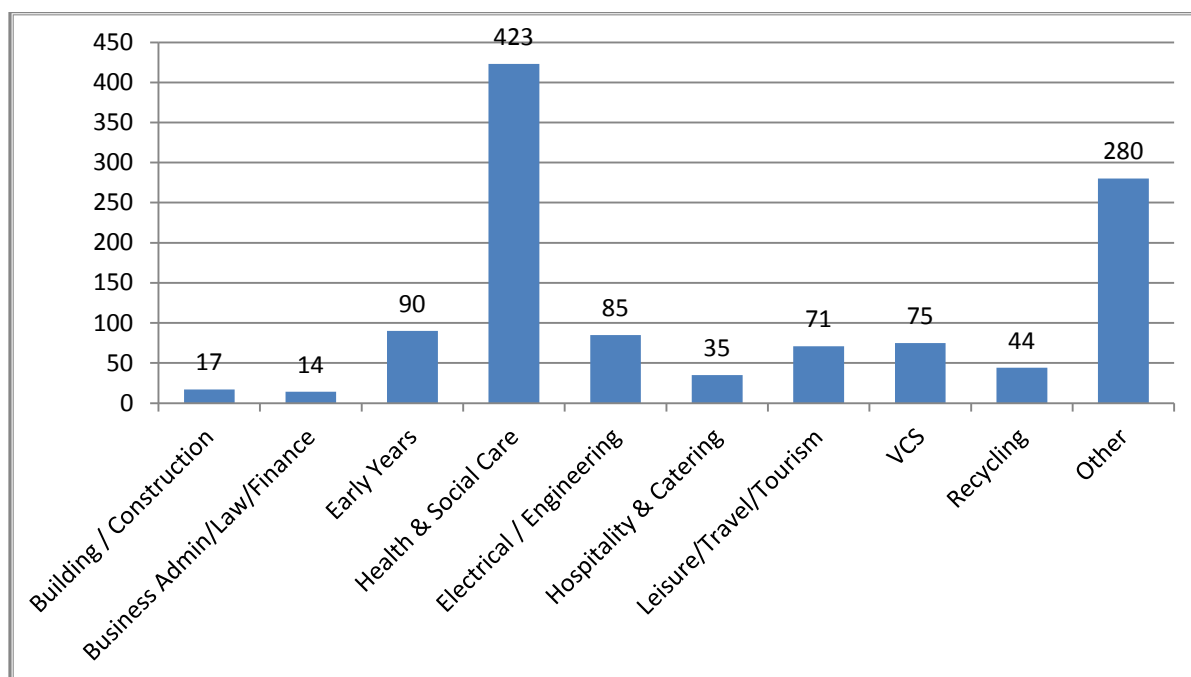
- 4.1 In the first year of operation the project has worked with many employers to engage their workforce in training. To date the project has engaged with 491 employers and delivered training to 1,543 employees. There is also training planned for an additional 851 employees which is due to start shortly. The target for the number of employees trained throughout the life of the project is 3023.

Table 1 shows the total number of starts for each local authority area.

Table 1

	TRAINING PLANNED	TRAINING STARTED / COMPLETED	TOTAL NUMBER
Darlington – Learners	315	188	503
Hartlepool – Learners	116	634	750
Middlesbrough – Learners	112	302	414
R&C – Learners	126	212	338
Stockton - Learners	182	207	389
TOTAL Learners	851	1,543	2,394

- 4.2 The employers have covered a range of sectors. **Table 2** shows the numbers of employees from the different sectors who have been engaged.

Table 2

- 4.3 In addition to the formal training the project has delivered a number of shorter workshops such as 'Taking on an Apprentice' or 'Google Analytical' A further 112 employees from 88 employers have attended these workshops.
- 4.4 There have been a number of lessons learnt from the project. These are described in full in the interim report. One of the key strengths has been the partnership working between The Adult Education teams and Regeneration teams of all five authorities. This has meant that the skills and expertise of a range of staff could be utilised.
- 4.5 The project has gathered feedback from the employers who have participated in the training through satisfaction surveys. 93% of the employees rated the teaching 10/10 whilst 100% rated the teaching as 8/10 or better. Furthermore 100% said they had achieved what they wanted to from the training and 100% said they would recommend it to other people.

5. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY CONSIDERATIONS

- 5.1 There are no equality or diversity implications.

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

- 6.1 There are no Section 17 Implications.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1 Members are recommended to note the contents of the report

8. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 8.1 To ensure that members are informed of the progress of the project at the end of its first year.

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Tees Valley

Workforce Skills

Project

Interim Annual Report



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1. Background

In December 2012 the Skills Funding Agency (SFA) issued an invite to tender for ESF funds. At this stage there was the opportunity to bid for a project for Skills Support for the Workforce.

The tenders for these bids were launched on a sub regional basis with only 2 contracts being issued across the North East. These were based on the LEP areas..

After initial discussions with a range of organisations the partnership of the Local Authority Adult Learning Providers in the Tees Valley came together to discuss the possibility of submitting a joint bid to deliver the project across the sub region. It was agreed that Hartlepool Adult Education would lead on this and submit the bid on behalf of the partnership. The bid was written with the assistance of the Economic Regeneration team.

In May 2013 the SFA contacted the service to inform that we had been successful in the bidding process and that they would issue a contract to deliver the project across Tees Valley.

2. Project Description

The project is managed by Hartlepool Borough Council as lead partner on behalf of the 5 Tees Valley Local Authorities.

This project is overseen by a steering group consisting of representatives from all the Local Authorities. Additional members are being recruited from Colleges, training providers and employers.

Delivery of the training is carried out by a range of training providers. These include the Local Authority Adult Learning Services, Colleges and Work Based Learning providers. The providers are a mix of large and small organisations. Some offer quite specific training which is required by some companies.

Staffing

The project has a number of dedicated staff. Each Local Authority Regeneration team was allocated a Business Coordinator whose role it is to contact the local SMEs and identify their training needs. Referrals are then made to the team of Skills Coordinators who liaise with the companies and training providers to make sure the delivery is completed.

Timeline

The project started in July 2013 and is due to finish in July 2015.

3. Aims of the Project

The Skills Support for the Workforce project is designed to provide a range of training and support programmes to assist employed individuals to:

- Enhance their skills in order to become more successful in the labour market
- Advance their career prospects
- Reduce the risk of long term unemployment and welfare dependency.

The project is designed to target SMEs in key sectors where skills are needed to meet greatest employer needs.

The targeted sector areas are: Logistics, Chemical Processing/Engineering, Digital, Advanced Manufacturing/Engineering and Health & Social Care. The project will also have funding to work with employers to establish their training needs and to raise awareness of and participation in apprenticeships.

The tender also specified that the primary target group is those adults with a basic skills need or those without a full level 2 qualification. Furthermore the project should target priority groups such as females, those with a disability, ethnic minorities and those aged 50 or over.

In addition to the activities to deliver training an additional funding allocation was offered to produce a Local Response Fund (LRF) Plan which has a number of objectives which will be flexible and respond to changing local priorities.

4. Objectives of the Project

The project has a number of objectives:

- Deliver training to 3,023 employees of SMEs across the Tees Valley
- Work with employers to increase the take up of apprentices from SMEs new to apprenticeships
- Work with employers to engage them in workforce development
- Provide a flexible support package to employers to enable them to train their staff
- Research the current provision on offer in key sectors and identify any gaps.
- Provide support for employers on generic skills.
- Provide training sessions on generic skills.
- Increase the development of ATAs to support new employers.
- Produce clear marketing information which details all opportunities available.
- Organise events for employers to highlight the opportunities and benefits of apprenticeships, traineeships and other schemes.
- Consult with stakeholders to establish any additional emerging sectors with training needs.
- Develop new ways and models of delivery which can be flexible to support employers needs.
- Consult with employers, Sector Skills Councils and National Skills Academies to develop more suitable frameworks where required.
- Identify ways to share good practice across the area.

5. Targets

TVWS Project Targets:

Output	Overall Total
Participant assessment and planning	2640
Start on nondefined accredited learning	2460
Achievement	2023
In work progression-Apprenticeship	220
In work progression-Accredited Training	735

LRF Project Targets:

Output	Overall Total
Participant assessment and planning	563
Start on nondefined accredited learning	563
Achievement	461
In work progression-Apprenticeship	15
In work progression-Accredited Training	88

6. Funding

The total potential income for the Tees Valley Workforce Skills project is £2,763,882. Of this £2,038,882 is set against the learning deliverables and £725,000 is set aside for Capacity Building such as staffing and marketing etc.

The total potential income for the LRF strand is £809,500 with £409,043 being allocated to training delivery and the remainder being set aside to respond to emerging issues and deliver the objectives of the LRF plan.

7. Progress to Date

Progress against deliverables

(August 2014)

To date the project has engaged with 491 employers and delivered training to 1,543 employees from 216 companies. Training is also scheduled for a further 851 employees over the next couple of months.

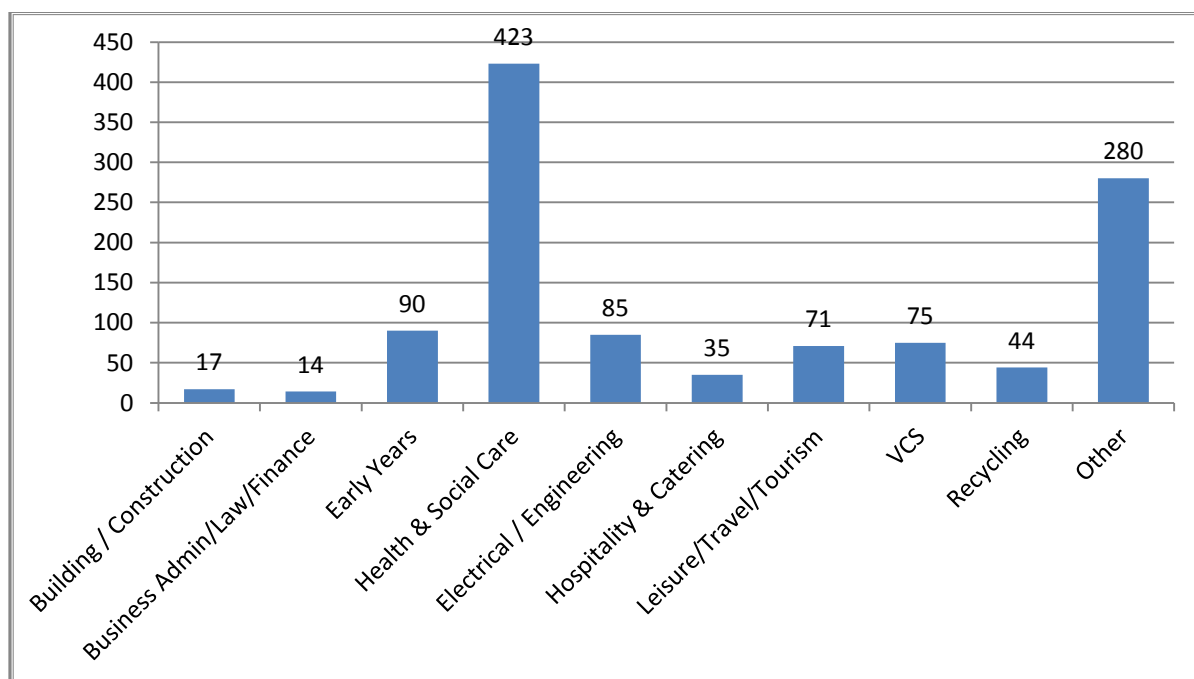
Progress against LRF Plan

A series of workshops has taken place to deliver short, half or 1 day training to employees on a variety of subjects identified by the Business Coordinators after consultation with employers.

16 workshops have taken place, covering topics such as “Taking on an apprentice”, “SEO and Google Analytics” and “Bookkeeping”.

A further 112 employees from 88 companies have attended these workshops.

The project has worked with employers from a variety of sectors. The chart below shows the number of employees by sector who have received training to date:



8. Lessons Learnt

As part of the project there is ongoing evaluation to learn any lessons from the activities. This will help to plan any future similar projects.

Within the first year a number of strengths have been identified. In addition some areas for improvement have also been identified.

Strengths

- The project is a partnership between all 5 local authorities. Within each authority there has been involvement by both the Regeneration team and the Adult Learning services. This joint working has worked best when there has been close cooperation between the different departments. The project has used the expertise of both departments to move the provision forward.
- The integration of the Business Coordinators into the Council's regeneration team has led to additional services being available. However at the same time the project has to ensure that there is a compatible service across the whole Tees Valley region so frequent communication is necessary.
- Owing to the dispersed nature of the project systems have been devised to ensure all staff and partners can be kept informed of actions and progress. The web based system Moodle has proved to be invaluable in this.
- The skills team have been based together with the lead provider. This has been a strength as they can share expertise and develop specialisms in order to respond more quickly to company requests.
- The project, through its delivery by a number of providers, has been able to support teaching staff to share good practice in the delivery of learning. This has led to the sharing of innovative approaches and assisted the companies to achieve the training they really need.
- The project staff have been able to engage with a large number of employers and this has led to other outcomes being delivered as new contacts have been made.
- The availability of free training has encouraged the employers to support workforce development.
- The original bid showed a delivery profile with the majority of employees studying between 5 and 12 credits, but employers have actually requested much more training that is less than 5 credits e.g. 1st Aid, IOSH Working Safely. The project is flexible and is working with the SFA to re-profile the targets to reflect employer demand.

Areas for Improvement

- The project is funded through the ESF and SFA. With all funded projects the criteria can be difficult to interpret. The project has been subject to changes in criteria and processes which has sometimes led to confusion.
- Owing to the criteria attached to the funding it has been difficult to manage employers' expectations. In some cases the training cannot be funded by the project. Clear marketing material would assist this.
- As with all new projects there is often a substantial lead in time before they can be fully operational. The deadlines for the project and the late notification has meant that all staff were not in place as soon as the project would have liked.
- The funding for the project has a time limited aspect and ceases in July 2015. This has led to uncertainty in staffing and there has been a turnover of staff where project staff have left to service permanent jobs.
- The lack of a full complement of project staff has meant that initially the project was performing below target and referrals were slower than desired. This has now been resolved and the process of referral is much quicker especially where detailed Training Needs Analysis are completed by the Business Co-ordinator with the employer.

9. Case Studies

Throughout the course of the project a very wide range of training has been requested. In order to meet the needs of employers, extra training has been provided for tutors from the Adult Education learning services. This has included training to achieve Assessor Awards and to be able to deliver Food Safety, Moving and Handling and Conflict Resolution and Personal Safety. Staff have also been registered with various awarding bodies to be able to deliver, amongst other qualifications, 1st Aid at Work, Paediatric 1st Aid, Fire Safety and IOSH Working and Managing Safely. Extra providers have been approved, following stringent quality checks, to help deliver training requested which the Adult Education learning services have not been able to provide, examples include scaffolding, PAT testing and welding.

The project has worked with new training providers based in the Tees Valley, who are themselves SMEs, to help them become approved training providers on the TVWS project. This has helped in supporting the new training providers and in meeting the needs of other SMEs who have requested specific training. One example of this is a training company which has been recently established in Hartlepool to deliver accredited training in the Funeral Care Service sector. This sector is largely unregulated but the training company have become accredited with an awarding body and established new, state of the art training facilities. They are the first training provider to deliver these qualifications with the awarding body and they have already started providing training to their first batch of companies.

Feedback

Feedback is gathered from employers and employees. Very positive comments have been received including:

"We have very much appreciated the 1st Aid training we received via yourselves and, in terms of feedback, the teaching was fantastic!" **RealMeals**

"The training has provided good basic knowledge and skills required to assist in the event of an individual requiring emergency first-aid treatment. This also goes a long way in having the confidence to deal with an emergency and the correct way to deal with it. Attending the course could make the difference in helping to save a life."

Surespond Building Solutions Ltd T/A Aspray Teesside

"I found the training very interesting, Everything was explained in layman terms, the tutor was very approachable and checked if we understood before moving on."

Course Evaluation Statistics

How good or bad was the teaching on this course?

93% rated the teaching 10/10, 100% gave 8/10 or higher

Have you achieved what you wanted to achieve from this course?

100% replied "YES"

Would you recommend this course to other people?

100% replied "YES"

10. The Future

The project has successfully completed its first year.

It has been a slow start whilst all systems and staffing have been secured. In the first two quarters the project was behind on its profiled targets, however the SFA allowed re- profiling of these.

After the first year the project is now ahead of its profiled targets and the project staff are confident that the project will deliver all outcomes as planned.

The second year will be easier as the systems are now in place and all staff have developed the necessary and wide ranging expertise to speed up the referral and delivery process.

After the project ceases in July 2015 it is hoped that future funding will be secured to maintain the good work that has started.