

FINANCE AND POLICY COMMITTEE AGENDA



Monday 27 July, 2015

at 9.30 am

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

MEMBERS: FINANCE AND POLICY COMMITTEE

Councillors C Akers-Belcher, Barclay, Cranney, James, Loynes, Richardson, Riddle, Simmons, Sirs, Springer and Thompson.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

2. TO RECEIVE ANY DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST BY MEMBERS

3. MINUTES

- 3.1 To receive the minutes of the meeting of the Finance and Policy Committee held on 29 June 2015 (*previously published and circulated*)

4. BUDGET AND POLICY FRAMEWORK ITEMS

- 4.1 Youth Justice Strategic Plan 2015-2016 – *Director of Child and Adult Services*
- 4.2 Local Council Tax Support 2016/17 – *Chief Finance Officer*
- 4.3 Hartlepool Housing Strategy 2015-2020 – *Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods*

5. KEY DECISIONS

- 5.1 Council Housing Stock Development – July 2015 – *Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods*
- 5.2 Workforce Arrangements – *Chief Executive and Assistant Chief Executive*



6. OTHER ITEMS REQUIRING DECISION

- 6.1 Employee Sickness Absence Annual Report 2014/15 – *Assistant Chief Executive*
- 6.2 Integrating Health and Social Care Services to deliver the Better Care Fund Plan – *Director of Child and Adult Services and Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods*

7. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

- 7.1 Corporate Procurement Quarterly Report on Contracts and Update on Collaborative Procurement Services Agreement – *Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods*

8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS WHICH THE CHAIR CONSIDERS URGENT

FOR INFORMATION:

Date of next meeting – Friday 28 August, 2015 at 9.30 am in the Civic Centre, Hartlepool.



FINANCE AND POLICY COMMITTEE MINUTES AND DECISION RECORD

29 June 2015

The meeting commenced at 9.30 am in the Civic Centre, Hartlepool

Present:

Councillor Christopher Akers-Belcher (In the Chair)

Councillors: Allan Barclay, Kevin Cranney, Marjorie James, Carl Richardson, David Riddle, Chris Simmons, George Springer and Paul Thompson.

Also Present: Councillor Jim Lindridge as substitute for Councillor Sirs in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 5.2.

Councillor Jim Ainslie.

Keith Bayley, Hartlepool Voluntary Development Agency

Officers: Gill Alexander, Chief Executive
Andrew Atkin, Assistant Chief Executive
Chris Little, Chief Finance Officer
Peter Devlin, Chief Solicitor
Damien Wilson, Assistant Director, Regeneration
Joan Stevens, Scrutiny Manager
Alastair Rae, Public Relations Manager
David Cosgrove, Democratic Services Team

14. Apologies for Absence

Councillors Brenda Loynes and Kaylee Sirs.

15. Declarations of Interest

Councillors Cranney and C Akers-Belcher declared personal interests in Minute No. 18.

Councillor C Akers-Belcher declared a prejudicial interest in Minute No. 17 and left the meeting during the consideration of the recommendations in the report that related to that interest.

16. Minutes of the meeting held on 1 June 2015

Confirmed.

17. **Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) 2016/17 to 2018/19** *(Corporate Management Team)*

Type of decision

Budget and Policy Framework.

Purpose of report

The purposes of the report were to:-

- (i) Update Members on the Council's financial position and the budget deficits forecast for 2016/17 to 2018/19;
- (ii) To enable Members to approve the recommended approach to be adopted for managing the budget deficits for 2016/17 to 2018/19;
- (iii) To enable Members to approve the proposed budget timetable; and
- (iv) To enable Members to reconsider a strategy for using the uncommitted 2014/15 outturn.

Issue(s) for consideration

The Chief Finance Officer reported that as detailed in previous MTFS reports the Council faces an increasingly challenging financial position which is driven by four key issues:

- Continuing significant Government grant cuts in 2016/17 and future years;
- The impact of financial risks transferred to Local Authorities from April 2013 arising from the implementation of the Business Rates Retention system and the transfer of responsibility for the Local Council Tax Support Scheme;
- The impact of demand led pressures – particularly in relation to Older People demographic pressures and increases in Looked After Children;
- Continued restriction of Council Tax increases.

An initial assessment of the forecast budget deficits for 2016/17 to 2017/18 was reported in the previous MTFS report and indicated the following annual budget deficits:

2016/17	£5.051m
2017/18	£5.084m
2018/19	£4.503m
Total	£14.638m

The above forecasts were based on key planning assumptions, which would need to be reviewed when more information becomes available. These included; Government Funding Reductions, Business Rates income and Council Tax income.

The Chief Finance Officer stated that the Leader had written to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government to request a meeting to discuss the financial impact of the significant rateable valuation reduction for the power station and the effects this would have on Hartlepool's finances.

In outlining the main aspects detailed within the report, The Chief Finance Officer highlighted the budget pressures that would be funded from existing risk reserves until 2017/18 (Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards and Looked After Children) though these would need to be included as pressures thereafter. Taking into account the pressures and the utilisation of various corporate savings which have been identified the revised forecast deficit of 2016/17 to 2018/19 was still £13.997m, though this would still be dependent on actual grant cuts and the Chief Finance Officer stated that the 10% per annum reduction presumed within the forecast may be optimistic as there was the potential for the grant reductions in the 2016/17 and 2017/18 to be higher than forecast.

The Chief Finance Officer reported that following on from arrangements adopted last year the recommended timetable for 2016/17 has been developed which would maximise the time available at the start of the process for the development of detailed Departmental savings proposals and consideration of these proposals by individual Policy Committees. This recognised that these tasks were critical to the delivery of sustainable savings and needs an appropriate timeframe for completion. Details of the budget timetable were set out in the report which showed the proposal for this Committee to consider the 2016/17 budget proposals in December before the finalisation of the budget proposals and the statutory Council Tax approvals in February 2016. It was highlight that the timetable is dependent upon the timing of the 2016/17 grant announcement by the Government.

The Chief Finance Officer then moved on to the strategy for use of the uncommitted outturn from the 2014/15 budget. As reported to the meeting on 1 June 2015, there was an uncommitted outturn of £596,000. Members had previously indicated that they would wish to fully cash back the Jacksons Landing interest free loan when resources were available. The Chief Finance Officer reported at the meeting that an extension of the loan free period had been negotiated with repayment being extended until October 2017.

The outturn report suggested that Members may wish to only allocate part of outturn to cash back the Jacksons Landing interest free loan, say £500,000, which when added to existing funding would provide total cash backing of 90%. As an alternative to this proposal Members may wish to cash back 80% of the interest free loan, which would commit £400,000 of

the available outturn. Reducing the value of the interest free loan which was cash backed to either 80% or 90% would not result in a significant financial risk to the Council, particularly as the repayment period had been extended until October 2017.

The proposal to cash back 80% of the interest free loan would then enable £196,000 (£96,000 if cash backed at 90%) to be allocated for other priorities, which may include consideration of the following issues:

- HVDA Funding (Hartlepool Voluntary Development Agency) – at Council on 26th March 2015 it was resolved “that consideration of any support for HVDA from any favourable outturn from the 2014/15 budget be referred to the Finance and Policy Committee and that the Manager of HVDA be invited to the meeting to present the up-to-date financial position of the organisation”.
- Moneywise Community banking – The Chair of Hartlepool Credit Union has written to the Chief Executive requesting financial support from the Council.
- Enforcement Officers – The proposal would provide additional capacity to address issues across the town and provide time to develop a sustainable business case for the permanent employment of additional Enforcement Officers.

A Member questioned if there were any proposals to ring-fence the Independent Living Fund finance that was being allocated to local authorities by central government. The Chief Finance Officer stated that that would form part of a future report to be brought to Members.

A Member considered that in light of the difficult decisions on funding the authority would have to make, no further effort should be made by officers to seek potential sources of funding for Members Ward Budgets; any finance that could be found should be put directly into front line services. The Leader stated that it had been clear that when the budget was allocated for Member Ward Budgets in 2015/16 it was only for this year.

At this point the Chair took the recommendations (i) to (vii) inclusive which were agreed unanimously by the Members present.

In accordance with the prejudicial interest declared at the commencement of the meeting Councillor C Akers-Belcher left the meeting to enable the remaining recommendations to be considered

Councillor Carl Richardson in the Chair

The Vice-Chair indicated that Members needed to determine which of the options set out in the report should be considered for the use of the

uncommitted outturn from 2014/15. Option 2 - “allocate £500,000 of the uncommitted revenue outturn towards cash backing the Jacksons Landing interest free loan, which would provide cash backing of 90% and enable £96,000 to be allocated towards other priorities” was moved and seconded. Option 3 - “allocate £400,000 of the uncommitted revenue outturn towards cash backing the Jacksons Landing interest free loan, which would provide cash backing of 80% and enable £196,000 to be allocated towards other priorities” was also moved and seconded. In light of Option 3 being moved, the Members that had proposed Option 2 withdrew their proposal.

The Vice-Chair put Option 3 to the Committee and Members supported the option unanimously.

Members indicated that as a consequence of agreeing Option 3, there was the potential to allocate funds to HVDA, and as the Manager of HVDA was present, he should be given an opportunity to address Members.

Mr Bayley stated that the financial position of HVDA was well known to Members. If some financial support could be found to support HVDA, Mr Bayley suggested that two particular schemes that would have a high impact would be to have a development officer to assist groups in the town access other sources of finance and the reinstatement of the Volunteer Centre. There were many requests for schemes/charities that people could volunteer for and connecting those people with such schemes and charities would be an extremely valuable resource. This could also assist in people finding employment as around half of all volunteers used volunteering as a way into work.

Most of the reserves HVDA had had been utilised and if any further reserves were used the organisation wouldn't be around this time next year. The organisation had set out a position using reserves and a much smaller staff team working on reduced hours to take it forward until 2016/17 when it was hoped there would be Big Lottery funding to take the organisation forward. The Big Lottery would be directed towards a number of smaller organisations that would need the advice and guidance that HVDA could provide. The concern was that if HVDA was not in being at the time the Big Lottery funding came through those organisations would be accessing services through development agencies in Stockton and Middlesbrough. Mr Bayley stated that any support would assist HVDA bridge the gap until European funding became available in 2016/17.

There were still Members that wished to see the detailed financial reserves held by HVDA which it was understood had been supplied to the authority. The Chief Financial Officer stated he had not seen those statements and the Chief Solicitor advised that any such consideration would require the meeting to go into closed session.

It was suggested that consideration should be given to using the Council's own Neighbourhood Development Officers to assist through provision 'in kind' to assist the voluntary sector groups referred to that needed

assistance. A Member of the public questioned what the strength of the voluntary and charity sector was in Hartlepool as in 2010 it was reported that there was over 100 registered charities in the town. Mr Bayley stated that the figures given were about right for that time but there had been no update assessment undertaken. In 2010/11 charities had a turnover of around £17m in Hartlepool though this was expected that this would be much reduced now as there were significantly fewer full time posts in the sector.

Members clarified that HVDA could sustain itself until additional new money became available from Europe and the Big Lottery. Mr Bayley confirmed this was the case though the organisation was working at a very minimal level. If the Council could allocate £30,000 of funding, HVDA could keep the Volunteer Centre open to assist groups around the town supported by a Development Officer.

Members also referred to the option of using some of the additional finance to employ additional Neighbourhood Enforcement Officers. It was proposed that the whole of the £196,000 be allocated to the Neighbourhood Services Department so that options including increased enforcement and enhancing Neighbourhood Development to support HVDA can be considered. This was supported by a Member who stated that they were receiving significant numbers of complaints from residents in relation to neighbourhood issues that improved enforcement could resolve, such as dog fouling and fly tipping.

It was proposed and seconded that the £196,000 should be broken down to provide £30,000 of support to HVDA, a further £30,000 to the Credit Union (Moneywise Community Banking) with the remaining £136,000 being allocated to the Neighbourhood Services Department. Another Member indicated that the report referred to a loan the Council had been made to the Credit Union and suggested that this be converted to a grant so the Credit Union would not need to repay it to the Council. The Chief Finance Officer stated that the Credit Union hadn't made reference to the loan in their correspondence to the Council but if Members were minded to agree to the loan being converted into a grant, the finance would need to come from the £196,000.

The Vice-Chair put the two proposals to the meeting. The first proposal to allocate the whole of the finance to the Neighbourhood Services Department was carried on a majority vote with the second proposal lost.

The Vice-Chair then sought the Committee's approval to note recommendation (x) in the report relating to the 2015/16 Council Capital Fund which was agreed.

Decision

1. That the report be noted and that further information on the issues detailed in paragraph 4.4 of the report would be reported to a future

meeting;

2. That the recommended Corporate Savings and Budget Pressures summarised in paragraph 4.19 of the report be approved, which would reduce the 2016/17 to 2018/19 forecast deficit from £14.638m to £13.997m;
3. That the risk that the actual budget deficits may be higher if actual Government grant cuts are higher than forecast and/or additional funding cannot be achieved to offset the Power Station Business Rates reduction be noted.
4. That the recommended phasing for the use of the Budget Support Fund, which is designed to smooth the annual budget reductions and provide a longer lead time to make permanent savings, as detailed in paragraph 4.21 of the report be approved.
5. That the revised annual deficits, after reflecting recommendations 2 and 4 and as detailed in paragraph 4.22 of the report be approved.
6. That the budget timetable detailed in the report be approved, which will enable budget decisions to be considered and approved by Council in December 2015 and Council Tax setting to be completed in February 2016.
7. That Option 3 - Allocate £400,000 of the uncommitted revenue outturn towards cash backing the Jacksons Landing interest free loan, which will provide cash backing of 80% and enable £196,000 to be allocated towards other priorities be approved.
8. That the whole of the £196,000 be allocated to the Neighbourhood Services Department to be utilised to support Members priorities relating to additional Enforcement Officers, the utilisation of Neighbourhood Development Officers to support HVDA and voluntary groups in the town and further consideration of the loan to Hartlepool Credit Union (Moneywise Community Banking) being converted into a grant.
9. That the Committee notes that a review of the approved 2015/16 Council Capital Fund will be completed and details reported to a future meeting.

Councillor C Akers-Belcher in the Chair

18. Acquisition of Assets - Anderson's Bakery Ashgrove Avenue (*Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods*)

Type of decision

Key Decision (test (i)) Forward Plan Reference RN98/11.

Purpose of report

To set out information relating to the opportunity in relation to the former Anderson's Bakery property in Ashgrove Avenue.

Issue(s) for consideration

The Assistant Director, Regeneration reported that property known as Anderson's Bakery comprised an interwar built end terrace originally constructed as two houses. It was converted into and used as a baker's shop with upper floor living accommodation for many years. More recently the business was closed and the property was sold to Developing Initiatives for Support in the Community (DISC) who purchased it with a view to converting the property into residential use.

Following their purchase in March 2014 DISC applied for planning permission in October for conversion of the property into four one bedroom flats together with a communal lounge for residents. The flats were intended for general needs social housing, for which DISC have funding. The application was refused in February of this year. The Council's Planning Service Manager has now received notification that DISC will appeal against the decision.

Due to the level of public concern raised by the DISC planning application, consideration is being given to acquiring the property by agreement from DISC in order to convert the property back into two houses as part of the Empty Homes Programme. The property has been inspected and valued and a schedule of costs for converting the property back into 2 houses has been prepared by the Consultancy Group. The financial considerations were set out in an confidential appendix to the report. The appendix contained exempt information under Schedule 12A Local Government Act 1972 (as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006) namely, (para 3) information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

The Business Case for the Empty Home Programme (EHP) has a cash budget per housing unit produced in order to ensure that there are adequate funds to acquire and refurbish the target number of units. However, it needed to be recognised that owing to the former use of his property and the current condition of the building that this conversion was not a typical EHP project. The conversion of the property would require a significantly more extensive range of structural works than a normal EHP scheme. Therefore, whilst the objective of this scheme would be to provide afforded housing, the costs of this project would exceed the normal EHP unit cost budget and details were given in the confidential appendix.

Given the anticipated costs it would not be possible to purchase and refurbish the property within the Empty Property Programme the normal unit

cost for an EHP unit. Given that the end use would be for general needs social housing, there was scope to use Section 106 funds. The Council had a fund derived from Section 106 contributions intended for social housing and thus potentially some of this could be used to meet the cost of acquiring, converting and renovating Anderson's Bakery.

Ward Councillors commented that the original proposals from DISC had caused a great deal of concern in the local community and the proposal for the Council to purchase the property and return it to general housing was welcomed. In considering the options it was suggested that the costs set out would be reviewed to find any savings possible. Once the properties had been sold, then any return over the costs of conversion should be returned to the empty homes scheme. In considering the options set out in the report, the Chair suggested that consideration should also be given to including any adaptations that may be required that would make the properties an option for foster families caring for disabled children. The Chair also commented that the Council had had preliminary discussions with DISC who were minded to sell the property to the authority should Members support option 1 "purchasing at a purchase price equivalent to DISC's acquisition price and costs to date on the project." This was supported unanimously by the Committee.

Decision

- i) That the Committee notes that the conversion of the Anderson's Bakery building into two housing units is not a normal Empty Homes Programme scheme owing to the former use and current condition of the building, which means that the cost of the scheme exceed the normal unit cost budget.
- ii) That the Committee supports option 1 "purchasing at a purchase price equivalent to DISC's acquisition price and costs to date on the project" supplementing the normal Empty Homes Programme unit cost budget with Section 106 resources.
- iii) That the Committee notes that any Section 106 resources allocated for this scheme would not be available for other projects and the housing outputs achieved would be two less than if these resources had been allocated to a normal EHP scheme.

19. Any Other Items which the Chairman Considers are Urgent

No items.

20. Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation Order) 2006

Under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and

public were excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the paragraphs referred to below of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006.

Minute 21 – West Hartlepool Rugby Football Club (WHRFC) – This item contains exempt information under Schedule 12A Local Government Act 1972 as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006 namely (para. 3) information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

- 21. West Hartlepool Rugby Football Club (WHRFC)** (*Chief Finance Officer*) This item contains exempt information under Schedule 12A Local Government Act 1972 as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006 namely (para 3)

Type of decision

Non-key decision.

Purpose of report

To consider revised arrangements in relation to an existing loan in together with a request for an additional amount from West Hartlepool Rugby Football Club (WHRFC).

Issue(s) for consideration

Details are set out in the exempt section of the minutes.

Decision

The decision is set out in the exempt section of the minutes.

The meeting concluded at 10.50 am.

P J DEVLIN

CHIEF SOLICITOR

PUBLICATION DATE: 7 JULY 2015

FINANCE AND POLICY COMMITTEE

27 July 2015



Report of: Director of Child and Adult Services

Subject: YOUTH JUSTICE STRATEGIC PLAN 2015-2016

1. TYPE OF DECISION/APPLICABLE CATEGORY

1.1 Budget and Policy Framework.

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

2.1 The purpose of this report is to present the Finance and Policy Committee with the Youth Justice Strategic Plan for 2015-2016 (**Appendix 1**) and seek final comments from the Committee prior to the Plan being submitted to the Full Council for ratification.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 The national Youth Justice System primarily exists to ensure that children and young people between the age of 10 and 17 do not engage in offending or re-offending behaviour and to ensure that where a young person is arrested and charged with a criminal offence, they are dealt with differently to adult offenders to reflect their particular welfare needs as children.

3.2 Local Youth Offending Services were established under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 to develop, deliver, commission and coordinate the provision of youth justice services within each Local Authority.

3.3 Hartlepool Youth Offending Service was established in April 2000 and is responsible for youth justice services locally. It is a multi-agency service and is made up of representatives from the Council's Children's Services, Police, Probation, Health, Education, Community Safety and the voluntary/community sector.

3.4 The primary functions of Youth Offending Services are detailed in the Plan at page 5 (see **Appendix 1**). The primary objectives of Youth Offending Services are to prevent offending and re-offending by children and young people and reduce the use of custody.

- 3.5 There is a statutory requirement for all Youth Offending Services to annually prepare, as part of the local business planning cycle, a local Youth Justice Plan for submission to the national Youth Justice Board.
- 3.6 The annual Youth Justice Plan provides an overview of how the Youth Offending Service, the Youth Offending Service Strategic Management Board and wider partnership will ensure that the service has sufficient resources and infrastructure to deliver youth justice services in its area in line with the requirements of the *National Standards for Youth Justice Services* to:
- promote performance improvement
 - shape youth justice system improvement
 - improve outcomes for young people, victims and the broader community

4. PLANNING AND CONSULTATION

- 4.1 The planning framework to support the development of the 2015-2016 Youth Justice Strategic Plan has drawn upon the appraisal of the Youth Justice Boards Regional Partnership Manager, the local Youth Offending Service Strategic Management Board alongside the views and opinions of service users, staff and key partners.
- 4.2 Alongside the above, the development of the plan has incorporated recommendations from the Safer Hartlepool Partnership and the Audit and Governance Committee and acknowledges the role of the Youth Offending Service in taking forward the priorities of the Cleveland Police and Crime Commissioner.
- 4.3 A review of progress made against last year's plan highlights that the service has made progress across the majority of the year's priorities; but there remains key areas for improvement that will need to be driven forward in the coming year (see page 8 **Appendix 1**).

Youth Crime

- 4.4 The local youth justice partnership has been particularly effective in reducing the numbers of young people entering the youth justice system for the first time; but there remains a need to drive down incidents of re-offending by young people who have previously offended through a combination of robust interventions designed to reduce risk, restore relationships and promote whole family engagement.
- 4.5 Whilst crime rates in Hartlepool have fallen, the likelihood of being a victim of crime still remains a reality, especially in our most vulnerable and

disadvantaged communities and there remains a need to continue to invest in the delivery of restorative approaches to give victims of crime a voice, choice, control and satisfaction in the criminal justice system.

Meeting National Standards

4.6 Self audit activity (verified by the national Youth Justice Board) in 2014-2015 indicates that Hartlepool YOS is meeting national standards relating to:

- Assessment for interventions and reports
- Planning and delivering interventions in custody and resettlement into the community (including Civil Detention Orders).

And is meeting national standards with recommendations for improvements identified relating to:

- Planning and delivering interventions in the community

Service User Feedback

4.7 During 2014-2015 nineteen young people who were subject to statutory court orders participated in an eSurvey questionnaire to determine what they thought about the services they had received from Hartlepool Youth Offending Service and whether they had been effective in terms of reducing their likelihood of re-offending and securing the help that they may have needed.

4.8 In the main the service users were positive about the services they had received from the Youth Offending Service with 53% of respondents reporting that they thought the service provided was very good and a further 42% reporting that it was good most of the time.

4.9 Alongside this 79% of respondents reported that they are a lot less likely to offend as a result of the work they have undertaken with the Youth Offending Service.

4.10 Beyond this the survey has identified areas for further exploration and potential improvement relating to how the service can improve the way it responds to children with learning difficulties or have difficulties explaining themselves.

Risks to Service Delivery and Performance

4.11 Planning has identified that the key risks that have the capacity to have an adverse impact on the Youth Offending Service in the coming twelve months and potentially beyond are:

- The unpredictability associated with **secure remand episodes** and secure remand length has the potential to place significant financial pressure on the YOS and broader Local Authority
- The introduction of new powers and civil injunctions to respond to and tackle anti-social behaviour in the community within the **Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Bill**
- The introduction of a new national Youth Justice Assessment tool (**ASSETPlus**) has the potential to significantly disrupt service delivery

4.12 The plan identifies Control Measures to enable these risks to be managed to limit any potential adverse impact on service delivery and resources.

Resources

4.13 Funding from the national Youth Justice Board for 2015-2016 Good Practice Grant has reduced by 7.6%, Restorative Development by over 81% and Unpaid Work Order Grant funding by 6%. Alongside this funding from partner organisations has now ceased and the Police and Crime Commissioners contribution has reduced by 22.5%. As a consequence the overall budget for the Youth Offending Service will be 5.7% less than 2014-2015 which will be managed in year through the use of reserves whilst options to bring service delivery in line with the reduced overall budget are considered in preparation for 2016-2017.

5. PRIORITIES FOR 2015-2016

5.1 Based upon the findings from the Strategic Assessment, it is proposed that the Youth Offending Service and broader youth justice Partnership focuses on the following key strategic objectives during 2015 - 16:

- **Early Intervention and Prevention** sustain the reduction of first time entrants to the youth justice system by ensuring that there remain strategies and services in place locally to prevent children and young people from becoming involved in crime and anti-social behaviour
- **Re-offending** Reducing further offending by young people who have committed crime with a particular emphasis on the development of activities to address the offending behaviour of young women
- **Remand and Custody** – Demonstrate that there are robust alternatives in place to support reductions in the use of remands to custody whilst awaiting trial/sentencing
- **Risk and Vulnerability** – ensure all children and young people entering or at risk of entering the youth justice system benefit from a structured needs assessment to identify risk and vulnerability to inform effective intervention and risk management

- **Restorative Justice** – ensure all victims of youth crime have the opportunity to participate in restorative justice approaches and restorative justice is central to work undertaken with young people who offend
- **Maintain Standards** – Ensure that work is undertaken to a high standard and improvement activities are identified through undertaking a self inspection and reviewing service user feedback
- **Think Family** – Embedding a whole family approach and improving our understanding of the difficulties faced by all members of the family and how this can contribute to anti-social and offending behaviour
- **Effective Governance** – Ensuring the Youth Offending Strategic Management Board continues to be a well constituted, committed and knowledgeable Board which scrutinises Youth Offending Service performance

5.2 The local Youth Justice Strategic Plan for 2014 – 2015 will establish responsibility across the Youth Offending Service and the Youth Offending Strategic Board for taking each improvement activity forward within agreed timescales.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 The Finance and Policy Committee is requested to note the progress made against the local Youth Justice Plan (2014-2015) and provide final comments on the 2015-2016 plan prior to the plan being submitted to Full Council.

7. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 The development of the Youth Justice plan for 2015-2016 and the comments of the Children's Services Committee will provide the Youth Offending Service with a clear steer to bring about further reductions in youth offending and contribute to improving outcomes for children, young people and their families alongside the broader community.

7.2 The local Youth Justice Strategic Plan for 2015–2016 will establish responsibility across the Youth Offending Service and the Youth Offending Strategic Board for taking each improvement activity forward within agreed timescales.

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 8.1 The following background papers were used in the preparation of this report:

The Youth Justice Boards: Youth Justice Performance Improvement Framework (Guidance for Youth Justice Board English Regions available at: <http://www.justice.gov.uk>)

9. CONTACT OFFICER

Sally Robinson, Director Child and Adult Services, Hartlepool Borough Council, Level 4, Civic Centre, TS24 8AY. Tel 01429 523405. E-mail sally.robinson@hartlepool.gov.uk

Mark Smith, Head of Youth Support Services, Child and Adult Services, Hartlepool Borough Council, level 4, Civic Centre, TS24 8AY. Tel 01429 523405. E-mail mark.smith@hartlepool.gov.uk



Hartlepool Youth Justice Strategic Plan 2015 - 2016

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1 FOREWORD

Welcome to the 2015 - 2016 Hartlepool Youth Justice Strategic Plan. This plan sets out our ambitions and priorities for Hartlepool Youth Offending Service and the broader local Youth Justice Partnership for the coming year.

Hartlepool's Community Strategy 2008-20 establishes a vision for the town:

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

The Youth Offending Service and broader partnership has a key role in contributing to this vision by building upon our historical delivery of high quality, effective and safe youth justice services that prevent crime and the fear of crime, whilst ensuring that young people who do offend are identified, managed and supported appropriately and without delay.

In recent years Hartlepool has witnessed a significant reduction in youth crime. The local youth justice partnership has been particularly effective in reducing the numbers of young people entering the youth justice system for the first time; but there remains a need to drive down incidents of re-offending by young people who have previously offended through a combination of robust interventions designed to reduce risk, restore relationships and promote whole family engagement.

This plan builds upon our progress to date whilst acknowledging that the enduring economic climate, welfare reform and the introduction of new legislation and reforms relating to how we respond to children, young people, families and communities will

inevitably present new challenges in the coming year.

Despite these challenges I am confident that Hartlepool Youth Offending Service and the broader Youth Justice Partnership will continue to help make Hartlepool a safer place to live, work, learn and play.

As always, the Strategic Management Board is extremely grateful for the skill and dedication of our employees in supporting young people who offend or are at risk of becoming involved in offending in Hartlepool.

On behalf of the Youth Offending Service Strategic Management Board I am pleased to endorse the Youth Justice Strategic Plan for 2015 -2016.

Signature

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'L Beeston', written in a cursive style.

Lynn Beeston Youth Offending Service Strategic Management Board Chair

2 INTRODUCTION

The National Youth Justice System primarily exists to ensure that children and young people between the age of 10 and 17 who are arrested and charged with a criminal offence are dealt with differently to adult offenders to reflect their particular welfare needs.

In summary, children and young people who offend are:

- Dealt with by youth courts
- Given different sentences in comparison to adults
- And when necessary, detained in special secure centre's for young people as opposed to adult prisons.

It is the responsibility of the Local Authority and statutory partners to secure and coordinate local youth justice services for all of those young people in the Local Authority area who come into contact with the Youth Justice System as a result of their offending behaviour through the establishment and funding of **Youth Offending Services**.

The primary functions of Youth Offending Services are to prevent offending and re-offending by children and young people and reduce the use of custody.

Hartlepool Youth Offending Service was established in April 2000 and is responsible for the delivery of youth justice services locally. It is a multi-agency service and is made up of representatives from the Council's Children's Services, Police, Probation, Health, Education, Community Safety and the local voluntary/community sector and seeks to ensure that:

- All children and young people entering the youth justice system benefit from a structured needs assessment to identify risk and protective factors associated with offending behaviour to inform effective intervention.
- Courts and youth offender panels are provided with high quality reports that enable sentencers to make informed decisions regarding sentencing.
- Court orders are managed in such a way that they support the primary aim of the youth justice system, which is to prevent offending, and that they have regard to the welfare of the child or young person.
- Services provided to courts are of a high quality and that magistrates and the judiciary have confidence in the supervision of children and young people who are subject to orders.
- Comprehensive bail and remand management services are in place locally for children and young person's remanded or committed on bail while awaiting trial or sentence.
- The needs and risks of young people sentenced to custodial orders (including long-term custodial orders) are addressed effectively to enable effective resettlement and management of risk.
- those receiving youth justice services are treated fairly regardless of race, language, gender, religion, sexual orientation, disability or any other factor, and actions are put in place to address unfairness where it is identified

Beyond the above, the remit of the service has widened significantly in recent years due to both national and local developments relating to prevention, diversion and restorative justice and there is a now requirement to ensure that:

- Strategies and services are in place locally to prevent children and young people from becoming involved in crime or anti-social behaviour.
- Assistance is provided to the Police when determining whether Cautions should be given.
- Out-of-court disposals deliver targeted interventions for those at risk of further offending.
- Restorative justice approaches are used, where appropriate, with victims of crime and that restorative justice is central to work undertaken with young people who offend.

The Hartlepool Youth Justice Plan for 2015-2016 seeks to establish how youth justice services will be delivered, funded and governed in response to both local need and the changing landscape and how the Hartlepool Youth Offending Service will work in partnership to prevent offending and re-offending by Children & Young People and reduce the use of custody.

3 2014-2015 PERFORMANCE

A review of progress made against last year's plan highlights that the service has made progress across the majority of the year's priorities; but there remains key areas for improvement that will need to be driven forward in the coming year:

2014-2015 Priority	Comments
Early Intervention and Prevention – sustain the reduction of first time entrants to the youth justice system by ensuring that their remain strategies and services in place locally to prevent children and young people from becoming involved in crime and anti-social behaviour	<p>(Green) The number of first time entrants into the Youth Justice System reduced from 52 in 2013 -2014 to 38 in 2014 - 2015 which represents further significant progress.</p> <p>Partnership arrangements with Cleveland Police remain effective in relation to the diversion of young people from the Youth Justice System through the delivery of pre-court disposals.</p>
Re-offending - reduce further offending by young people who have committed crime	<p>(Amber) The way this performance indicator is measured has been changed nationally which has made direct comparisons with historical performance difficult.</p> <p>Data suggests that the number of young people going on to re-offend is reducing quarter by quarter but that the rate of re-offending in terms of the number of offences per re-offender has increased.</p>

<p>Remand and Custody – demonstrate that there are robust and comprehensive alternatives in place to support reductions in the use of remands and custody.</p>	<p>(Amber) The number of remand episodes has decreased from 10 in 2013-2014 to 5 in 2014-2015.</p> <p>The number of custodial sentences has increased from 1 in 2013-2014 to 4 in 2014-2015.</p> <p>The number of breaches of Bail conditions and community based orders has decreased from 70 in 2013-2014 to 45 in 2014-2015.</p>
<p>Restorative Justice – ensure all victims of youth crime have the opportunity to participate in restorative justice approaches and restorative justice is central to work undertaken with young people who offend.</p>	<p>(Amber) All victims of youth crime continue to be provided with the opportunity to participate in restorative justice approaches and restorative justice remains central to work undertaken with young people who offend.</p> <p>63% of contactable victims in 2014-2015 chose to engage in a restorative process in comparison to 76% in 2013-2014.</p> <p>The numbers of victims opting to participate in direct restorative processes is low and will need to be explored further in the coming year.</p>

<p>Risk and Vulnerability – ensure all children and young people entering or at risk of entering the youth justice system benefit from a structured needs assessment to identify risk and vulnerability to inform effective intervention and risk management.</p>	<p>(Green) Risk and vulnerability arrangements continue to benefit from regular audit activity to ensure that all young people entering or at risk of entering the youth justice system benefit from a structured needs assessment to identify risk and vulnerability to inform effective intervention and risk management.</p>
<p>Think Family – embed a whole family approach to better understand the true impact of families in our communities and improve our understanding of the difficulties faced by all members of the family and how this can contribute to anti-social and offending behaviour.</p>	<p>Whilst significant progress has been made in relation to this priority, systems and practice are not yet embedded and the service will need to ensure that it remains fully involved in local ‘Troubled Families’ developments in the coming year as services are reorganised.</p>
<p>Maintain Standards – work undertaken by the YOS remains effective and achieves individual, team, service, community and national aims and objectives.</p>	<p>(Green) Self audit (verified by the national Youth Justice Board) in 2013-2014 indicates that Hartlepool YOS is meeting national standards relating to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment for interventions and reports • Planning and delivering interventions in custody and resettlement into the community (including Civil Detention Orders). <p>And is meeting national standards with recommendations for improvements identified relating to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning and delivering interventions in the community

<p>Effective Governance – ensure that the Youth Offending Strategic Management Board remains a well constituted, committed and knowledgeable Board which scrutinises Youth Offending Service performance.</p>	<p>(Green) The Youth Offending Strategic Management Board continues to be a well constituted, committed and knowledgeable Board which scrutinises Youth Offending Service performance.</p> <p>It is prudent that the board’s membership is reviewed to reflect the reorganisation activities that have and are taking place internally and across partner organisations.</p>
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4 STRATEGIC NEEDS ANALYSIS

Most young people in Hartlepool make the transition to adulthood successfully through a combination of supportive families, good schools, colleges and training providers and access to opportunities for personal and social development outside the classroom along with the vision and belief that they can succeed.

Whilst many young people make mistakes along the way and do things they should not do, or wish they had not done, most are able to get back on track quickly with little harm done.

But whilst many young people in Hartlepool are thriving, evidence is clear that it is young people from deprived and disadvantaged backgrounds and communities who lack many of the protective factors above, who are disproportionately at greater risk of involvement in anti-social and offending behaviour and poorer outcomes generally.

Despite significant regeneration over the past twenty years the Index of Multiple Deprivation (2010) indicates that Hartlepool is ranked as the 24th most deprived out of England's 354 Local Authority districts. Deprivation covers a broad range of potentially life limiting issues and refers to unmet needs caused by the interplay of a number of local factors that impact upon families living conditions such as:

- Low Income;
- Exclusion from the labour market;

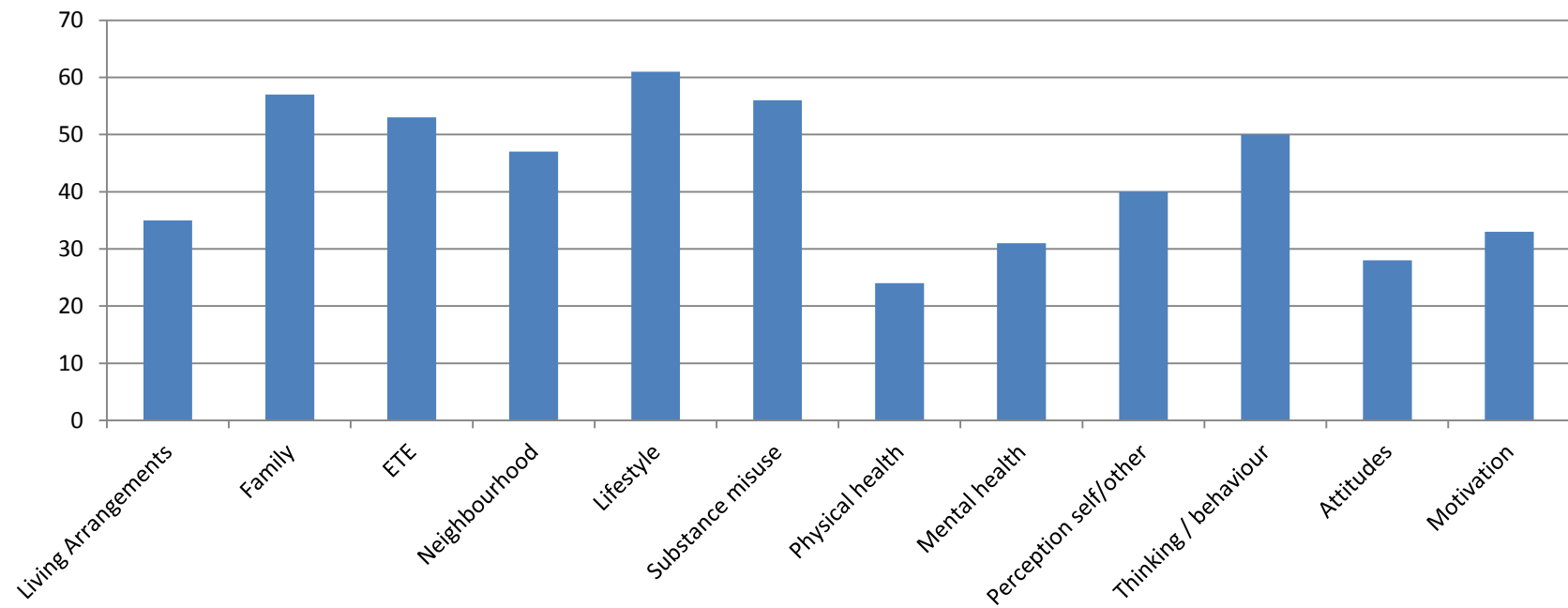
- Impairment of quality of life by poor physical and mental health and disability;
- Educational underachievement, barriers to progression and a shortage of skills and qualifications amongst adults;
- Barriers to accessing key local services and affordable housing;
- Low quality of individuals' immediate surroundings both within and outside the home; and
- A prevalence of violent crime, burglary, theft and criminal damage in an area

Local analysis of need and outcomes highlights that, whilst there are families who are more resilient to deprivation, the interplay of the above factors clearly places families who are contending with deprivation at a disadvantage. This can significantly limit the opportunities and outcomes for their children which, in time, will tend to perpetuate a cycle of deprivation and disadvantage due to diminished life chances.

A more detailed analysis of the broader circumstances/factors of families whose children are experiencing difficulties indicates that parenting, parental substance misuse and/or mental health, housing and home conditions, employment issues and domestic violence are often the main factors linked to the prevalence of poor outcomes in local children and young people. It is often the complex interplay of each of these factors that makes problems in some households insurmountable and places the children at significant risk of involvement in anti-social and offending behaviour.

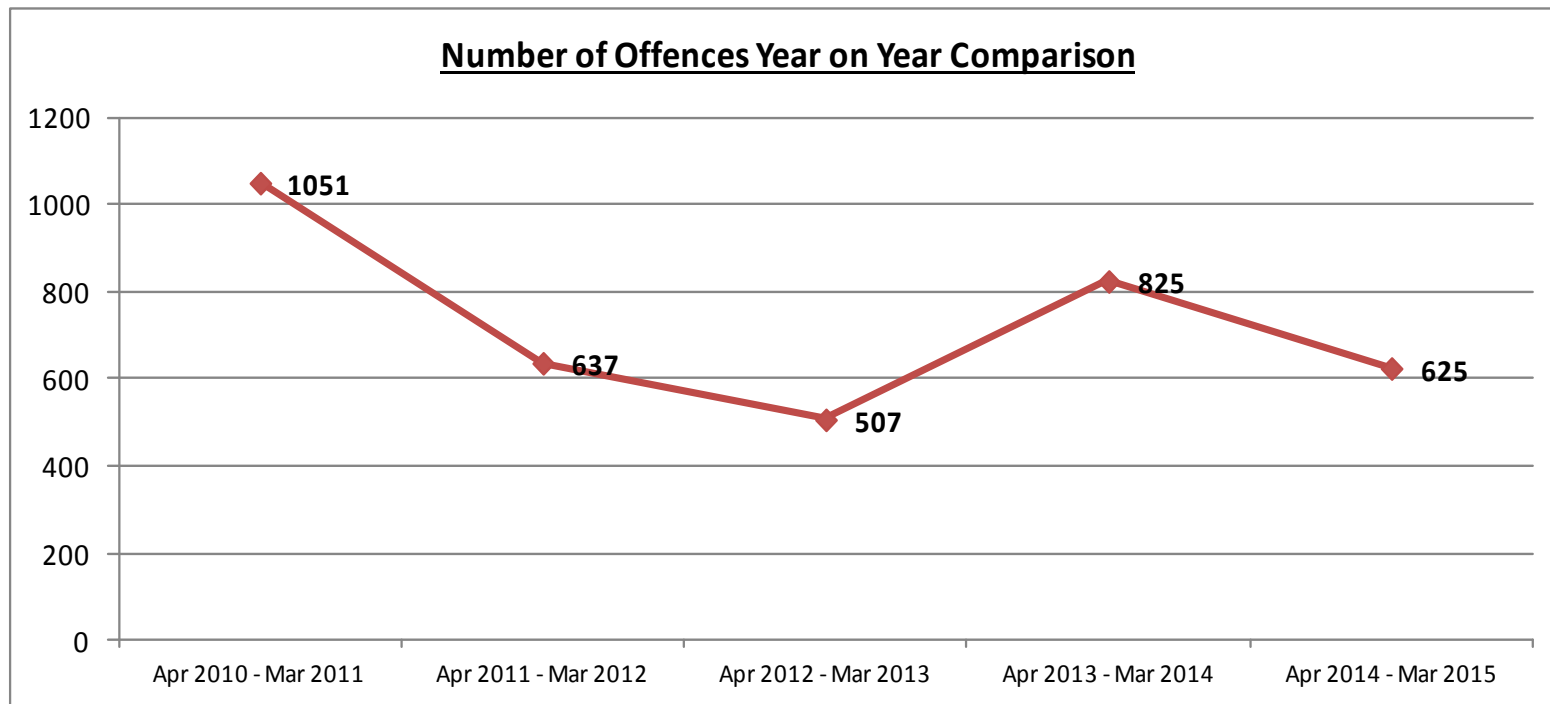
An annual local analysis (see below) of the factors that contribute to young people's offending behaviour highlights that the most prevalent factors are often a combination of the young person's family circumstances, their lifestyle, their misuse of substances and a lack of engagement with education and/or further learning all of which shapes thinking and behaviour.

FACTORS THAT CONTRIBUTE TO LOCAL YOUNG PEOPLE'S OFFENDING BEHAVIOUR



Young Offenders

In spite of the adversities that significant numbers of young people, families and communities contend with in Hartlepool the local Youth Justice Partnership has had significant success in recent years in terms of preventing and reducing youth offending behaviour.



Offence Category - Year on Year Comparisons

OFFENCE CATEGORY	Apr 2010 - Mar 2011	Apr 2011 - Mar 2012	Apr 2012 - Mar 2013	Apr 2013 - Mar 2014	Apr 2014 - Mar 2015	Actual Change 2013/14 Vs 2014/15
Arson	7	0	0	5	7	2
Breach of Bail	26	26	10	21	13	-8
Breach of Conditional Discharge	14	14	12	9	2	-7
Breach of Statutory Order	67	65	27	49	33	-16
Criminal Damage	144	121	77	139	96	-43
Domestic Burglary	39	10	15	26	28	2
Drugs	30	19	20	30	17	-13
Fraud and Forgery	6	4	0	0	1	1
Motoring Offences	39	13	22	46	29	-17
Non Domestic Burglary	26	11	9	14	21	7
Other	41	10	18	33	19	-14
Public Order	189	92	69	94	58	-36
Racially Aggravated	5	5	1	12	6	-6
Robbery	7	3	0	5	4	-1
Sexual Offences	8	2	11	20	9	-11
Theft and Handling Stolen Goods	221	111	114	133	120	-13
Vehicle Theft / Unauthorised Taking	26	5	9	29	18	-11
Violence Against the Person	156	126	93	160	144	-16
TOTAL	1051	637	507	825	625	-200

It is notable that there have been significant reductions in:

- Criminal Damage
- Public Order offences
- Breach of Bail
- Breaches of Statutory Orders

Given the recent decision to transfer Youth Court listings to Teesside Magistrates it was anticipated that there would be an increase in Breach of Bail as young people and their broader families struggle to undertake the journey from Hartlepool to Teesside. Figures suggest that this decision has not had the anticipated impact which can be attributed to the broader reductions in overall court appearances and the services efforts to secure transport for young people and families who have barriers to accessing transport.

Anti-social behaviour relating to young people continues to follow a strong seasonal trend with incidents and complaints often related to alcohol reaching their peak during the summer months.

Community perception results from the recent Household Survey indicate that from a town wide perspective the fear of crime and anti-social behaviour related issues have generally improved, however it is noted that these results do vary across wards with perceptions in our most disadvantaged communities remaining high.

Youth crime continues to be concentrated in our most disadvantaged and vulnerable communities, co-existing with high levels of anti-social behaviour, health inequalities, unemployment and poor housing all of which place a significant demand on partner

resources. People living in deprived areas experience significantly higher levels of crime and disorder; therefore they are at greater risk of victimisation and for this reason remain vulnerable.

Prevention and Diversion

Research consistently highlights that children and young people who are exposed to multiple risks and disadvantage are more likely to become involved in crime and anti-social behaviour. Similarly, children and young people who engage in anti-social behaviour at an early age are more likely to become serious persistent offenders.

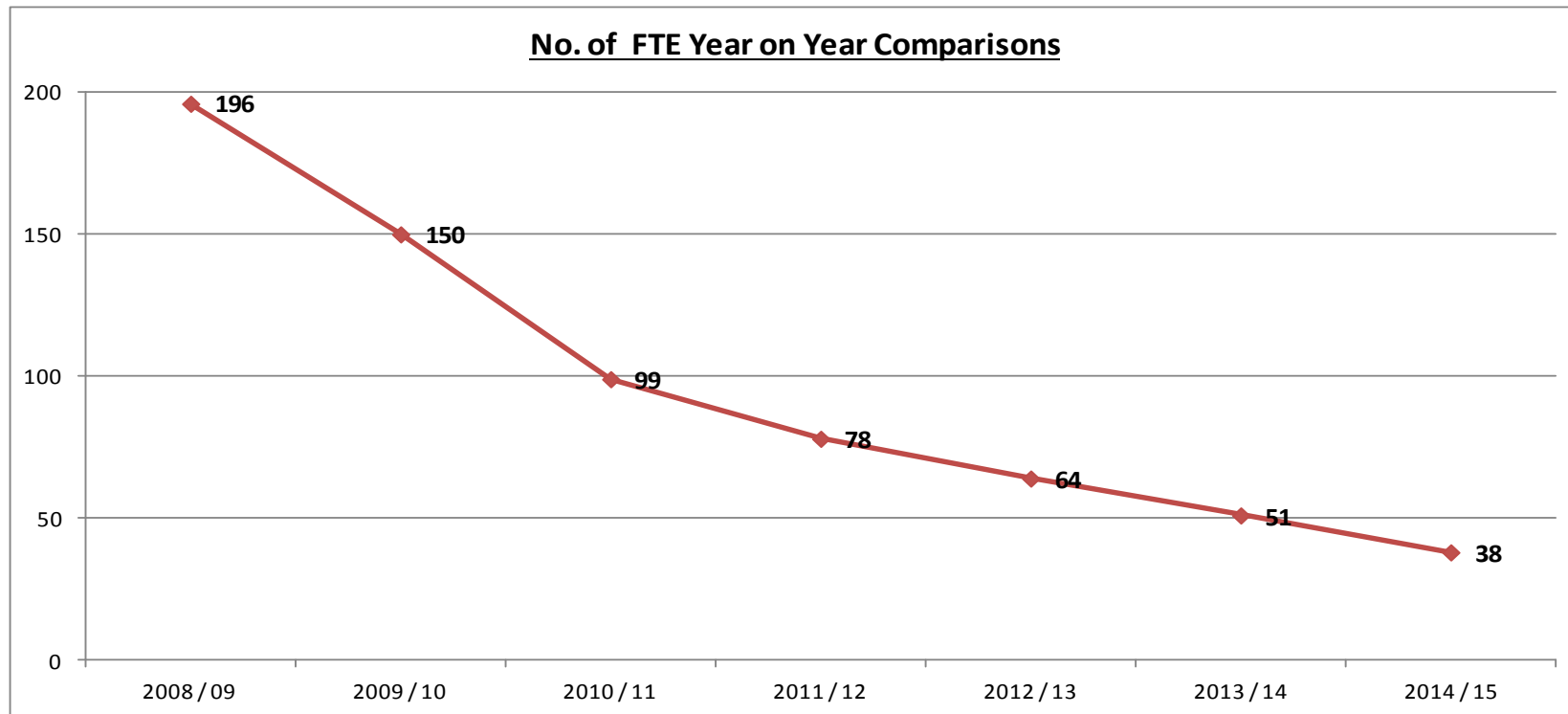
In addition to this, research highlights that young people involved in offending behaviour are more likely to experience significant difficulties during adulthood in relation to housing, health, relationships, substance misuse and employment.

Youth crime prevention and diversion is based on the premise that it is possible to change the life-course trajectories of young people by reducing risk factors that may lead to offending behaviour and building on protective factors that might help prevent offending.

It marks a concerted shift away from reactive spending towards early action and intervention through a range of programmes for young people who are deemed to be at risk of offending, which can result in better outcomes and greater value for money.

In recent years, Hartlepool Youth Offending Service and the broader youth justice partnership have placed a significant emphasis on the prevention of young people's involvement in crime and anti-social behaviour and this has had a notable impact upon the numbers of young people entering the Youth Justice System.

For young people whose behaviour has become more problematic robust out of court interventions have proven to be highly successful in diverting young people away from further involvement in crime and anti-social behaviour through the use of interventions that whilst impressing upon the young people the seriousness and potentially damaging effect of their actions, do not criminalise the young people in the way that statutory court orders inevitably do.



Re-Offending

On top of the continuing reductions in the numbers of young people entering the youth justice system for the first time, we are now starting to see a reduction in the numbers of young people going onto re-offend. However, the rate of reoffending by those young people who have previously offended remains high and this will need to be addressed in the coming year.

COHORT DATE	No. Of Young People Offending	No. Reoffending	No of Offences	% Reoffending	Reoffending Rate (No. Offences / No. Young People Re-Offending)
Oct 2011 to Sep 2012 (COHORT D)	162	74	276	45.7%	3.7
Jan 2012 to Dec 2012 (COHORT A)	145	75	310	51.7%	4.1
Apr 2012 to Mar 2013 (COHORT B)	155	76	320	49.0%	4.2
Jul 2012 to Jun 2013 (COHORT C)	146	72	321	49.3%	4.5
Oct 2012 to Sep 2013 (COHORT D)	149	73	265	49.0%	3.6
Jan 2013 to Dec 2013 (COHORT A)	144	67	218	46.5%	3.3
Apr 2013 to Mar 2014 (COHORT B)	113	53	190	46.9%	3.6

(The **new** reoffending measure uses a 12 month cohort which is 'tracked' for a 12 month period. A new cohort starts every 3 months (4 Cohorts per year A/B/C/D), i.e. April 2013 to Mar 2014 cohort are tracked until end of Mar 2015)

Further exploration highlights that were a young person offends for the first time in Hartlepool 53% do not go on to re-offend. Analysis highlights that the service is dealing with a small number of persistent offenders (see below) who repeat offend; often in

line with broader lifestyle choices relating to substance misuse and the need to generate income to maintain substance misuse levels.

Numbers of Re-Offences (2014-2015)

	Girls	Boys
1 Offence	38	141
2 Offences	12	39
3 Offences	4	21
4 Offences	4	13
5 Offences	1	9
6 Offences	0	6
7 Offences	0	5
8 Offences	0	1
9 Offences	0	2
10 Offences	0	1
13 Offences	2	2
14 Offences	0	1
15 Offences	0	2
16 Offences	0	2
23 Offences	0	1
26 Offences	0	1

This cohort of persistent young offenders are predominantly young men who are aged between 15 and 17 and who reside within Hartlepool's most deprived neighbourhoods.

These young people are often the most socially excluded and often have complex and deep rooted health and social problems such as:

- Higher than average mental health needs
- Higher levels of drug and alcohol use than for the general population and in particular 'heavy cannabis use'
- Low educational attachment, attendance and attainment
- Having family members or friends who offend
- Higher than average levels of loss, bereavement, abuse and violence experienced within the family
- A history of family disruption

Working in partnership with the local 'Think Families – Think Communities' initiative will be key to supporting a greater understanding these underlying issues and addressing them in a holistic and co-ordinated way to provide “pathways out of offending”, reduce crime and break the cycle of offending behaviour across generations.

Victims of Youth Crime

Whilst crime rates in Hartlepool have fallen, the likelihood of being a victim of crime still remains a reality, especially in our most vulnerable and disadvantaged communities. The Youth Offending Service and broader Youth Justice Partnership are working hard to reduce the numbers of victims of crime, including the successful use of restorative justice to achieve this objective. Restorative justice provides opportunities for those directly affected by an offence – victim, offender and members of the community – to communicate and agree how to deal with the offence and its consequences.

Restorative justice is an important underlying principle of all disposals for young offenders from Cautions to Youth Rehabilitation Orders. Whilst restorative processes typically result in practical reparation, for example participating in a task that benefits the community, the communication between victim and offender as part of this process can also produce powerful emotional responses leading to mutual satisfaction and socially inclusive outcomes.

Beyond this victims of crime are helped to access appropriate support pathways that enable them to move on from the impact of crime. A personalised approach is taken to ensure that victims of crime in Hartlepool are placed at the centre. This includes ensuring that individual needs and wishes are fully taken into account. As a result we aim to visit all victims of crime so they are able to access pathways to support, including the option to participate in restorative justice.

Within the Youth Offending Service, restorative justice has been provided for a number of years by The Children's Society, a national charity which has a history of providing and developing restorative justice services at a national level.

Analysis of Restorative Justice interventions highlights that victims are in the main opting not to engage in direct restorative

activities. Work is underway to explore this further with the Children's Society to establish whether any barriers exist for victims of youth crime and whether remedial activity needs to be undertaken given that participation in direct restorative activities can often have the biggest impact upon victim satisfaction levels and impact upon the young person's future desistance from crime.

	2014-15			
Court Disposals	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr4
No. Of cases Sentenced following a Court- ordered adjournment or deferred sentence to allow delivery of a restorative process	14	16	7	7
No. Of Identified victims of the offences leading to the disposal	5	16	8	11
No. Of 'Direct' restorative process that victims participated in	1	1	0	1
No. Of 'Indirect' restorative processes victims participated in	1	13	5	3

Out of Court Disposals				
No. Of Pre-Court disposals given in the period and Courts disposal closing in the period	3	3	12	9
No. Of identified victims of the offences leading to the disposal	3	4	8	0
No. Of victims offered the opportunity to participate in the restorative process	3	4	6	0
Number of 'Direct' restorative processes that the victims participated in	0	0	0	0
Number of 'Indirect' restorative process that the victims participated in	3	1	6	0

Quality of Services

The National Standards for Youth Justice Services are set by the Secretary of State for Justice on advice from the Youth Justice Board for England and Wales (YJB). The standards apply to those organisations providing statutory youth justice services.

Self audit activity (verified by the national Youth Justice Board) in 2013-2014 indicates that Hartlepool YOS is meeting national standards relating to:

- Assessment for interventions and reports
- Planning and delivering interventions in custody and resettlement into the community (including Civil Detention Orders).

And is meeting national standards with recommendations for improvements identified relating to:

- Planning and delivering interventions in the community

The Youth Offending Service Strategic Management Board has identified that the service would benefit from a self inspection in the coming year to ensure that the service maintains its compliance with the National Standards and any areas for improvement can be identified and swiftly addressed.

Service User Feedback

During 2014-2015 nineteen young people who were subject to statutory court orders participated in an eSurvey questionnaire to determine what they thought about the services they had received from Hartlepool Youth Offending Service and whether they had been effective in terms of reducing their likelihood of re-offending and securing the help that they may have needed.

In the main the service users were positive about the services they had received from the Youth Offending Service with 53% of respondents reporting that they thought the service provided was very good and a further 42% reporting that it was good most of the time.

Alongside this 79% of respondents reported that they are a lot less likely to offend as a result of the work they have undertaken with the Youth Offending Service.

Beyond this the survey has identified areas for further exploration and potential improvement. From a total of nineteen young people two of these stated that they had never been asked to explain why they had offended by a member of the service. Following on from this two young people also stated that they were never asked to explain what would help them stop offending.

When asked if there were things that made it harder for service users to take full part in the sessions with the service two young people said there were things that made it harder to take part. Barriers to taking apart were identified as follows:

- Learning needs (1)
- Young people finding it difficult to explain things(1)
- A disability (1)
- Where they lived (relating to transport) (1)

When the young people were asked if things had got better for them in school, college or in getting a job with five participants reported that things had not got better. In relation to substance use two out of nineteen young people acknowledged they needed help to cut down their drug use but that they didn't get enough help with this, with two young people also stating that things had not got any better for them.

A similar response was given in relation to alcohol use with one young person answering that they didn't get enough help, and one young person stating that things had not got any better for them.

When asked about their health one young person stated they didn't get enough help in terms of improving their health or things about their body and two young people answered that their health hadn't got any better whilst being supervised by the service.

In relation to young people dealing with strange and upsetting thoughts one out of the nineteen stated they didn't get enough help with this and three young people stating that things hadn't got any better since whilst being supervised by the service. One young person answered that they did not get enough help with money problems and getting out or debt.

When asked the question if their work with the Youth Offending Service had made it less likely that they would offend four out of nineteen young people reported that it had made no difference.

These findings will be built into service development activities in the coming year with the same consultation exercise repeated throughout the year to determine progress in terms of service user experience.

5 RESOURCES AND VALUE FOR MONEY

Adequate resourcing and the appropriate use of resources underpin the ability of the Youth Offending Service to deliver high quality services. The Youth Offending Service budget is made up of a central grant from the Youth Justice Board and contributions from statutory partners (Health, Children's Services, Police and Probation).

Funding from the national Youth Justice Board for 2015-2016 Good Practice Grant has reduced by 7.6%, Restorative Development by over 81% and Unpaid Work Order Grant funding by 6%. In previous years Youth Offending received a £25,000 contribution from Public Health however this has now ceased and the Police and Crime Commissioners contribution has reduced by 22.5%. As a consequence it is anticipated at this stage that the overall budget for the Youth Offending Service will be 5.7% less than 2014-2015.

Organisation	Financial Contribution	In kind staffing contribution	Total
Youth Justice Board:- Good Practice Restorative Justice Unpd Wrk Order	£459,333 £2,000 £9,628		£470,961
HBC Children's Services	£406,446	£57,541 (Incl. Statutory Split)	£463,987
Cleveland Police	£40,000 (Police and Crime Commissioner)	£45,000 (Police Officer)	£85,000
Durham Tees Valley Probation Trust	£11,711	£36,250 (Probation Officer)	£47,961
Hartlepool Clinical Commissioning Group	£0	£41,250 (Nurse)	£41,250
Totals	£929,118	£180,041	£1,109,159

6 STRUCTURE AND GOVERNANCE

Service Structure

The Youth Offending Service deploys a staff team of thirty eight people, which includes four seconded staff, four commissioned staff and eight sessional workers (**see Appendix 1**). The service also benefits from a team of thirteen active volunteers who sit as Referral Order Panel members. All staff and volunteers are subject to Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks which are renewed every three years.

The service has undergone significant service remodelling in response to emerging priorities and areas of need. Historically the service was organised into two discreet areas; Pre-court and Post-court provision. The service now operates a 'through court' model that places the majority of the services resources at the point of prevention and diversion to reflect the decreasing numbers of young people appearing before magistrates and the ongoing reductions in court orders.

It is envisaged that for those young people who go onto offend (in spite of preventative and diversionary interventions), the Youth Offending officer who will have established a relationship and rapport with the young person will be provided with the capacity to support the young person and their broader family through the court process, support any statutory interventions and then go on to provide aftercare with a view to reducing any further offending behaviour.

Governance

The Youth Offending Service is located within the Children's Services Division of Child and Adult Services. The Management Board is chaired by a local Police Area Commander and is made up of representatives from Child and Adult Services, Police, Probation, Health, Courts, Housing, Youth Support Services, Community Safety and the local Voluntary and Community Sector. Effective integrated strategic partnership working and clear oversight by the Management Board are critical to the success and effective delivery of youth justice services in Hartlepool.

The board is directly responsible for:

- Determining how appropriate youth justice services are to be provided and funded.
- Overseeing the formulation each year of a draft youth justice plan.
- Agreeing measurable objectives linked to key performance indicators as part of the youth justice plan.
- Ensuring delivery of the statutory aim to prevent offending by children and young people.
- Giving strategic direction to Youth Offending Service Manager and Youth Offending Service Team.
- Providing performance management of the prevention of youth crime and periodically report this to the Safer Hartlepool Executive Group.
- Promoting the key role played by the Youth Offending Service within local integrated offender management arrangements.

The Management Board is clear about the priority areas for improvement, and monitors the delivery of the Youth Justice Strategic Plan, performance and prevention work. It is well attended and receives comprehensive reports relating to performance, finance and specific areas of service delivery.

Members of the Board are knowledgeable, participate well in discussions and are members of other related boards, which contribute to effective partnership working at a strategic level. Board meetings are well structured and members are held accountable.

The membership of the Board is as follows:

Lynn Beeston Chair	Local Police Area Commander
Mark Smith	Head of Youth Support Services (incorporating YOS Manager functions)
Sally Robinson	Assistant Director - Prevention, Safeguarding & Specialist Services Hartlepool Borough Council
Mark Patten	Assistant Director – Performance and Achievement Hartlepool Borough Council
Julie Allan	Head of Cleveland NPS – National Probation Service (NE)
Sally Ivison	Senior Clinical Matron Children and Young People Service - Integrated Care
Claire Clark	Neighbourhood Manager Community Safety
Dave Wise	Chair of the West View Project (Voluntary/Community Sector representative).
Deborah Clark	Health Improvement Practitioner
Lynda Igoe	Principal Housing Officer Hartlepool Borough Council

Karen Turner	Hartlepool Magistrates
Jane Young	Business Unit Manager, Prevention, Safeguarding and Specialist Services
Ben Dickinson	Children's Society – Restorative Justice
Young People's Representative	Currently vacant

7 PARTNERSHIP ARRANGEMENTS

Hartlepool Youth Offending Service is a statutory partnership which includes, but also extends beyond, the direct delivery of youth justice services. In order to deliver youth justice outcomes it must be able to function effectively in both of the two key sectors within which it operates, namely:

- Criminal justice services.
- Services for children and young people and their families.

The Youth Offending Service contributes both to improving community safety and to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and in particular protecting them from significant harm. Working Together to Safeguard Children highlights the need for Youth Offending Services to work jointly with other agencies and professionals to ensure that young people are protected from harm and to ensure that outcomes for local children, young people and their families are improved.

Many of the young people involved with the Youth Offending Service are amongst the most vulnerable children in the borough and are at greatest risk of social exclusion. The Youth Offending Service's multi-agency approach ensures that it plays a significant role in meeting the safeguarding needs of these young people. This is achieved through the effective assessment and management of vulnerability and risk and through working in partnership with other services, for example Children's Social Care, Health and Education to ensure young people's wellbeing is promoted and they are protected from harm.

In order to generate effective outcomes for children and young people who offend or are at risk of offending the Youth Offending Service has in place effective partnership arrangements and is an important delivery partner for the Safer Hartlepool Partnership and the Children and Young Peoples Strategic Partnership. This close relationship is embedded in Hartlepool's 'Crime, Disorder, and Drugs Strategy' and 'Children and Young People's Plans'.

The Youth Offending Service Manager and nominated officers from within the Youth Offending Service are members of strategic boards relevant to young people who offend. For example representatives sit on the Criminal Justice Intervention Managers Partnership, 11-19 Strategic Board, Secondary Behaviour and Attendance Partnership, Parenting Strategy Board, Substance Misuse Steering Group, Pupil Referral Unit Management Board, Social Inclusion Strategy Group and Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA). The Youth Offending Service is also represented on the Children's Strategic Partnership, Local Safeguarding Children Board, Health and Well-being Board and the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership.

8 RISKS TO FUTURE DELIVERY

The key risks that have the capacity to have an adverse impact on the Youth Offending Service in the coming twelve months and potentially beyond are detailed below:

Risks	Potential Impact	Control Measures
Secure Remand Costs	The unpredictability associated with remand episodes and remand length has the potential to place significant financial pressure on the YOS and broader Local Authority.	<p>It remains essential that the service can demonstrate to magistrates going forward that there are robust and comprehensive alternatives in place to support reductions in the use of remands and custody.</p> <p>Coordinated multi-agency responses to young people at risk of remand where safe and secure accommodation is the precipitating factor to be further developed.</p>

<p>The Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Bill - Introduction of new powers to respond to and tackle anti-social behaviour in the community</p>	<p>There is the potential for increases in the number of children being subject to civil injunctions, more breaches of orders and injunctions, and more children being sent to custody. Children with learning disabilities, communication difficulties, mental health problems and low literacy may have difficulty understanding what is expected of them, and what will happen if they fail to comply with civil injunctions.</p>	<p>Develop local protocol to ensure that multi-agency consultation is held in relation to any applications for Criminal Behaviour Orders.</p>
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<p>Introduction of ASSETPlus – National Youth Justice Assessment tool</p>	<p>There is the potential for significant service disruption as the staff teams and management information system transition from ASSET to ASSETplus</p>	<p>AssetPlus is scheduled to be adopted by Hartlepool in autumn 2015 and will benefit from being the third of three national trenches in terms of being able to learn from YOT's in the first two trenches re lessons learned.</p> <p>Nominate a local change lead who will take ownership for the local implementation of AssetPlus alongside the AssetPlus project team.</p> <p>Ensure that Hartlepool YOS remain involved in all planning activities to secure smooth transition to ASSET Plus.</p> <p>Prior to implementation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • undertake Assessment and Planning Foundation training with staff • implement AssetPlus Early Practice Changes • hold introductory AssetPlus staff briefings
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9 STRATEGIC SUMMARY

In spite of the adversities that families and communities contend with in Hartlepool the local Youth Justice Partnership has had significant success in recent years in terms of preventing and reducing youth offending behaviour.

However, an emphasis on prevention and diversion needs to be maintained and in spite of recent reductions in re-offending, the rate of re-offending in Hartlepool continues to be an area of concern.

Evidence highlights that it is often the complex interplay of multiple deprivation factors and difficulties that makes problems in some households insurmountable and places the children at significant risk of involvement in anti-social and offending behaviour. As a result there is a need to place an even greater emphasis on whole family interventions to create “pathways out of offending”, reduce crime and break the cycle of offending behaviour across generations.

Whilst youth crime rates in Hartlepool have fallen, the likelihood of being a victim of crime still remains a reality, especially in our most vulnerable and disadvantaged communities and there remains a need to continue to invest in the delivery of restorative approaches to give victims of crime a voice, choice, control and satisfaction in the criminal justice system.

Alongside the above, there have been further policy developments at a national level alongside operational risks which the service will need to respond to and manage in the coming year.

The Youth Offending Service and broader Youth Justice Partnership will be proactive in addressing the above challenges to secure further reductions in offending and re-offending by young people.

Proposed Strategic Objectives and Priorities

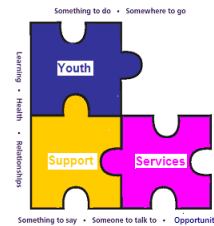
Based upon the findings from the Strategic Assessment, it is proposed that the Youth Offending Service and broader youth justice Partnership focuses on the following key strategic objectives during 2015 - 16:

YOUTH JUSTICE STRATEGIC PRIORITIES	
Re-offending - reduce further offending by young people who have committed crime with a particular emphasis on the development of activities to address the offending behaviour of young women	Risk and Vulnerability – ensure all children and young people entering or at risk of entering the youth justice system benefit from a structured needs assessment to identify risk and vulnerability to inform effective intervention and risk management.
Early Intervention and Prevention – sustain the reduction of first time entrants to the youth justice system by ensuring that there remain strategies and services in place locally to prevent children and young people from becoming involved in crime and anti-social behaviour.	Think Family – embed a whole family approach to better understand the true impact of families in our communities and improve our understanding of the difficulties faced by all members of the family and how this can contribute to anti-social and offending behaviour.

Remand and Custody – demonstrate that there are robust and comprehensive alternatives in place to support reductions in the use of remands and custody.	Maintain Standards – Ensure that work is undertaken to a high standard and improvement activities are identified through undertaking a self inspection and reviewing service user feedback.
Restorative Justice – ensure all victims of youth crime have the opportunity to participate in restorative justice approaches and restorative justice is central to work undertaken with young people who offend.	Effective Governance – ensure that the Youth Offending Strategic Management Board will be a well constituted, committed and knowledgeable Board which scrutinises Youth Offending Service performance.

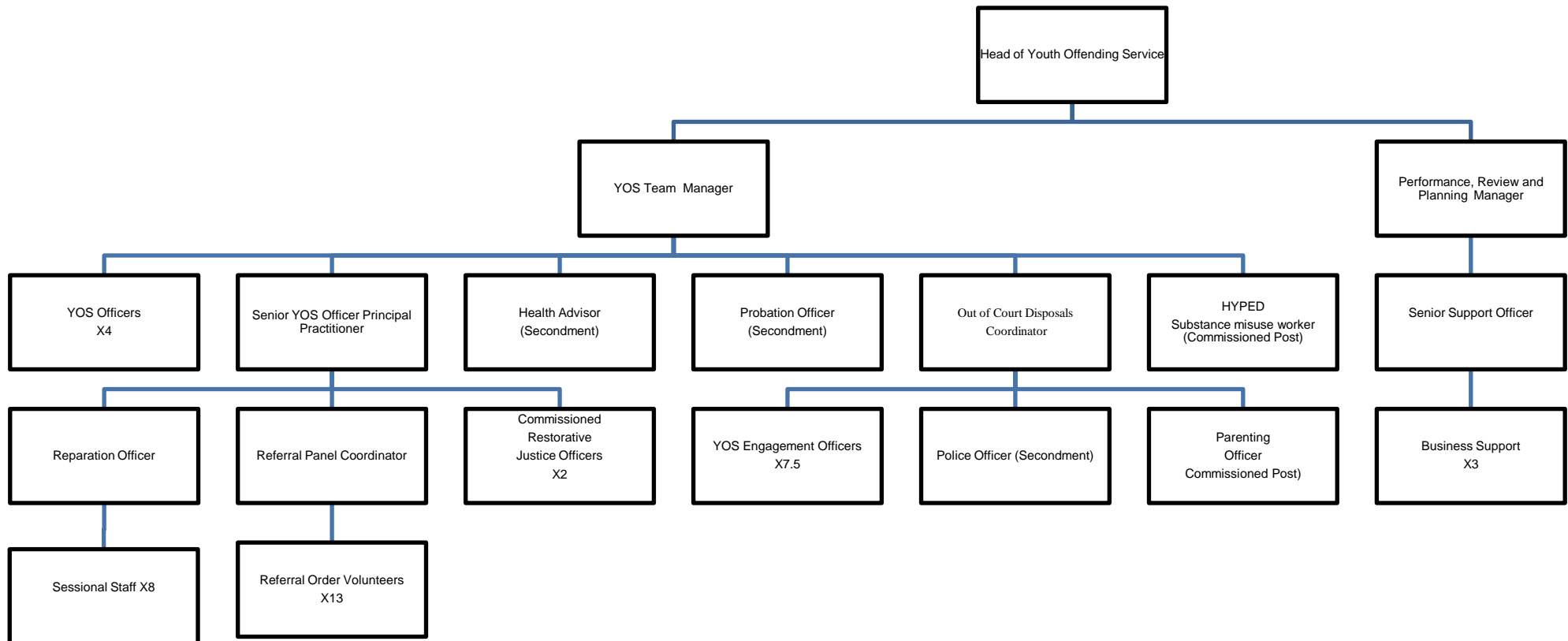
The local Youth Justice Strategic Plan for 2015 – 2016 will establish responsibility across the Youth Offending Service and the Youth Offending Strategic Board for taking each improvement activity forward within agreed timescales.

HARTLEPOOL YOUTH JUSTICE PARTNERSHIP



APPENDIX 1

YOUTH OFFENDING SERVICE STRUCTURE



YOUTH JUSTICE STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN 2015-2016

Re-offending - reduce further offending by young people who have committed crime.

- The number of young people who go onto offend following their first conviction is reduced from a baseline of 46.9% (2014-2015).
- The rate of re-offending across the cohort of young offenders is reduced from a baseline of 3.6 (2014-2015).

Objectives	Actions	Responsible Officer and Resources	Timeline	Performance Monitoring and Indicators
Improve intelligence relating to the re-offending cohort to inform service-wide improvement activity.	The factors behind young people's offending behavior are established and analysed and shared with the Management Board, Management Team and broader service, through use of the YJB's re-offending Tool and the cross referencing of local Management Information Systems and this intelligence is used to inform future service development.	YOS Team Manager	Report produced by September 2015. Performance Indicators reviewed Monthly throughout 2015-2016	Report produced by September 2015 to inform service development. The number of young people who go onto offend following their first conviction is reduced from a baseline of 37.1% in 2013/2014 The rate of re-offending across the cohort of young offenders is reduced from a baseline of 1.3 in 2013/2014.

Objectives	Actions	Responsible Officer and Resources	Timeline	Performance Monitoring and Indicators
Improve assessments of young people at risk of re-offending to ensure that risks and needs are identified and patterns of offending behaviour are understood and inform effective intervention planning and risk and vulnerability management arrangements.	Staff training and development is secured and developed to prepare the service for the recently developed YJB Screening Tools.	YOS Principal Practitioner (Post Court)	September 2015	Workforce Development Activities delivered and use of screening tools incorporated within local quality assurance arrangements.
	Ensure robust arrangements are in place for the quality assurance of all assessments and planning through the further development of the assessment quality assurance tool and quality assurance arrangements.	YOS Deputy Manager	April 2015	All assessments quality assured within locally agreed timeframes. Continuous review of quality of assessments and evidence of effective interventions reducing re offending.
	Findings from quality assurance exercises are shared and reviewed collectively to identify emerging themes, improve operational practice and to inform ongoing staff training and development activities.	YOS Deputy Manager	Progress reviewed Monthly throughout 2015-2016	Performance is raised further in relation to the production of assessments, reports, plans and reviews.

Objectives	Actions	Responsible Officer and Resources	Timeline	Performance Monitoring and Indicators
Improve both service and partnership emphasis upon the contributory factors relating to the re-offending cohort.	Secure improved partnership arrangements for young offenders with Behavioral, Emotional and Social Difficulties.	Head of Youth Support Services	September 2015	Multi-agency planning forum established to respond holistically to the needs of BESD students.
	Work in partnership with sub-regional post 16 providers to enhance the local offer and their capacity to support young people supervised by the YOS.	Head of Youth Support Services	September 2015	Increased flexibility is built into the local post 16 offer to secure learning post 16 learning provision that is more responsive to the needs of young people in receipt of youth justice services.
	Work effectively with partners to increase the engagement in education, training and employment (ETE) of young people in the youth justice system.	YOS Management Team	Progress reviewed Monthly throughout 2015-2016	Engagement in compulsory education by young offenders is raised from an annual baseline of 78.3 % in 2013/14. Engagement in post-16 education, training and employment by young offenders is raised from an annual baseline of 69.6% in 2013/14.
	Ensure a "Think Family" approach is embedded across the Service which works effectively to highlight and address whole family needs through the trialing of whole family assessments in line with the Troubled Families initiative.	YOS Preventions Manager/Troubled Families Coordinator	August 2015	Whole Family Assessments and plans to be trialed across the Youth Engagement Team to prepare for the incorporation of troubled families responsibilities across teams.

Objectives	Actions	Responsible Officer and Resources	Timeline	Performance Monitoring and Indicators
Improve Interventions delivered across the re-offending cohort to address thinking, behaviours and needs.	Target emerging offending behaviour trends with offence focused interventions through the development and/or purchase of resources.	Preventions Manager/YOS Principal Practitioner	June 2015	Gaps identified and shared with management team to establish responsibility for developing and/or procuring resources to fill gaps.
	Review transition arrangements with Probation Services in response to national changes to Probation Services.	Head of Youth Support Services	June 2015	Protocol developed between Hartlepool YOS and National Probation Service to secure effective transition arrangements for young offenders nearing their 18 th birthday.
	Secure options to spot purchase educational provision for young people in receipt of ISS who are not in receipt of/or disengaged from compulsory or post 16 learning.	YOS Management Team	September 2015	Potential educational providers in place.
	Secure Allotment for the delivery of horticultural activities.	YOS Management Team	September 2015	Allotment secured.

Objectives	Actions	Responsible Officer and Resources	Timeline	Performance Monitoring and Indicators
Improve the services ability to provide intensive packages of Supervision and support to high intensity orders and bail arrangements (including Intensive Supervision and Surveillance programmes - ISSP).	<p>Develop 'Rolling Programme' consisting of the following topics that will run for four weeks each for 52 weeks of the year:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Substance Misuse • Health and Wellbeing • Pitfalls of violent crime (including Prison me no way, Gangs, Weapons etc) • Animal Cruelty • Independent Living • Equality and Diversity – through cooking • Fire Safety • Sexual Health and Relationships • Managing your emotions plus self esteem • Victim Awareness 	YOS Management Team	September 2015	Rolling Programme developed and in operation.

Early Intervention and Prevention – sustain the reduction of first time entrants to the youth justice system.

- First Time Entrants are further reduced from a baseline of 36 (2014-2015).

Objectives	Actions	Responsible Officer and Resources	Timeline	Performance Monitoring and Indicators
Improve intelligence relating to those young people who are at risk of offending behaviour to inform service-wide improvement activity.	The factors placing young people at risk of entering the Youth Justice System are established and analysed and shared with the Management Board, Management Team and broader service to inform future service development.	YOS Preventions Manager	Report produced by September 2015. Performance Indicators reviewed Monthly throughout 2015-2016	Report produced by September 2015 to inform service development. The number of young people who enter the Youth Justice System for the first time is reduced from a baseline of 36 (2014-2015)
Improve assessments of young people at risk of re-offending to ensure that risks and needs are identified and patterns of offending behaviour are understood and inform effective intervention planning and risk and vulnerability management arrangements.	Staff training and development is secured and developed to prepare the service for the recently developed YJB Screening Tools.	YOS Preventions Manager	September 2015	Workforce Development Activities delivered and use of screening tools incorporated within local quality assurance arrangements.
	Ensure robust arrangements are in place for the quality assurance of all assessments through the further development of the assessment quality assurance tool and quality assurance arrangements.	YOS Preventions Manager	April 2015	All assessments quality assured within locally agreed timeframes. Continuous review of quality of assessments and evidence of effective interventions reducing re offending.

Objectives	Actions	Responsible Officer and Resources	Timeline	Performance Monitoring and Indicators
	Findings from quality assurance exercises are shared and reviewed collectively to identify emerging themes, improve operational practice and to inform ongoing staff training and development activities.	YOS Preventions Manager	Progress reviewed Monthly throughout 2015-2016	Performance is raised further in relation to the production of assessments, reports, plans and reviews.
Improve both service and partnership emphasis upon the contributory factors relating to those young people identified at risk of offending.	Secure improved partnership arrangements for young people at risk of offending with Behavioral, Emotional and Social Difficulties.	Head of Youth Support Services	September 2015	Multi-agency planning forum established to respond holistically to the needs of BESD students.
	Work in partnership with sub-regional post 16 providers to enhance the local offer and their capacity to support young people at risk of offending.	Head of Youth Support Services	September 2015	Increased flexibility is built into the local post 16 offer to secure learning post 16 learning provision that is more responsive to the needs of young people in receipt of youth justice services.
	Ensure a "Think Family" approach is embedded across the Service which works effectively to highlight and address whole family needs through the trialing of whole family assessments in line with the Troubled Families initiative.	YOS Preventions Manager/Troubled Families Coordinator	August 2015	Whole Family Assessments and plans to be trialed across the Youth Engagement Team to prepare for the incorporation of troubled families responsibilities across teams.
Improve Interventions delivered across the address the thinking, behaviours and needs of those young people identified as being at Risk of Offending.	Target emerging offending behaviour trends with offence focused interventions through the development and/or purchase of resources.	YOS Management Team	June 2015	Gaps identified and shared with management team to establish responsibility for developing and/or procuring resources to fill gaps.

Objectives	Actions	Responsible Officer and Resources	Timeline	Performance Monitoring and Indicators
	<p>Develop 'Rolling Programme' consisting of the following topics that will run for four weeks each for 52 weeks of the year:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Substance Misuse • Health and Wellbeing • Pitfalls of violent crime (including Prison me no way, Gangs, Weapons etc) • Animal Cruelty • Independent Living • Equality and Diversity – through cooking • Fire Safety • Sexual Health and Relationships • Managing your emotions plus self esteem • Victim Awareness 	YOS Management Team	September 2015	Rolling Programme developed and in operation.
Improve partnership working with Cleveland Police in relation to pre and out of court disposals and diversionary schemes and activities.	Review out of court disposal protocols with Cleveland Police to maintain robust and effective working arrangements.	Preventions Manager	October 2015	Protocols reviewed.

Remand and Custody – demonstrate that there are robust and comprehensive alternatives in place to support reductions in the use of detainment, remands and custody.

Reduce the number of remand episodes from a base line of 5 (2014-2015)

Reduce the number of custodial sentences from a baseline of 4 (2014-2015)

Reduce the number of breaches of community based orders from a baseline of 45 in (2014-2015)

Objectives	Actions	Responsible Officer and Resources	Timeline	Performance Monitoring and Indicators
Improve intelligence and understanding of the factors that place young people at risk of detainment in Police Custody and remands to custody.	The factors behind young people's detainment in police custody and secure remands are analysed and shared with the Management Board, Management Team and broader service, through use of the YJB's re-offending Tool and the cross referencing of local Management Information Systems and this intelligence is used to inform future service development.	YOS Deputy Manager	Report produced by November 2015. Performance Indicators reviewed Monthly throughout 2015-2016	Report produced by November 2015 to inform service development. The number of remand episodes is reduced from a from a base line of 5 (2014-2015).
Improve joint responses to young people at risk of detainment in police custody and/or at risk of remand.	Develop joint protocol between YOS and Social Care to establish roles and responsibilities relating to the securing of suitable accommodation arrangements for young people at risk of detainment in police custody and/or at risk of remand.	Head of Youth Support Services	Protocol developed June 2015	Protocol developed.
	Establish capacity across YOS and social care to deliver robust 7 days per week packages of support to young people a risk of detainment, and/or remand.	YOS Management Team	Rota developed June 2015	Rota to be developed to support weekend supervision and support arrangements.

Objectives	Actions	Responsible Officer and Resources	Timeline	Performance Monitoring and Indicators
	Court representatives are supported to have a comprehensive knowledge of all levels of bail arrangements available and be able to inspire confidence in the supervision and enforcement of such interventions	YOS Management Team	June 2015	The number of remand episodes is reduced from a from a base line of 5 (2014-2015).
Improve the services response to young people who are at risk of breaching their court orders/bail conditions.	Embed the use of Compliance Panels to encourage young people and families to take responsibility for the completion of Court imposed orders without the sanction of a return to court.	YOS Deputy Manager	Ongoing throughout 2015-2016	Compliance panels are utilised for young people and their families who are at risk of breaching their orders/bail conditions. The number of breaches of community based orders is reduced from a baseline of 45 in 2015-2016.
Improve the services ability to provide intensive packages of Supervision and support to high intensity orders and bail arrangements (including Intensive Supervision and Surveillance programmes - ISS).	Rota to be developed to support weekend supervision and support arrangements.	YOS Management Team	June 2015	Rota in place.
	Secure options to spot purchase educational provision for young people in receipt of ISS who are not in receipt of/or disengaged from compulsory or post 16 learning.	YOS Management Team	September 2015	Potential educational providers in place.
	Secure Allotment for the delivery of horticultural activities.	YOS Management Team	September 2015	Allotment secured.

Objectives	Actions	Responsible Officer and Resources	Timeline	Performance Monitoring and Indicators
	<p>Develop 'Rolling Programme consisting of the following topics that will run for four weeks each for 52 weeks of the year:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Substance Misuse • Health and Wellbeing • Pitfalls of violent crime (including Prison me no way, Gangs, Weapons etc) • Animal Cruelty • Independent Living • Equality and Diversity – through cooking • Fire Safety • Sexual Health and Relationships • Managing your emotions plus self esteem • Victim Awareness 	YOS Management Team	August 2015	Rolling Programme developed and in operation.
Ensure that the needs of young people in receipt of custodial sentences and the factors relating to their offending behavior are addressed in the secure estate to prevent further offending upon release.	Additional training is secured to raise awareness of minimum national standards and effective practice.	YOS Principle Practitioner	June 2015	Workforce Development Activities delivered and minimum national standards adhered to in all cases.

Objectives	Actions	Responsible Officer and Resources	Timeline	Performance Monitoring and Indicators
Ensure that robust Resettlement Planning is in place to ensure that young people released from the secure estate desist from further offending behavior.	Additional training is secured to raise awareness of minimum national standards and effective practice.	YOS Principle Practitioner	January 2016	Workforce Development Activities delivered and minimum national standards adhered to in all cases.
	Ensure robust arrangements are in place for the quality assurance of all assessments and planning through the further development of the assessment quality assurance tool and quality assurance arrangements.	YOS Deputy Manager	April 2015	All assessments and planning quality assured within locally agreed timeframes.

Restorative Justice – ensure all victims of youth crime have the opportunity to participate in restorative justice approaches and restorative justice is central to work undertaken with young people who offend.

Objectives	Actions	Responsible Officer and Resources	Timeline	Performance Monitoring and Indicators
Ensure that victims of youth crime have the opportunity to participate in restorative justice approaches that lead to satisfying outcomes for victims.	Contract Manage Restorative Justice services for victims of youth crime.	Head of Youth Support Services	April 2015	Restorative Justice service for victims of youth crime in place and fully operational.
	Work in partnership with local Restorative Justice Service Provider (Children's Society) to ensure that the levels of involvement and satisfaction of victims remains high.	YOS Principal Practitioner	Ongoing throughout 2015-2016	100% of victims of youth crime participate (where appropriate) in Restorative Justice approaches.
Embed restorative practice across all aspects of the Youth Offending Service.	All YOS staff to be trained in Restorative Justice in order to have the victim and their interests at the core of any intervention and planning.	YOS Principal Practitioner	June 2015	All staff trained in Restorative Justice Practices

Objectives	Actions	Responsible Officer and Resources	Timeline	Performance Monitoring and Indicators
	Train Referral Panel Members in Restorative Justice to strengthen work undertaken at Panel Meetings and contracts made with young people attending Panels.	YOS Principle Practitioner	June 2015	All panel members trained in Restorative Justice Practices
Improve responses across partner agencies around the management of problematic behavior through an emphasis on Restorative approaches.	Support local secondary schools to embed restorative approaches through the sharing of best practice and training opportunities.	Head of Youth Support Services	September 2015	All schools to have a Restorative practice champion.
	Support the local Police and Crime Commissioner led initiative to embed on the spot restorative justice approaches across Cleveland Police.	YOS Management Team	Ongoing throughout 2015- 2016	YOS participation at PCC led meetings relating to Restorative Justice.

Risk and Vulnerability – ensure all children and young people entering or at risk of entering the youth justice system benefit from a structured needs assessment to identify risk and vulnerability to inform effective intervention and risk management.

Objectives	Actions	Responsible Officer and Resources	Timeline	Performance Monitoring and Indicators
Improve intelligence relating to the risk and/or vulnerability of the youth-offending cohort to inform service-wide improvement activity.	The factors behind young people's risks and vulnerabilities are established and analysed and shared with the Management Board, Management Team and broader service, through the cross referencing of local Management Information Systems and this intelligence is used to inform future service development.	YOS Deputy Manager	Report produced by September 2015. Performance Indicators reviewed Monthly throughout 2015- 2016	Report produced by September 2015 to inform service development.
Improve assessments of young people at risk of re-offending to ensure that risks and vulnerabilities are identified and protective factors are understood and inform effective intervention planning and risk and vulnerability management arrangements.	Staff training and development is secured and developed to prepare the service for the recently developed YJB Screening Tools.	YOS Principal Practitioner (Post Court)	September 2015	Workforce Development Activities delivered and use of screening tools incorporated within local quality assurance arrangements.

Objectives	Actions	Responsible Officer and Resources	Timeline	Performance Monitoring and Indicators
	Ensure robust arrangements are in place for the quality assurance of all assessments through the further development of the assessment quality assurance tool and quality assurance arrangements.	YOS Deputy Manager	April 2015	All assessments quality assured within locally agreed timeframes. Continuous review of quality of assessments and evidence of effective interventions reducing re offending.
	Findings from quality assurance exercises are shared and reviewed collectively to identify emerging themes, improve operational practice and to inform ongoing staff training and development activities.	YOS Deputy Manager	Progress reviewed Monthly throughout 2015-2016	Performance is raised further in relation to the production of assessments, reports, plans and reviews.
Improve both service and partnership emphasis upon the contributory factors relating to the risks and vulnerabilities of the youth offending cohort.	Secure improved partnership arrangements for young offenders in receipt of social care interventions to prevent duplication of effort and secure a coordinated response to identified vulnerabilities.	Head of Youth Support Services	September 2015	Single process in place to secure joint planning for young offenders in receipt of social care interventions.
Improve Interventions delivered across the re-offending cohort to address thinking, behaviours and needs.	Target emerging risk and vulnerability trends with offence focused interventions through the development and/or purchase of resources.	Preventions Manager/YOS Principal Practitioner	March 2016	Gaps identified and shared with management team to establish responsibility for developing and/or procuring resources to fill gaps.

Objectives	Actions	Responsible Officer and Resources	Timeline	Performance Monitoring and Indicators
	Continue to invest in the local Teen to Parent Abuse programme to support families whose teenagers pose a threat to their parents.	Preventions Manager/YOS Principal Practitioner	Progress reviewed Monthly throughout 2015-2016	Increased referral rate and uptake of the project.
	Continue to invest in the local Deter Young Offenders Programme to support robust risk management arrangements for young people who pose a threat to the community.	Head of Youth Support Services		Increased referral rate and uptake of the project.

Maintain Standards – work undertaken by the YOS is effective and achieves individual, team, service, community and national aims and objectives.

Objectives	Actions	Responsible Officer and Resources	Timeline	Performance Monitoring and Indicators
Ensure that the YOS adheres to minimum national and local standards and builds upon best practice to deliver a high quality effective service.	Undertake YJB self audit to identify local strengths and establish areas for further improvement to inform planning for 2015-2016	Head of Youth Support Services	July 2016	Strengths and areas for further improvement identified to improvement activities for 2015-2016
	Commission 'Young Inspectors' to undertake an inspection of local Youth Justice Services to establish young people's on the services strengths and areas for improvement.	Head of Youth Support Services	July 2016	Strengths and areas for further improvement identified to improvement activities for 2015-2016
	Routinely audit all National Standards performance data that is provided to the YJB Management Information System (YJMIS) for the YOS Case Level data Returns, submitted on a quarterly basis.	Performance and Review Manager	Progress reviewed Monthly throughout 2015-2016	All case level information is inputted in a timely manner in line with national standards.
	An annual plan is developed to enable specific areas of practice to be scrutinised and reviewed at least annually (e.g. Intervention Plans).	YOS Deputy Manager	June 2015	Annual audit plan developed.

Objectives	Actions	Responsible Officer and Resources	Timeline	Performance Monitoring and Indicators
	Monthly Careworks Surgery to be held to audit all performance required to meet the YJB National Standards. This will include Asset assessments start and end, intervention plans, This will also include accommodation ETE and closure of cases.	Performance and Review Manager	Progress reviewed Monthly throughout 2015-2016	Surgeries in place to ensure all case level requirements are met and information is inputted in a timely manner in line with national standards.
Ensure that the staff team is fully supported to deliver effective, high quality services.	Provide regular (no less than monthly) and structured supervision and appraisal to YOS staff that covers all four functions of supervision as detailed in the Prevention, Safeguarding and Specialist Services Supervision and Policy, Procedure and Practice Guidance.	YOS Management Team	Progress reviewed Monthly throughout 2015-2016	Robust supervision arrangements in place for all practitioners.
	Templates are developed that establish service expectations relating to the standard, quality and depth of Youth Justice Assessments, Reports and Plans.	YOS Principle Practitioner	June 2015	Templates developed.
	Embed the use of Youth Justice Interactive Learning System to secure individualized learning activities to support professional development.	YOS Principle Practitioner	June 2015	All staff have individual learning activities identified via supervision.

Effective Governance – ensure that the Youth Offending Strategic Management Board will be a well constituted, committed and knowledgeable Board which scrutinises Youth Offending Service performance.

Objectives	Actions	Responsible Officer and Resources	Timeline	Performance Monitoring and Indicators
The Youth Offending Strategic Management Board is a well constituted, committed and knowledgeable Board which scrutinises YOS performance.	Annually review the membership of the YOS Strategic Management Board to ensure that the statutory functions specified in the Crime and Disorder Act and associated guidance are fulfilled.	Chair of the Strategic Management Board	Ongoing throughout 2015-16	Membership of the YOS Strategic Management Board meets the Statutory functions specified in the Crime and Disorder Act and associated guidance.
	Annually review the Terms of Reference of the YOS Strategic Management Board to ensure that all members understand their role and function as Board Members.	YOS Strategic Management Board	Ongoing throughout 2015-16	All Members receive a copy of the Boards revised Terms of Reference to support their understanding of their role and function as Board Members.

Objectives	Actions	Responsible Officer and Resources	Timeline	Performance Monitoring and Indicators
The Youth Offending Strategic Management Board provides a strategic lead for the service and understands the way in which the YOS contributes to integrated offender management arrangements, reduction of crime and offending and public protection.	Ensure that all new and current Management Board members have a strong induction programme that includes opportunities to observe YOS practice to develop a clearer understanding of the unique role of the YOS	YOS Management Team	Ongoing throughout 2015-16	All new and current Members participate in an induction programme and participate in at least one observation of YOS practice per year.
	Ensure Management Board agendas focus on strategic issues that extended beyond the operational performance of the YOS (such as how educational achievement of young people who offend could be improved).	YOS Strategic Management Board	Ongoing – reviewed at every Board Meeting	Every YOS Strategic Management Board agenda to incorporate at least one agenda item that focuses upon a strategic issue that extends beyond the operational performance of the YOS.

Finance & Policy Committee

27 July 2015



Report of: Chief Finance Officer

Subject: LOCAL COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT 2016/17

1. TYPE OF DECISION / APPLICABLE CATEGORY

1.1 Budget and Policy Framework Decision.

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purposes of the report are to:

- i) Update Members on the operation of the Local Council Tax Support (LCTS) scheme in 2015/16 and a proposed LCTS scheme for 2016/17;
- ii) Update Members on financial risks to the LCTS scheme from future funding settlements following the 2015 Comprehensive Spending Review and the financial risks linked to the Government's proposed £12bn national Welfare Reforms.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Previous reports informed Members that the Coalition Government abolished the national Council Tax Benefit scheme on 31st March 2013 and replaced it with a requirement for Councils to determine and operate their own LCTS schemes. Once a LCTS scheme has been set for a financial year it cannot be altered for that year.
- 3.2 This was a fundamental change to the Welfare State which transferred responsibility for Council Tax support from the national Government to individual Councils. Previous reports to Members have set out three key issues arising from this change:-
 - (i) Funding transferred by the Government for 2013/14 LCTS schemes was cut by 10% nationally. However, when account was taken of the value of awards, the initial grant cut for Hartlepool for 2013/14 was 13.4%;

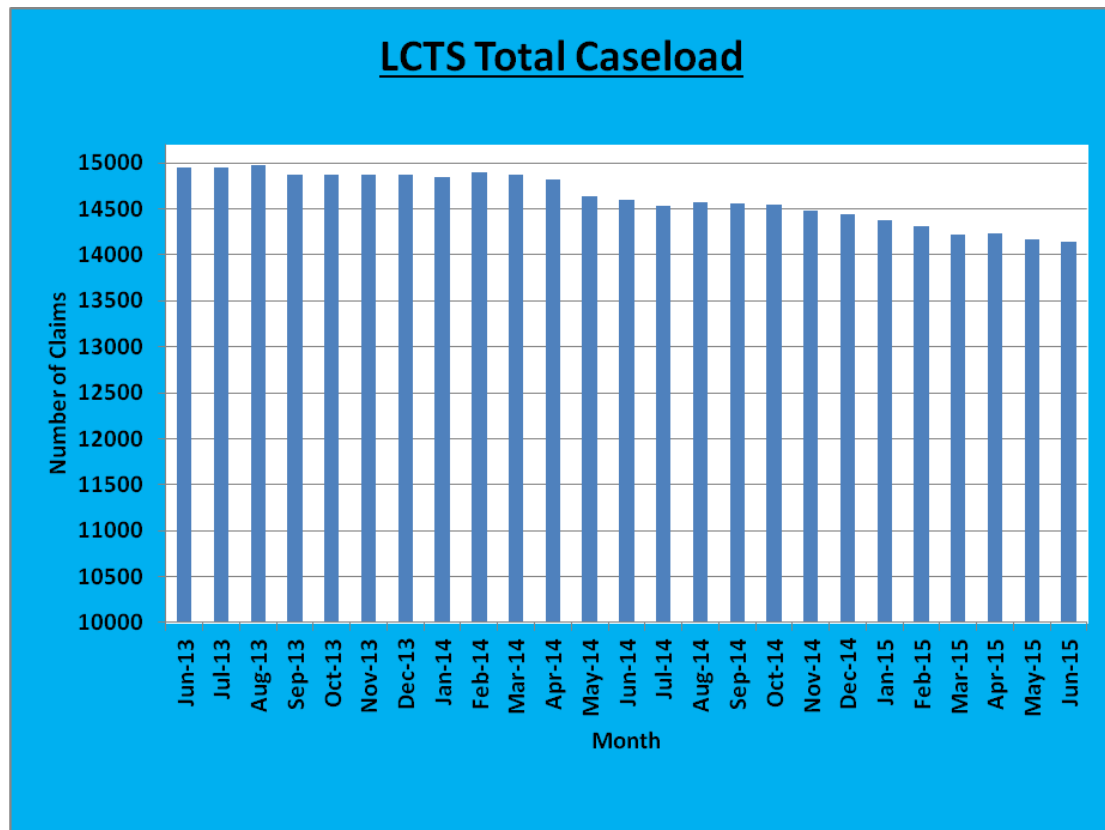
- (ii) Councils are required to fully protect low income Pensioners eligible for LCTS support, which means the initial funding cut falls on working age households and effectively built a 20% reduction for this group into the system;
 - (iii) From 2014/15 and future years, Central Government funding for LCTS is no longer provided as a separate grant allocation but is included in the Core Revenue Grant allocation for individual Councils. This means Councils face having to implement higher reductions in LCTS support for working age households, as pensioners remain fully protected, or limit the LCTS cut by implementing higher General Fund budget cuts.
- 3.3 These issues have a fundamental impact on the affordability and sustainability of LCTS schemes for Councils. It would have been much clearer for Councils and the public if funding for LCTS schemes continued to be paid as a specific grant. This arrangement would also have ensured that the impact of a significant shift in responsibility for supporting low income households from Central to Local Government was fully understood and properly resourced. The new arrangements have a significantly greater impact on Councils which are more dependent on Government Grant and have higher levels of deprivation.
- 3.4 Previous Medium Term Financial Strategy reports have highlighted the implications of this change and the difficult policy decision individual Councils must now make on the use of the Core Revenue Grant. This is a choice between supporting services and providing LCTS support to low income households. For 2013/14 and 2014/15 the Council decided to protect the funding allocated for the LCTS scheme. For the LCTS scheme in 2015/16 and future years the MTFS approved by full Council in February 2014 determined to share the grant cut across the General Fund and the LCTS scheme.
- 3.5 The Council had recognised the impact of these changes before they were implemented and allocated one off resources to help mitigate the impact on low income working age households. As a result of this action the Council has been able avoid implementing LCTS cuts of 20% over the last three years and has limited the reduction in support to:
- 8.5% in 2013/14;
 - 12% in 2014/15;
 - 12% in 2015/16.
- 3.6 Details of the number of households and the value of support they have received in Hartlepool, as compared to a 20% LCTS scheme are provided in section 7. All other Tees Valley councils have operated LCTS schemes involving cuts of 20% since April 2013.
- 3.7 Members have been advised that significantly higher cuts in LCTS support are likely to be required in future years as Councils will find it

increasingly difficult to balance supporting LCTS schemes and General Fund services if grant cuts continue. In this context, the 2015 Comprehensive Spending Review will have a key impact on the affordability and sustainability of LCTS schemes.

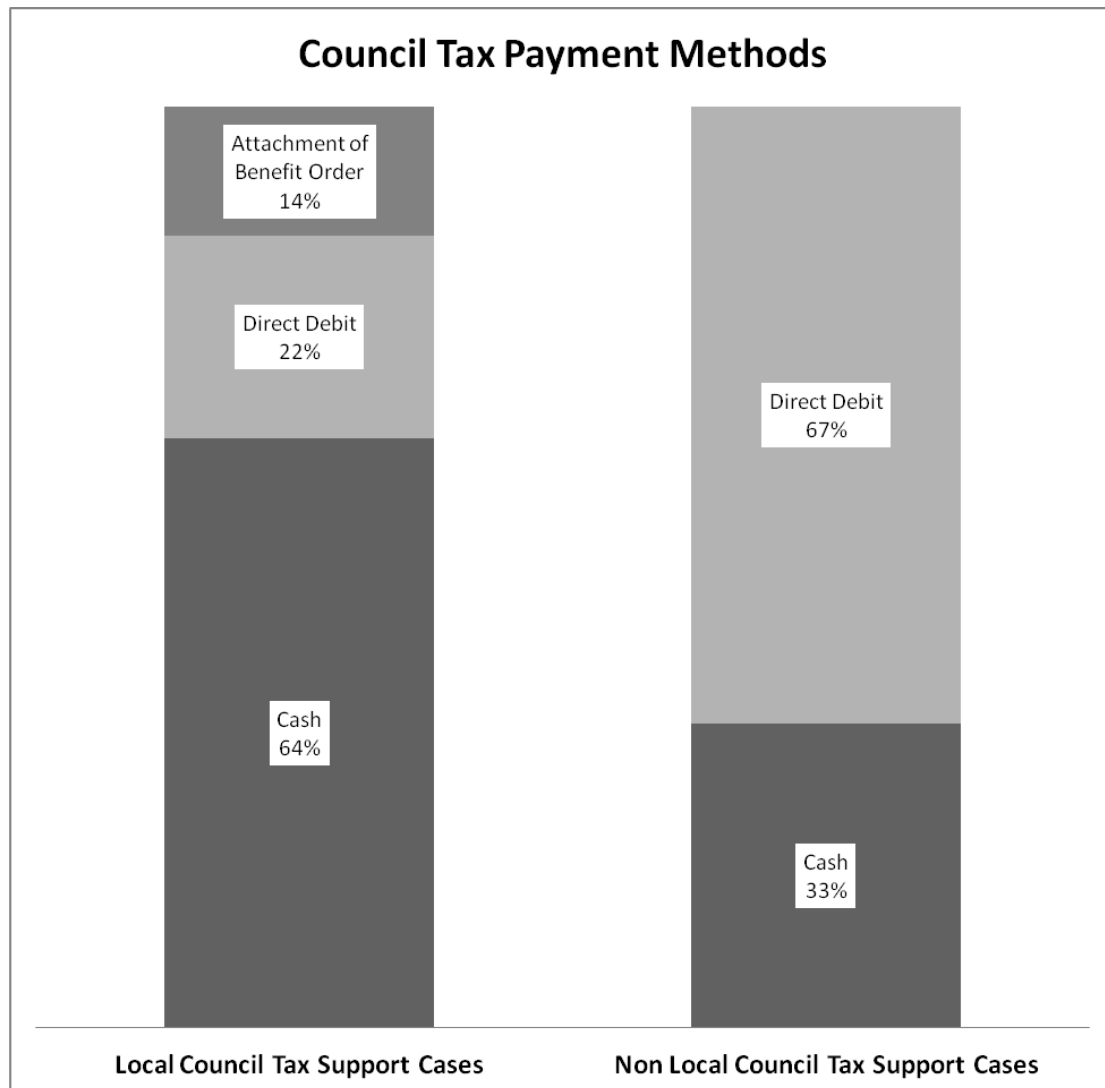
- 3.8 In addition, the Government has transferred the responsibility and funding for the Independent Living Fund (ILF) to local authorities from 1st July 2015. There is uncertainty around ILF funding in 2016/17 and future years representing an additional potential future funding challenge for the Council.
- 3.9 The proposals in this report have not been updated to reflect the impact of the significant permanent reduction in Business Rates income received from the Power Station following the rateable value reduction of 48%. As reported to this Committee on 1st June the Council's share of the this annual income reduction is £3.9m. For planning purposes it is assumed that this issue will be addressed as part of the Medium Term Financial Strategy for the General Fund Budget. However, this issue is highlighted to underline the financial challenges facing the Council when developing detailed proposals for the 2016/17 LCTS scheme and the General Fund Budget.

4. 2015/16 and future years LCTS financial modelling

- 4.1 The actual cost of the Council's LCTS scheme is determined by a range of external factors including, the total number of households accessing support, the balance of claimants between pensionable age and working age and the particular financial circumstances of individual claimants as Council Tax support continues to be means tested support. The Council now has three years experience of operating a LCTS scheme covering:
- 2013/14 and 2014/15 – both estimated costs and outturn costs;
 - 2015/16 – estimated costs based on completion of the annual billing run.
- 4.2 On the basis of this experience the LCTS financial model has been updated to reflect changes in the key cost drivers – i.e. claimant numbers and collection levels, as detailed in the following paragraphs.
- 4.3 **Claimant numbers** - Since June 2013, there has been a gradual reduction in the numbers of households receiving LCTS and the cost of the associated awards covering both Pensioner Households (a protected group under LCTS) and Working Age Households.



- 4.4 This trend was reflected in the 2015/16 LCTS scheme modelling. An updated assessment of caseload trends has been completed and further reductions in claimant numbers are anticipated for 2016/17 and 2017/18. This is reflected in the updated financial forecasts detailed later in the report. However, the LCTS scheme faces future financial risks associated with the 2015 Comprehensive Spending Review and the government's proposed £12bn welfare cuts, further details are provided in section 7.
- 4.5 **Collection Levels** – in Hartlepool, the operation of the LCTS scheme means that in 2016/17 about 5,600 working age households will receive a Council Tax Bill who would have been exempt under Council Tax Benefit; and a further 1,900 working age households will receive a higher Council Tax Bill. Robust and proportionate arrangements for collecting Council Tax from LCTS households have been adopted to reflect the financial circumstances of households, whilst balancing the needs of the Council to collect this income to pay for services.
- 4.6 Collecting Council Tax from LCTS households is more difficult and resource intensive as these households are significantly less likely to pay by Direct Debt and make payments in different ways, as highlighted in the following graphs.



- 4.7 The Council has continued to achieve good overall in-year collection levels for Council Tax. For LCTS households the in-year collection levels for 2013/14 and 2014/15 have exceeded the initial forecasts included in the LCTS Financial model. This positive position has been reflected in the revised forecasts for 2015/16 onwards.
- 4.8 Collection levels for LCTS households will continue to be monitored closely as it will become increasingly difficult to recover Council Tax in the year it is due. This will have an impact on in-year collection rates. Members have recognised the workload pressures associated with Council Tax collection and have committed new burdens funding which has allowed the appointment of a Revenues Officer on a fixed term contract and two modern apprentices. It is hoped that there is no adverse impact on the long-term collection rate, which is the ultimate measure of collection performance, as the Council operates robust but fair recovery arrangements.

5. 2016/17 and future years LCTS Scheme Financial Modelling

- 5.1 Modelling the LCTS scheme costs beyond the forthcoming financial year is complex and challenging owing to the many variables affecting scheme costs, including the total number of claimants, both pensioner households and working age households, individual claimants' financial circumstances and eligibility for support. In addition, funding for LCTS schemes will remain uncertain until the 2016/17 Local Government Finance Settlement is announced in late November/December 2015 and the results of the 2015 Comprehensive Spending Review are available.
- 5.2 Against this uncertain background, the LCTS scheme forecasts for 2016/17 and future years have been updated to reflect experience of operating the LCTS scheme to date and the latest caseload forecasts. These forecasts are based on annual Council Tax increase of 1.9% for 2016/17 to 2018/19.
- 5.3 If Members determine to implement a lower Council Tax increase for 2016/17 this will reduce the cost of the LCTS scheme. It is recommended that if this situation arises the LCTS scheme cost saving is used to reduce the LCTS budget pressure included in the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS), as this will help partly mitigate the impact of a lower Council Tax increase than 1.9% in 2016/17. This issue will be considered in more detail later in the year when an updated MTFS is reported to Members to reflect the impact of the Chancellor's July Budget and the 2016/17 Local Government Finance Settlement, including any proposals the Government brings forward to extend the Council Tax freeze regime..
- 5.4 As previously reported to Members, a LCTS Risk Reserve has previously been established to support the LCTS scheme over a number of years and to provide one-off funding to manage the risk of an unexpected in-year increase LCTS costs arising from increased caseloads. At 31st March 2015, the value of the LCTS Risk Reserve was £2.92m (inclusive of £0.48m contributed from the 2014/15 outturn). It has previously been recommended that £0.3m of this reserve should be retained to manage in-year financial risks. This remains the recommended level and equates to about 3% of the Council's share of the annual scheme cost. After reflecting the recommended minimum risk reserve and a forecast use of reserves of £0.968m in 2015/16 there is £1.652m available to support the LCTS in 2016/17 and future years. This amount has been reflected in the updated financial forecasts and the proposed phasing is designed to minimise cuts in Council Tax support for working age households for as long as possible.
- 5.5 In summary, the updated financial forecasts for the LCTS scheme for the period 2016/17 to 2018/19 are based on the following planning assumptions:

Planning assumptions underpinning LCTS forecasts for 2016/17 to 2018/19

- i) The actual grant cuts for 2016/17 to 2018/19 being in line with the existing planning assumptions;
 - ii) The existing Working Age caseload continuing to incrementally reduce;
 - iii) Members supporting the re-phased use of the LCTS Reserves (including the contribution from the 2014/15 LCTS outturn) to partly mitigate the impact of the Government Grant cut on Working Age households;
 - iv) The retention of an un-committed LCTS Risk Reserve of £0.3m to manage LCTS financial risks. The availability of this uncommitted funding would not provide a permanent solution to a higher grant cut, or the ongoing impact of a sustained in-year increase in claimant numbers, but it would provide a slightly longer lead time for the Council to respond;
 - v) For 2016/17, an additional General Fund budget pressure has been included in the MTFS forecast increasing the total pressure to £1.57m;
 - vi) In the event that Members approve a lower Council Tax increase than 1.9% it is recommended that the reduction in the LCTS scheme cost should be used to reduce the LCTS budget pressure included in the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS), as this will help partly mitigate the impact of a lower Council Tax increase.
- 5.6 Regular reviews of these factors will continue to be undertaken to assess the implications of any changes in these planning assumptions which are inevitable and unavoidable, as the majority of factors are outside the Council's direct control.
- 5.7 Based on the updated planning assumptions the following table summarises the latest forecast LCTS outturn for 2015/16 and future forecasts for the period 2016/17 to 2018/19 and highlights the following key issues:
- The increasing impact of the Government grant cut;
 - The re-phased use of the one-off LCTS reserves, which has enabled the Council to partly protect low income households from the impacts of cuts in government grant;
 - The potential un-sustainability of the LCTS scheme necessitating high levels of future LCTS cuts beyond 2017/18 if Government grant cuts continue as forecast in the MTFS. The table shows the impact of

grant cuts continuing for 2016/17 to 2018/19. If the level of future government grant cuts is higher than modelled, and / or the government's national welfare reforms have a significant adverse financial impact on the LCTS scheme, the level of LCTS scheme cut will need to increase to ensure a balanced and viable scheme can be approved;

- Previous policy guidance from Members to phase reductions in LCTS support over as a long a period as possible using the available one-off LCTS Risk Reserve.

LCTS Scheme Cost modelling 2015/16 to 2018/19

	15/16	16/17	17/18	18/19
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
LCTS scheme Govt Grant				
Shortfall	2,150	3,040	3,860	4,600
Less cut in LCTS to households	(870)	(886)	(1,356)	(2,896)
% LCTS cut	12%	12%	18%	39%
Funding Required	1,280	2,154	2,504	1,704
<u>Funding available</u>				
MTFS Pressure	312	1,570	1,570	1,570
LCTS Reserve	968	584	934	134
Funding available	1,280	2,154	2,504	1,704

- 5.8 Continuing with a 12% LCTS cut for 2016/17 would defer an increase in the Council Tax liability of low income working age households at a time when households will be adjusting to the Government's £12bn welfare savings programme. This level of LCTS support will also increase the likelihood of the Council maintaining high levels of Council Tax collection in 2016/17. Previous scheme forecasts had indicated that LCTS cuts would need to move to 20% for 2016/17 and 2017/18 rising to 42% for 2018/19.
- 5.9 Members may wish to consider a slight reduction in LCTS support in 2016/17 to begin phasing in the increases which will be unavoidable in future years owing to the impact of continuing Government grant cuts. This could be achieved by either:
- Considering alternative phasing for the use of the one-off LCTS Risk Reserve, whilst recognising that this money can only be used once;

- Considering reducing the support provided from the General Fund by reducing the pressure included in the MTFS, which for 2016/17 increases to £1.57m to partly mitigate the LCTS share of the overall forecast grant cut. Reducing this funding would reduce the level of LCTS support which could be provided. However, there would be a reduction in the General Fund budget deficit.

5.10 Members have previously requested information regarding LCTS claimants covering those who are unemployed and those that are in work. Relevant data is set out in the following tables:-

Unemployed Working Age Households - who previously received 100% Council Tax Benefit

Estimated amount of Council Tax to pay by Band 2016/17 with 12% LCTS scheme cut

Band	Number of Households	Amount to pay 2016/17 £
A	5118	138
B	367	161
C	90	184
D	28	207
E	10	253
F	1	299
G	3	345
H	0	N/A
Total	5617	

NB The amount to pay will be reduced for those households with only one occupier.

Employed Working Age Households impacted by the 12% LCTS scheme cut

Band	Number of Households Impacted
A	1541
B	251
C	112
D	28
E	8
F	6
G	1
H	0
Total	1947

6. 2016/17 LCTS Scheme Principles

- 6.1 In common with LCTS schemes established by many other Councils the Hartlepool LCTS scheme has been centred on a number of core principles for the period 2013/14 to 2015/16. For 2016/17, it is proposed that the existing scheme principles should continue to be applied, as they are clear, fair and have been generally supported in previous consultation, as follows:

A - Every working age household should pay something towards Council Tax

Working age claimants should have their LCTS entitlements recalculated and reduced to ensure an affordable and sustainable scheme.

B - Everyone in the Household should contribute appropriately

Hartlepool would implement the Government's annual increases in the value of non dependant adult deductions from Council Tax Support entitlements.

C - The LCTS scheme should encourage work

Claimants should be allowed to keep more of their earnings before they are taken into account in the LCTS award calculation. The Hartlepool LCTS scheme increased earnings disregards by £5 per week; to £10, £15 and £30 for single person, couple and single parent households respectively.

D - Streamline / Simplify the LCTS Scheme

The Hartlepool LCTS scheme involved the removal of 2nd Adult Rebate, and the restriction of backdating of LCTS to a maximum of 4 weeks.

E - Retain War Widows / War Pensions Local disregards framework

Under the national CTB regulations Local Authorities are required to disregard the first £10 per week of War Pension Scheme and Armed Forces Compensation Scheme payments. In addition Local Authorities have the discretion to top up the disregard to the full amount. Hartlepool had historically applied the discretionary top up and this was carried over to the Council's LCTS scheme.

- 6.2 In relation to Parish Councils the national regulations require Billing Authorities (ie. Hartlepool Borough Council) to pass on an element of the Council Tax Support Grant received to individual Parish Councils. For some Local Authorities with a large number of Parish Councils levying relatively high Parish Council Tax precepts this may be a significant

issue. This is not the case for Hartlepool as the total share of the grant for all Parish Councils is estimated at around £6,000 for 2016/17.

7. FINANCIAL RISKS

- 7.1. The proposals detailed in this report are based on the current forecast grant cuts for 2016/17 to 2018/19 and Members previous decision to allocate the Government grant cuts proportionately between the LCTS scheme and the General Fund budget. In the event that the actual Government grant cuts for 2016/17 and future years are higher than forecast, Members will need to review the impact on both the LCTS scheme and General Fund budget. In relation to the LCTS scheme, a higher actual grant cut will require Members to consider whether:
- The additional grant cut is passed on and a higher LCTS cut is implemented for 2016/17 than proposed in this report; or
 - The proposed LCTS cut for 2016/17 detailed in this report is maintained by re-phasing the use of the LCTS Reserve. Whilst this option would enable Members to avoid increasing the level of LCTS cut in 2016/17, this would use the available LCTS reserves earlier than forecast and would reduce the resources available to support LCTS after 2016/17.
- 7.2. There is also a financial risk from the measures outlined by the Chancellor in the July 2015 Budget to achieve a further £12bn of Welfare Reform reductions by 2019/20. These proposals will be implemented over 3 years, rather than 2 years as initially proposed. The changes include reductions in Tax Credits which will reduce household income. The Government has also stated that a new National Living Wage will be introduced for workers aged 25 and above. The Government will ask the Low Pay Commission to set out how the National Living Wage will reach 60% of median earnings by 2020. Based on the Office for Budget Responsibility earnings forecast the Government's National Living Wage target of £9 will be reached by 2020.
- 7.3. The changes to the Welfare Benefits and the National Living Wage will have an impact on the cost of the LCTS, the former will increase costs, the latter may reduce costs. A detailed assessment of these issues will need to be completed when more information is available. An initial assessment indicates that there will be a net increase in the costs of the 2016/17 LCTS scheme, although at this stage it is not possible to quantify the impact.
- 7.4. A further update report will be submitted to a future meeting for consideration when more information is available and the financial impact on the current forecasts has been assessed. This further report

will enable Members to finalise proposals for the 2016/17 LCTS before they are referred to full Council in December 2015. This will enable Members to determine whether the additional costs of the LCTS scheme, arising from the Government's Welfare changes, are funded:

- by increasing the use of the one-off LCTS Reserve in 2016/17, which will mean there is less money to support future years schemes, or
- Implementing a higher LCTS cut than the 12% proposed in this report, which will require consultation.

8 CONCLUSION

- 8.1 As reported previously the replacement of the national Council Tax Benefit scheme with Local Council Tax Support schemes determined by individual Councils and a 10% national funding cut transferred a significant new financial risk to Councils. The requirement to protect low income pensioners means the whole of the funding cut falls on low income working income households, which effectively results in an in-built 20% LCTS scheme cut for this group. The national change continues to have a greater impact on Councils serving more deprived communities, including Hartlepool.
- 8.2 The Council had recognised the risk from the Council Tax Benefit scheme abolition. Accordingly, the Council had set aside one-off resources to manage the impact of this unprecedented transfer of responsibility for an element of Welfare Support from Central Government to Local Government. This approach enabled the Council to limit the cut in Local Council Tax Support to 8.5% in 2013/14 and 12% in 2014/15 and 2015/16.
- 8.3 If the Council had not taken this pro-active multi-year strategy, a 20% LCTS would have had to be implemented in 2013/14. This is the level of cut implemented by the other Tees Valley Councils in 2013/14, 2014/15 and 2015/16.
- 8.4 Following the Government's decision to mainstream the Local Council Tax Support grant within the main revenue grant allocation from 2014/15 individual Councils now face a difficult choice over the use of the overall grant. This is particularly challenging for Hartlepool as further significant grant cuts are forecast over the next three years. On the basis of the forecast reductions in funding of 10% in the MTFS the Council needs to make General Fund budget cuts of around £14m over the years 2016/17, 2017/18 and 2018/19.
- 8.5. Against this background, Members need to determine a LCTS scheme for 2016/17 that is financially viable, supports the delivery of future year's schemes and that will help smooth the reduction in support to working age households.

- 8.6 Updated financial modelling indicates that the 2016/17 LCTS scheme reduction should be able to be maintained at 12%, the same level as 2014/15 and 2015/16. This is predicated on the actual grant cut for 2016/17 not exceeding the current forecast cut.
- 8.7. However, if the level of grant cuts for 2016/17 and future years are higher than forecast, Members will need to review the impact on both the LCTS scheme and the General Fund Budget. Furthermore, there will be LCTS entitlement cost pressures linked to the timing and extent of cuts to welfare benefits as part of the Government's commitment to deliver £12bn of welfare savings. In view of these uncertainties, a further LCTS scheme report will be submitted to a future meeting when details of the actual grant cut and welfare savings programme are known.
- 8.8 On the basis, of sustaining a 12% LCTS cut for 2016/17, the Council's locally approved LCTS scheme will have provided the following financial support to low income working age households compared to annual LCTS cuts of 20% over the 4 years up to March 2017. All other Tees Valley councils have operated LCTS schemes involving cuts of 20% since April 2013. This position is summarised overleaf:

Impact of Hartlepool's actual 2013/14 to 2015/16 LCTS scheme and proposed 2016/17 LCTS cut compared to annual cuts of 20%.

	Band A	Band B
Council Tax Liability with a 20% LCTS cut in 2013/14, to 2016/17.	£906	£1057
Council Tax Liability with HBC phased LCTS cuts of 8.5 % in 13/14 and 12% in 14/15, 15/16 and 16/17.	£504	£589
Cumulative Support to Households 2013/14 to 2016/17	£402	£468
Number of Households Supported (i.e. who previously received 100% Council Tax Benefit)	5,118	367
Percentage of LCTS Households (i.e. who previously received 100% Council Tax Benefit)	91%	6%

- 8.9 The reductions in the number of LCTS claimants and the re-phasing of earmarked one-off resources should allow the Council to maintain the level of cut in LCTS support in 2016/17 at 12% and minimise the level of cut in 2017/18 to 18% The revised forecast will depend on existing caseload trends continuing.

8.10 The forecast detailed in this report were prepared before the Chancellor's July 2015 Budget. Further financial modelling will need to be completed to assess the impact of these changes and a further report will be presented to a future meeting. An initial assessment of the changes announced by the Chancellor indicates that these will increase the cost of operating the LCTS scheme. Therefore, once further financial modelling has been completed Members will need to consider whether these costs are funded by increasing the use of the LCTS Reserve in 2016/17, which will mean there is less money to support future years schemes, or whether the Council needs to consult on a higher LCTS cut than the 12% proposed in this report.

8.11 Beyond 2017/18 a significantly higher level of cut in LCTS will be required reflecting future forecast additional Government Grant cuts and this will affect all Councils, particularly areas serving more deprived communities. This risk was highlighted when responsibility for providing Council Tax support was transferred to Councils in April 2013 and has been exacerbated by the Government's decision to transfer funding for Council Tax support into the main Revenue Support Grant.

9. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

9.1. The existing Equality Impact Assessment will be updated and included in the final LCTS report to be submitted to this Committee and Council later in the year.

10. RECOMMENDATIONS

10.1 It is recommended that Members note:

- i. The LCTS scheme financial modelling completed before the Chancellor's July 2015 Budget indicated that maintaining a LCTS cut at 12% for 2016/17 should be financially viable;
- ii. The risk that the actual 2016/17 Government Grant cut may be higher than forecast which may impact on the funding which can be allocated to support the 2016/17 LCTS scheme;
- iii. That a further report will be submitted to this Committee to enable Members to consider this issue before they approve the final 2016/17 LCTS scheme proposals to be referred to full Council in December 2015, including the impact of updated financial modelling to reflect the Welfare Reforms announced by the Chancellor in the July 2015 Budget, which may require increased use of the one-off LCTS Reserve in 2016/17 if Members wish to maintain a 12% scheme.

11. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 11.1 To update the Finance and Policy Committee on latest available data on the LCTS scheme costs and the future financial risks associated with the funding settlement and the Government's national welfare reforms.

12. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 12.1 Medium Term Financial Strategy 2016/17 to 2018/19 report - Finance and Policy Committee 29th June 2015.

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FINANCE AND POLICY COMMITTEE

27th July 2015



Report of: Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods

Subject: HARTLEPOOL HOUSING STRATEGY 2015-2020

1. TYPE OF DECISION/APPLICABLE CATEGORY

1.1 Budget and Policy Framework. Forward Plan Reference No. RN 07/15.

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

2.1 Members of the Finance and Policy Committee are asked to approve the Housing Strategy for 2015-2020 and the adoption of the Action Plan. The Strategy details the key housing priorities for the Council and its partners for the period to 2020. The Action Plan is the delivery plan for the priorities which have been identified.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 In 2003, the Government placed a legal duty on all local authorities to develop housing strategies. The current Strategy expired at the end of March 2015 and it is therefore necessary to prepare a new Strategy incorporating an Action Plan for the next five years.

3.2 The Housing Strategy for 2015–2020 reflects on what has been achieved through the 2011–2015 Housing Strategy and details the actions required for the next five years.

3.3 The new Strategy incorporates the Council's Homelessness Strategy and Empty Homes Strategy which both expired in March 2015. This will enable the Council and its partners to monitor and manage its strategic functions through the delivery of a single Housing Strategy for Hartlepool.

3.4 This new strategy replaces the Hartlepool Housing Strategy 2011-15, which identified a range of priorities to meet housing needs within Hartlepool. Many of these priorities still remain relevant and are reflected in the 5 Priorities that have been identified and developed as a result of extensive consultation.

- 3.5 The strategy sets out high level priority outcomes that have been developed using a robust evidence base and reflects the issues identified through consultation.
- 3.6 To enable delivery of the strategy's objectives, the Council will work with a range of agencies and organisations. Strong relationships will be maintained with the regulatory authority the, Homes and Communities Agency, to make best use of resources and best practice. Local residents' views will also be sought throughout the life of the strategy to measure whether the housing offer within Hartlepool is improved and meets local needs.
- 3.7 The Draft Housing Strategy and Action Plan have been developed during a period of challenging economic conditions and within a changed political environment. Therefore, while the Strategy sets out a longer term vision it also recognises that short and medium term actions are needed to address issues facing the housing market now.

- 3.8 The vision of the Housing Strategy 2015-20 is:

Developing and maintaining successful communities where people choose to live, by meeting the housing needs of our residents now and in the future.

To achieve this vision the Housing Strategy has been developed under five main priority outcomes which will contribute towards achieving the vision:

1. Delivering suitable new homes, including affordable homes and older person accommodation.
2. Making the best use of existing homes; improving quality, conditions and the environment.
3. Bringing long-term empty homes back into use.
4. Improving health and wellbeing; promoting sustainability by supporting people with specific housing needs.
5. Preventing homelessness and providing options.

4. HOUSING STRATEGY 2015 – 2020 DEVELOPMENT TIMETABLE

- 4.1 The new Strategy has been produced following engagement with the Council's partners which includes Registered Providers, residents, voluntary organisations and the private sector.
- 4.2 The consultation for the Housing Strategy was completed in various stages.
- **Stage 1** - During September 2014, 3 consultation workshops were held at the Civic Centre and these were attended by Members, the Housing Partnership, Council Officers, Registered Providers,

Private Landlords, Developers and the voluntary sector. The aim of the workshops was to identify themes and issues affecting housing across all tenures.

The issues raised across the 3 topic areas were used as a basis for further consultation and as background for development of the 1st draft of the new Housing Strategy.

- **Stage 2** – From the end of October 2014 until the beginning of January 2015 a questionnaire was posted on the Council's website as a mechanism for consulting with residents about the priorities that emerged during the 3 workshops.
- **Stage 3** - The results from the 3 workshops and the on-line community consultation were used to develop the 1st draft of the Housing Strategy 2015 – 2020.

The draft Strategy was formally consulted on from the end of April until the beginning of June 2015 with Members, Housing Partnership, workshop attendees, Council Officers, residents and external partners.

- **Stage 4** – following the consultation stages above the 2nd draft of the Housing Strategy and associated Action Plan were developed during June 2015. These documents reflect the formal feedback received and the views, suggestions and issues that were raised.

- 4.3 A number of action planning meetings were held with the key respondents to the consultation and their knowledge was used to develop the draft Action Plan. The Action Plan is a 'live' working document and any additional actions or amendments to existing actions will be made during the lifetime of the Housing Strategy subject to approval from the Housing Partnership.
- 4.4 The 2nd draft of the Housing Strategy 2015 – 20 is attached at **Appendix 1** and the draft Action Plan is attached at **Appendix 2**. Performance Indicators have been identified for each of the Priority Outcomes; clear outcomes have been stated above each set of actions and achievable timescales for delivery have been agreed.
- 4.5 Further information about the consultation is detailed in **Appendix 3**.

5. ROLE OF THE HOUSING PARTNERSHIP

- 5.1 Hartlepool's Housing Partnership brings together a range of partners with the common aim of improving housing provision within Hartlepool. The partnership includes representatives from the Council, Registered Providers (RPs), and the Voluntary and Community Sector.

- 5.2 The focus of the Housing Partnership will be on ensuring the delivery of the Housing Strategy. The Partnership will co-ordinate and facilitate multi-agency and private sector involvement and provide a link between housing and wider policies for the social, economic and environmental well-being of the area, including the regeneration of deprived neighbourhoods. The Partnership will be responsible for agreeing and monitoring the Housing Strategy action plan, addressing areas of underperformance and promoting achievements.

6. THE 5 PRIORITY OUTCOMES

- 6.1 The Draft Housing Strategy 2015 - 20 recognises how existing housing in the borough and the construction of new housing can have a profound effect on health, the economy, education and the environment. These themes underpin the 5 priority outcomes.

6.2 **Priority 1 - Delivering suitable new homes, including affordable homes and older person accommodation**

This priority details how the Council will work with partners to deliver suitable and affordable new homes for all demographic groups. The challenges faced in achieving this priority revolve around delivering high quality new housing which meets identified need, in places where people choose to live whilst continuing to deliver Housing Regeneration. The outcomes identified for this priority are to:

- Deliver new homes that will meet current and future housing needs;
- Ensure new affordable homes are high quality with good standards of design and construction;
- Support employment through development.

6.3 **Priority 2 – Making the best use of existing homes; improving quality, conditions and the environment**

This priority details how the Council aims to improve existing homes across tenures. The challenges faced in achieving this priority include ensuring housing quality and choice across the rented sector. Particular challenges include raising standards within the private rented sector, tackling fuel poverty and helping owner occupiers to maintain their homes. The outcomes identified for this priority are:

- Improved management standards, housing quality and choice in the rented sector;
- Improved energy efficiency and tackle fuel poverty across tenures;
- Improved neighbourhoods and the environment ;
- Owner occupiers are better able to maintain and improve their homes.

6.4 **Priority 3 – Bringing long-term empty homes back into use**

This priority details how the Council will work with partners to bring long-term empty homes back into use. The challenges faced in achieving this priority include balancing incentive and enforcement action, identifying funding to undertake empty homes work and supporting investment in housing regeneration. The outcomes identified for this priority are:

- Reduced number of long-term empty homes;
- Increased level of funding drawn in to support empty homes initiatives.

6.5 Priority 4 – Improving health and wellbeing; promoting sustainability by supporting people with specific housing needs

This priority details how the Council will work with partners to meet the specific housing needs of vulnerable people to support independent living. The challenges faced in achieving this priority include ensuring that there is a variety of housing options to meet different needs. There are particular pressures for finding suitable housing solutions for people with learning and other disabilities, as well as housing for a growing older population, addressing Black and Minority Ethnic housing needs and funding housing adaptations to enable independent living. The outcomes identified for this priority are:

- People with specific housing needs will have improved housing options;
- There will be increased supported housing options for vulnerable people, including the provision for older people and people with dementia;
- The needs and aspirations of the minority ethnic groups will be clearly understood in order to ensure services are responsive to their needs.

6.6 Priority 5 – Preventing homelessness and providing options

This priority details how the Council will work with partners to deliver improved early intervention and homelessness prevention services to residents in Hartlepool who find themselves homeless, threatened with homelessness or in a housing crisis. The challenges faced in achieving this priority include ensuring that there are a variety of housing options to meet different needs. There are also challenges in addressing the wider areas of health, employment and developing skill capacity for people to be independent. Mitigating the impact of welfare reforms on vulnerable households' ability to obtain and sustain affordable housing are also important issues to be addressed. The outcomes identified for this priority are:

- A joined up multi agency approach to homeless prevention in place;
- High quality advice, assistance and early intervention in place to prevent homelessness;

- There is minimal impact of welfare reform on residents;
- Improved access to social housing.

7. RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 The Council has housing responsibilities that provide opportunities to improve the town and its resident's lives and there are risks associated if the Council does not manage housing strategically. Funding and regulatory frameworks reinforce the need to have a robust Housing Strategy. Without a Strategy that has been agreed with the Council's partners, funding and support from the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) will not be achievable. Without a clear vision it will be more difficult to attract developers and funding; tackle homelessness; tackle empty properties and improve housing quality. Without a Housing Strategy and a clear approach to strategic housing the Council will be restricted from identifying opportunities and responding quickly to initiatives.

8. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY CONSIDERATIONS

- 8.1 The Strategy has had an Equality Impact Assessment undertaken to identify any unmet needs / requirements. This is attached at Appendix 4.

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

- 9.1 Development of the new Housing Strategy has been undertaken with the reduction of crime and anti social behaviour in mind. The new Housing Strategy for 2015-2020 vision is "developing and maintaining successful communities where people choose to live, by meeting the housing needs of our residents now and in the future".

10. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 10.1 Finance and Policy Committee are recommended to refer to Council for approval :-
- a) Approve the adoption and publication of the draft Housing Strategy 2015 – 2020 contained at Appendix 1
 - b) Approve the associated Action Plan contained at Appendix 2
 - c) Note the Consultation Report attached at Appendix 3
 - d) Note the Equality Impact Assessment contained at Appendix 4

11. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 11.1 The recommendations ensure that there is a Housing Strategy and supporting Action Plan in place to deliver the 5 identified priority outcomes

and the vision of “developing and maintaining successful communities where people choose to live, by meeting the housing needs of our residents now and in the future”.

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Hartlepool Housing Strategy

2015 – 2020



“Developing and maintaining successful communities where people choose to live, by meeting the housing needs of our residents now and in the future.”

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Foreword

I am delighted to introduce Hartlepool's new Housing Strategy for 2015-2020, which sets out our vision and priorities for housing for the next five years.

We have developed excellent partnership working relationships with developers, registered providers, private landlords and residents to improve our housing offer and services. There are considerable challenges ahead and the new Housing Strategy will be delivered during a time of significant reduction in funding for local government. However, we look forward to continuing to respond positively to these challenges through our strong partnership approach.

Our housing offer will have an important role in the economic regeneration of Hartlepool and the Hartlepool Vision. We need communities where people choose to live that meets the aspirations of our residents and which attracts new people to live in Hartlepool.

Hartlepool's Housing Strategy is supported by a robust Action Plan which sets out how we will work with our partners to deliver our priorities.

I would like to thank all partners, housing providers and residents who have contributed to the consultation for this Strategy.

Cllr Kevin Cranney
Chair of Regeneration Services Committee

June 2015

Chapter 1 - Introduction

Why do we need a new Housing Strategy?

In 2003, the Government placed a legal duty on all local authorities to develop housing strategies. The current Housing Strategy expired at the end of March 2015 and it is therefore necessary to prepare a new Strategy incorporating an Action Plan for the next five years. The previous Strategy was developed at a time of significant change, politically, socially and economically. This Strategy builds on the progress made over the past 4 years, setting out key priorities and how we aim to meet these.

The new Strategy incorporates the Council's Homelessness and Empty Homes Strategies which both expired in March 2015. This will enable the Council and its partners to monitor and manage its strategic functions through the delivery of a single Housing Strategy for Hartlepool, working together to meet the housing needs and aspirations of Hartlepool Borough Council, its partners and its residents.

Since our last Housing Strategy was published, the local housing market has changed fundamentally. Owner occupation is in decline, the private rented sector is expanding and social housing is proving harder to let.

The priorities identified for the new Housing Strategy will be clearly linked to other strategies and plans and will be achieved through challenging but deliverable actions.

This Strategy sets out high level priority outcomes and is an over-arching document developed using a robust evidence base and reflecting issues identified through consultation.

To enable delivery of the Strategy's objectives, the Council will continue to work with a range of agencies and organisations.

Consultation

In order to ensure that the development of this Strategy reflected the views, needs and priorities of our community and stakeholders, detailed consultation was undertaken at various stages in its development.

Methods of consultation included:

- Workshops
- On-line and paper questionnaire
- Attendance at Neighbourhood Forums
- Housing Partnership Face the Public Event 2014
- Engagement with the Housing Partnership and Elected Members

Further information about the consultation can be obtained from the Council's Housing Services Division.

Equality and Diversity

This Strategy is aimed at improving housing services for all residents with housing or housing-related support needs. As such, no group in Hartlepool should be adversely affected or disadvantaged as a result of the Strategy.

The Council is committed to equality and diversity issues and will comply with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010.

An Equality Impact Assessment has been undertaken on this Strategy.

Vision and Priority Outcomes

Our vision for the 2015-2020 Strategy is:

Developing and maintaining successful communities where people choose to live, by meeting the housing needs of our residents now and in the future.

To achieve this vision the Housing Strategy has been developed under five main priority outcomes:

- 1. Delivering suitable new homes, including affordable homes and older person accommodation;**
- 2. Making the best use of existing homes; improving quality, conditions and the environment;**
- 3. Bringing long-term empty homes back into use;**
- 4. Improving health and wellbeing; promoting sustainability by supporting people with specific housing needs; and**
- 5. Preventing homelessness and providing options.**

Each of the above will contribute towards delivering the vision for housing in Hartlepool. Housing makes an important contribution towards the wider priorities of the Council, including health, the economy, education and the environment.

Why does housing matter?

Poor housing or the lack of a home has been shown to have a detrimental effect on employment, crime, education and health.

Good quality, appropriate housing contributes to successful and sustainable communities. The Council strives to support and develop places where people want to live and work, now and in the future.

Housing and Health

Links between good quality housing and improved physical and mental health have been documented. The Marmot review¹ into health inequalities in England demonstrated that the 'broader determinants of health' (local environment, housing, transport, employment and social interactions) can be significantly influenced by how local authorities deliver their core roles and functions. Poor health can affect an individual's ability to access and maintain accommodation. Poor housing conditions and a lack of housing-related support is associated with the following:

- Children and young adults living in poor housing conditions are up to 25% more likely to suffer from severe ill-health or disability than those in good quality housing;
- Homeless children are up to four times more likely than other children to have mental health problems² ;
- Increased risk of cardiovascular disease and respiratory disease; and
- Increased risk of mental health problems such as anxiety and depression - mental health is frequently cited as a reason for tenancy breakdown and people with mental health problems are twice as likely to be unhappy with their housing.

Safe, healthy and accessible housing is essential in enabling older and disabled people to live independently.

The successful delivery of the Housing Strategy and close working with health colleagues, should contribute to reduced levels of health inequality within Hartlepool. Life expectancy in Hartlepool is lower than the national average and there are disparities between wards. For example, data shows people born in Stranton live, on average, 14 years less than those born in Hart.

Unsuitable accommodation also costs the NHS at least £2.5 billion a year nationally in treating people with illness directly linked to living in cold, damp and dangerous homes. Falls and fractures amongst the over 65's is estimated to cost £2 billion according to the Royal College of Physicians

Housing and Education

Links can be made between housing conditions and levels of academic achievement:

- Children who live in poor quality housing and overcrowded homes miss school more frequently due to illnesses and infections;
- Homeless children are more likely to have behavioural problems, which affects academic achievement and relationships with peers and teachers;

¹ Fair Society, Health Lives, 2010

² Shelter, Chances of a lifetime: the impact of bad housing on children's lives, 2006

- Poor housing and homelessness can result in children finding it difficult to do their homework and struggling to concentrate and listen; and
- Many children in homeless families have lower levels of academic achievement that cannot be explained by differences in their levels of ability.

Housing and the Economy

The housing available in a community can contribute to the economic success of that community through:

- The ability of a community to attract and retain people, especially wealth creators, and provide support for those who need it relies on good housing and attractive, inclusive neighbourhoods; and
- Achieving the right housing offer, including executive, family and affordable housing, is vital in attracting and retaining skilled people, which will in turn encourage inward investment

The long-term health problems and low educational attainment that are associated with poor quality housing increase the likelihood of a person being unemployed or working in a low-paid job².

Housing and the Environment

Existing housing stock accounts for a significant proportion of all carbon emissions. To avoid further climate change in the future we need to change the way we live and this includes the homes in which we live now and how we develop new houses in the future. The role of housing in relation to climate change includes:

- Developing new houses which are as energy efficient and close to existing/newly provided services and public transport routes as is possible;
- Improving the energy efficiency of existing dwellings; this has a knock-on benefit of helping to tackle fuel poverty; and
- Ensuring new and refurbished houses do not contribute to increased surface water run-off during the more intense storm weather expected to occur as a result of climate change.

Climate change is likely to result in more changeable and intense weather patterns so homes will need to provide energy efficient solutions to these conditions.

The Council will work closely with Registered Provider (RP) and developer partners to contribute towards mitigating against further climate change and adapting to the likely impacts of climate change in Hartlepool.

Chapter 2 – National and Sub Regional Context

National Housing Policy Context

A number of reforms to housing, planning and social policy were made by the Government which formed in May 2010. The Council and its partners responded flexibly to emerging policies during the lifetime of the 2011-15 Strategy. The Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) remains the Government's national housing delivery and enablement partner and includes the regulatory function of Registered Providers (RPs).

Localism Act 2011

The Localism Act offered new freedoms and flexibilities for planning and housing with empowerment for localised decisions about housing. The significant housing related changes include:

- **Social housing allocations reform** – power for local authorities to limit who can apply for social housing within their areas;
- **Social housing tenure reform** – enabled a new form of flexible tenure for social housing tenants;
- **Reform of homelessness legislation** - power for local authorities to discharge their duties to homeless people by using private sector accommodation;
- **Affordable rent** – allows housing providers to let a property at a maximum of 80% of market rent;
- **Tenancy Strategy** – a requirement on each local authority to produce a tenancy strategy; and
- **The National Planning Policy Framework** - superseded all previous planning policies.

Local Response

- The Council has introduced flexible tenancies let at an affordable rent for properties acquired through the Empty Property Purchasing Scheme;
- Thirteen Group (Housing Hartlepool and Tees Valley Housing) has also introduced flexible tenancies, mostly let on an affordable rent, for some of their properties;
- Endeavour Housing and Home Group have a number of affordable rent tenancies;
- A Tees Valley Tenancy Strategy was published in 2011 and updated in 2014;
- The Tees Valley Common Allocations Policy was reviewed in 2012; and
- The Council has produced a procedure to discharge its homelessness duty into the private rented sector where this is considered to be the most appropriate housing solution.

Welfare Reform Act 2012

The Welfare Reform Act introduced a range of reforms including:

- **Universal Credit** – a single benefit payment paid to households monthly in arrears;
- **Benefit cap** – a cap on the total amount of benefits that can be claimed by any individual household;
- **Size criteria** – a limit on the amount of housing benefit working age tenants in the social rented sector can claim for households deemed to be under-occupying;
- **Single-room rate** - increased the age threshold from 25 to 35 under which single claimants are entitled only to the shared room rate; and
- **Council Tax benefit** – abolished.

Local Response

- The Tees Valley Common Allocations Policy was reviewed in 2012 to give greater priority to social housing tenants of partner organisations who are under occupying their accommodation and are financially affected as a result of welfare reform benefit restrictions ;
- As a result of the abolition of Council Tax benefit households now have to pay a minimum of 12% of the Council Tax on their home; and
- Universal Credit was introduced in Hartlepool in February 2015 and an internal steering group made up from officers within housing, benefits and customer services meets with representatives of the Department of Work and Pensions.

Health and Social Care Act 2012

The Health and Social Care Act included reforms within the NHS and in social care which have an impact on the provision of housing services. The Act gave local authorities responsibility for public health and more focus on integrating health, social care and housing. The Better Care Fund creates a local single pooled budget to incentivise the NHS and local government to work more closely together, placing people's well-being at the centre of health and care services.

Local Response

From 1st April 2013 the Council established its Health and Wellbeing Board to promote more joined-up commissioning of health and social care and public health services. It is responsible for the development of the Health and Wellbeing Strategy and the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment.

National Housing Strategy 2011

On 21st November 2011, the Government published 'Laying the Foundations: A Housing Strategy for England'. The strategy presented the Government's direction of travel for housing, its role in the wider economy and its contribution to social mobility. Principles included: homeownership; increased building; overhaul of social housing; and commitment to zero carbon new build.

Local Response

- The Council has continued to secure affordable housing on private led schemes via Section 106 agreements;
- The Tees Valley Common Allocations Policy was reviewed in 2012 to take account of the reforms to social housing; and
- The Council made a successful bid for funding to tackle empty homes in low demand areas.

Energy Act 2011

The Energy Act introduced the Green Deal, intended to improve the energy efficiency of both commercial and residential properties. The financial mechanisms under the deal eliminate the need for households to pay for energy improvements up front; instead the cost of improvements are to be covered by savings in energy bills and through a charge on household energy bills. The rationale for the Green Deal is to reduce carbon emissions cost effectively.

The Act also introduced the Energy Company Obligation (ECO), which integrates with the Green Deal to address energy efficiency improvements in the housing sector and help to address fuel poverty.

Local Response

- The Council entered into a partnership with British Gas in September 2013 to improve the energy efficiency of homes (Warm Up North);
- The Council has promoted two Collective Switching schemes for gas and electricity for residents; and
- A consortia of registered providers and local authorities in the North East has been established to support residents out of fuel poverty.

Anti Social behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014

The Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 includes two new measures which are designed to give victims and communities a say in the way anti-social behaviour is dealt with:

- The Community Trigger which gives victims the ability to demand action, starting with a review of their case, where the locally defined threshold is met.
- The Community Remedy which gives victims a say in the out-of-court punishment of perpetrators for low-level crime and anti-social behaviour.

Local Response

- The Council has agreed its local community trigger process in partnership with the Police, Clinical Commissioning Group and all Registered Providers operating in Hartlepool.

Emerging National Housing and Related Policies

The election of the Conservative Government in May 2015 suggests that the overall direction of travel for housing policy will largely remain unchanged during the lifetime of this Strategy. It is expected that future policies will be underpinned by:

- A market driven approach
- De-regulation
- Localism
- Minimal intervention
- Planning policies that favour development

The Conservative Government has announced its main new housing policy of extending the Right to Buy (RTB) to housing association tenants. A Housing Bill will be introduced during 2015/2016 and the RTB will be a key feature of the new legislation.

Housing pledges which featured in the Conservative manifesto include:

- Assisting more first-time buyers into home ownership;
- Building 200,000 homes for first-time buyers aged under 40;
- An additional 275,000 'affordable' homes in the social housing sector;
- A brownfield fund set up to unlock homes on previously developed urban sites; and
- Doubling the number of self build/custom build under a 'Right to Build' pledge

In addition other pledges include seeing EU migrants barred from council housing unless they have lived in an area for four years; extension of the Freedom of Information Act to housing associations and the creation of a new Public Service Ombudsman.

Policy in relation to welfare reform is expected to accelerate with a further £12b in cuts planned. Cuts that are in place or planned include:

- The size criteria for social rented housing;
- Full roll-out of Universal Credit to all working age households on benefit;
- Abolition of housing benefit for single people aged 18 to 21 (excluding those leaving care);
- Reducing the capping of benefits for individual households from £26,000 per annum to £23,000; and
- The freezing of working age benefits (including Housing Benefit) for two years.

Programmes already started under the previous Government will be maintained such as the Help to Buy scheme and the National Planning Policy Framework.

General economic conditions will determine much of what happens in the housing sector during the lifetime of this Strategy and issues to be aware of include the push to boost house building, expansion of the private rented sector, increased housing

need and homelessness, welfare reform and devolution of housing investment to city regions.

Sub Regional Context

The Tees Valley has a good record of partnership working between the five local authorities (Darlington, Hartlepool, Middlesbrough, Redcar and Cleveland and Stockton) and during the last Housing Strategy a number of sub- regional schemes and initiatives have continued to operate.

Tees Valley Unlimited (TVU) and the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP)

TVU is a partnership of public, private and voluntary bodies which coordinate activities, appropriate to a city region, designed to improve the economic performance of the entire Tees Valley.

TVU is the LEP that covers Hartlepool focussed on delivering jobs and economic growth across Tees Valley. The LEP is doing this by tackling barriers to growth, developing key assets and creating an environment that encourages growth and long-term prosperity. The LEP has adopted a Strategic Economic Plan (SEP), whereby local partners will:

- Drive the transition to a high value, low carbon economy; and
- Create a more diversified and inclusive economy

The LEP's focus is on increasing jobs, Gross Value Added and the number of enterprises, as well as raising the educational attainment of residents.

Tees Valley Climate Change Strategy

The Council is a member of the Tees Valley Climate Change Partnership which has a vision of "creating prosperous and resilient communities in a low carbon economy." The partnership produced the Tees Valley Climate Change Strategy in 2010 which prioritises substantial and measurable emissions reductions, adaptation to the impacts of climate change, and developing the economic opportunities associated with climate change. The strategy states that, for instance, in future all homes in the Tees Valley should be 'insulated to the best possible standards and are resilient to impacts such as flooding and heat waves' and that 'new homes are designed to maximum possible sustainability standards'.

Compass Choice Based Lettings (CBL)

This scheme was introduced in 2009 and is a partnership between the five local authorities and housing provider partners; Housing Hartlepool, Erimus Housing, Coast & Country Housing, Tristar Homes, Tees Valley Housing, Endeavour Housing, Accent and Home Group. It is the system through which social housing is let throughout the Tees Valley and it operates a common allocations policy. All other registered providers and private landlords are able to advertise their vacant stock via Compass.

Chapter 3 - Hartlepool Local Context

Key Strategic Links

The Housing Strategy does not stand alone. It is linked into a number of other documents as demonstrated in Figure 1.

Figure 1 - Key Council Strategies

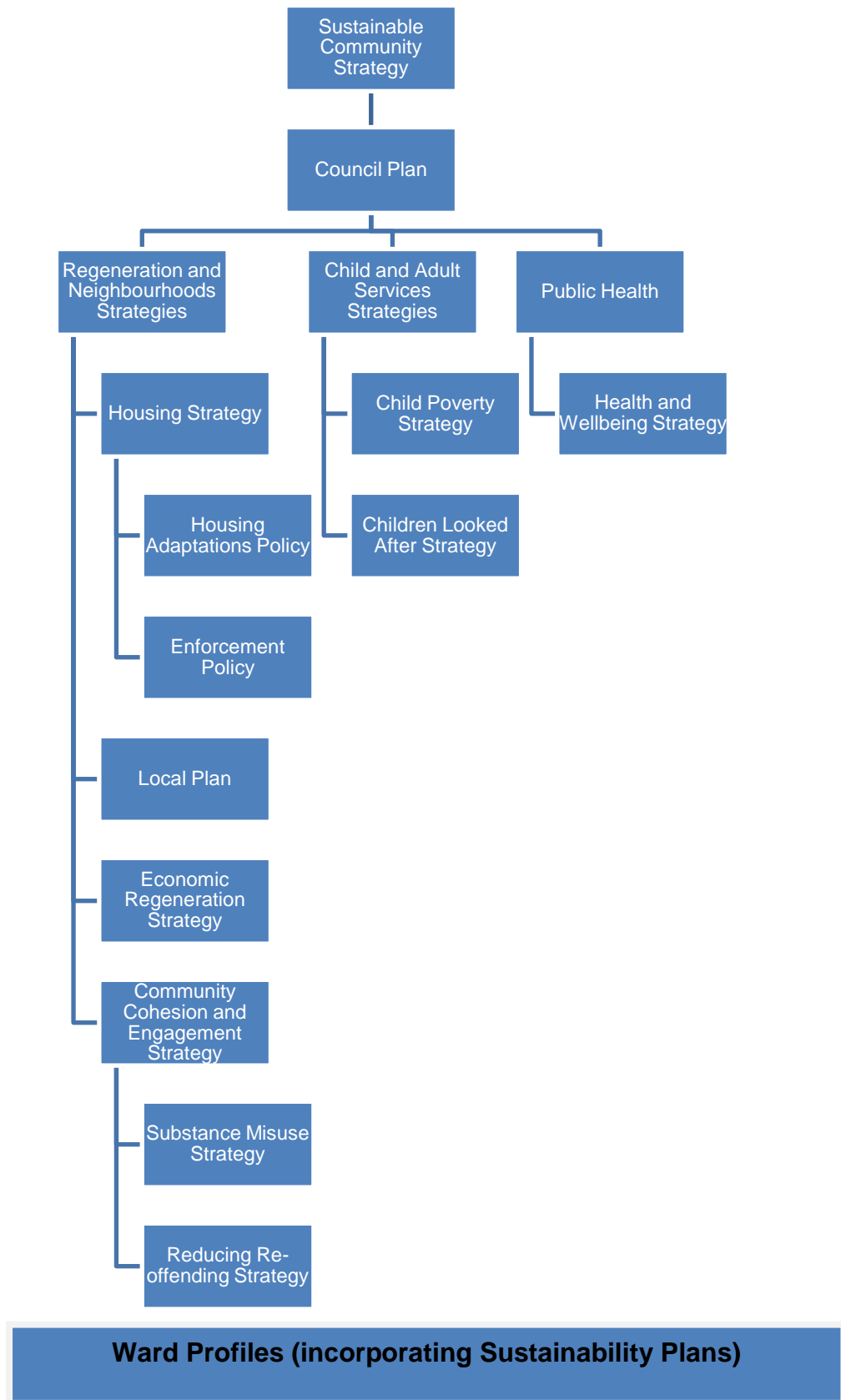


Table 1, details the key strategic links that exist between the Housing Strategy and the other Council documents and strategies identified in Figure 1.

Table 1 – Key Strategic Links

Strategy	Date	Key Strategic Links	Comment
Sustainable Community Strategy	2014 - 2020	Sets out a long term vision for the town and explains how the Council and its partners will improve the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of Hartlepool.	
Economic Regeneration Strategy	2011 - 2021	Sets out the vision, priorities and actions for the delivery of economic development and physical regeneration programmes to improve the environment and attract businesses to invest and grow in Hartlepool.	This Strategy was refreshed in April 2014
Constructing Hartlepool Strategy	October 2014	Complements the shared goals of the Hartlepool Vision, Masterplan, Economic Regeneration Strategy and Housing Strategy. 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 clauses within their planning proposal which will support business growth and enable greater access to employment and skills for local residents.	
Housing Adaptations Policy	ongoing	Provides a policy for supporting people to live as independently as possible through adaptations or rehousing to more appropriate long-term accommodation.	
Enforcement Policy	ongoing	The purpose of this policy is to explain clearly the approach of the Council's Housing Service towards enforcement. It provides guidance to enforcement officers, businesses, consumers and the general public on the range of options that are available to achieve compliance with the legislation that we enforce.	
Child Poverty Strategy	2011 - 2014	Provides the strategic priorities which aim to improve the life chances of all children, young people and their families.	The Child Poverty Needs Assessment has recently been updated to reflect the latest statistical data on child poverty. The action plan has also been updated. The strategy has expired and will

			be updated.
Children Looked After Strategy	2014 - 2017	This strategy outlines the vision for children and young people in care and care leavers. Hartlepool Children's Services is committed to improving the experiences and outcomes for children looked after and care leavers in the town and are aspirational in its plan to deliver continuous improvement and remove the gap between children in care and their peers.	
Health and Wellbeing Strategy	2013 - 2018	The vision of the Health & Wellbeing Strategy is to improve health and wellbeing and reduce health inequalities among the population of Hartlepool through integrated working, focusing on outcomes and improving efficiency.	
Hartlepool Local Plan 2006	2006	Establishes a spatial strategy together with strategic policies. It sets out the planning policy framework to enable ongoing regeneration, provide new housing sites and ensures an appropriate mix of housing is delivered.	The 2006 Local Plan will be replaced by the 2016 Local Plan
Hartlepool Local Plan 2016	2016 - 31	This Local Plan will replace the 2006 Local Plan when adopted. It establishes a spatial strategy together with strategic policies, guiding development over the next 15 years. Sets out the planning policy framework to enable ongoing regeneration, provide new housing sites, ensure an appropriate mix of housing is delivered and affordable housing is provided.	
Community Cohesion and Engagement Strategy	2014 - 17	This Strategy is responsible for ensuring governance arrangements are in place to enable community participation in local government decision making processes; shaping public services around the residents and communities that use them and improving quality of life; and tackling deprivation in our most disadvantaged and vulnerable neighbourhoods.	
Substance Misuse Strategy		This Strategy is supported by an Annual Substance Misuse Treatment Plan with recovery as the central goal. Recovery	

		requires an effective 'whole systems' approach working with education, training and employment, housing, family support services, wider health services and criminal justice agencies where appropriate	
Reducing Re-Offending Strategy	2014 - 17	This Strategy aims to break the cycle of offending by 'ensuring that local services are coordinated in a manner that meets the needs of offenders, whilst at the same time ensuring local communities remain safe'.	
Ward Profiles	ongoing	Ward Profiles are being refreshed with sustainability plans to be produced for the localities identified as vulnerable.	

Key Facts:

Key facts and statistics relating to Hartlepool are set out below:

- There are currently 42,599 dwellings of which 40,631 are occupied dwellings³
- Hartlepool has a population of 92,600 and this is projected to increase 5.2% by 2037³
- 23.2% of the population have a limiting long-term illness compared to 17.9% in England and Wales⁴.
- The median house price in Hartlepool remains consistently lower than the national average³.
- Levels of owner occupation in Hartlepool remain lower than the national average.
- Levels of social and private renting are higher than the national average⁴
- 2.7% of households are overcrowded which is less than the national average of 4.6% across England³
- At the end of March 2015 3,092 applicants in Hartlepool were registered on the Compass CBL Waiting List of which 955 were in the Priority Bands 1-3⁵.
- The percentage of empty properties in Hartlepool's private sector exceeds the national average with an overall vacancy rate of 4.6% compared to 2.7% across England³.

³ Hartlepool Strategic Market Assessment, 2015

⁴ Census, 2011

⁵ Priority Bands contain the applicants who have been identified as in the greatest housing need

- The affordable housing requirement calculated by the Hartlepool Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) was calculated at 144 net additional units³.
- 34.8% of the private sector stock is non decent and there are estimated to be 21.2% of households in fuel poverty⁶.
- The average energy efficiency rating using the Government's Standard Assessment Procedure is 51 which is slightly above the England average⁶
- At June 2015 3.7% of people were unemployed in Hartlepool which is nearly double the national average.
- The number of working age adults on out of work benefits was 16.7% (November 2014)⁷
- 11,433 people commute out of Hartlepool for work³
- The Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) 2010 identified that just over a third of the population of Hartlepool live in the 10% most disadvantaged areas nationally.
- Since 1990 approximately 300 new homes are built each year in Hartlepool.

Hartlepool's Housing Partnership and Registered Providers (RPs)

Hartlepool's Housing Partnership brings together a range of partners with the common aim of improving housing provision within Hartlepool. The partnership includes representatives from the Council, Registered Providers (RPs) and the Voluntary and Community Sector.

The focus of the Housing Partnership is to ensure the delivery of this Strategy. The Partnership will co-ordinate and facilitate multi-agency and private sector involvement and provide a link between housing and wider policies for the social, economic and environmental well-being of the area, including the regeneration of deprived neighbourhoods. The Partnership will be responsible for agreeing and monitoring the Housing Strategy action plan, addressing areas of underperformance and promoting achievements.

13 RPs currently operate in Hartlepool, including Hartlepool Borough Council from 1st April 2015. The largest of these is Housing Hartlepool with approximately 70% of the social housing stock. Table 2 sets out the stock levels of the RPs operating in Hartlepool.

⁶ Private Sector House Condition Survey, 2009

⁷ Hartlepool Economic Profile, June 2015

Table 2 – Registered Providers operating in Hartlepool

Registered Provider (RP)	Stock Number (at February 2015)
Housing Hartlepool	6727
Home	888
Four Housing	385
Tees Valley	379
Guinness Northern Counties	364
Anchor	333
Endeavour	275
Joseph Rowntree Housing Trust	242 of which: 150 rented 58 shared ownership 34 owner occupied
Hartlepool Borough Council	186
Accent	103
Housing & Care 21	44
Railway Housing	14
Places for People	1
Total Social Rented Stock	9849

Local Economy

The economic downturn, reduced public expenditure, planning, social housing and welfare reform have had an impact in Hartlepool. These circumstances provide the backdrop to the Strategy and will continue to present challenges in terms of unemployment, cutbacks in housing led regeneration programmes, cuts in public spending and restraints on affordable mortgage finance.

Hartlepool Wards

Figure 2 illustrates the wards within Hartlepool.

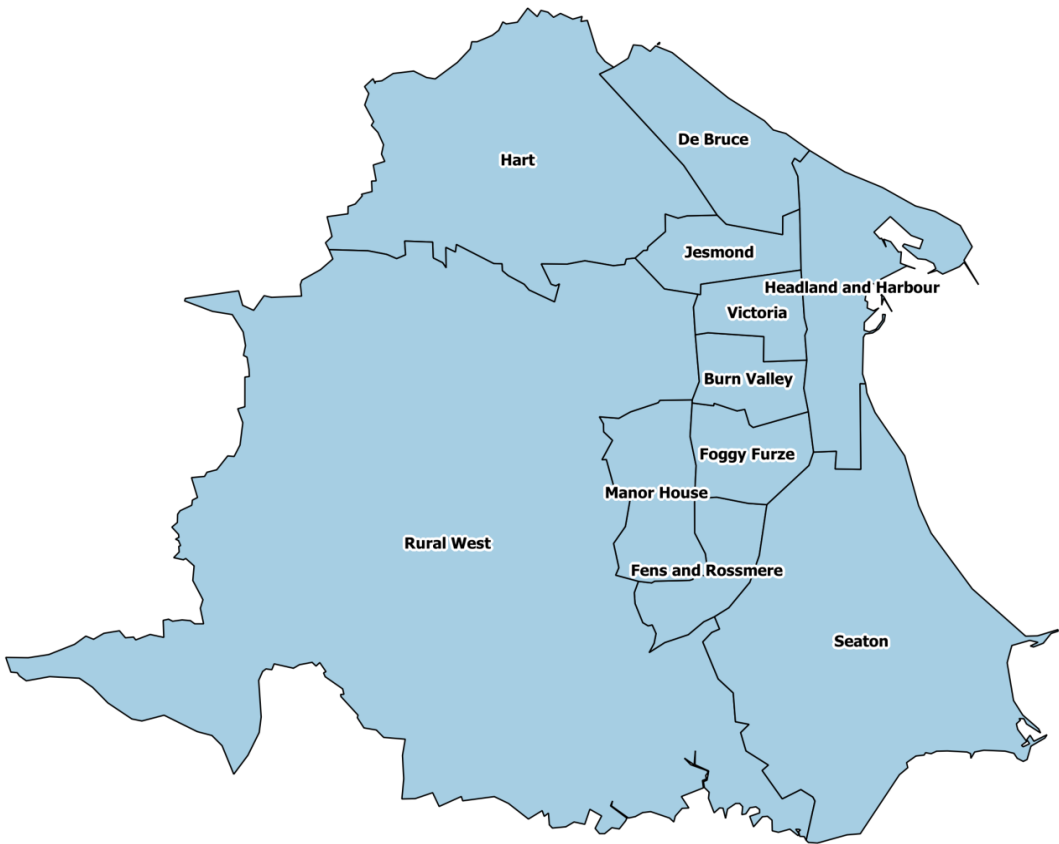


Figure 2 - Hartlepool Wards

Chapter 4 - Local Housing Need

The Housing Strategy, along with other key strategies will address current and future housing need and demand in the Borough. As a result a comprehensive and robust evidence base has been established, including the following documents and sources detailed in Table 3:

Table 3 - Housing Need Evidence Source

Evidence Source	Information
Hartlepool Strategic Housing Market Assessment (2015)	Local housing need and demand
Tees Valley Strategic Housing Market Assessment (2012)	Sub-regional and local housing need and demand
Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (2014)	Specific housing need with regard to the Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Show persons groups
Hartlepool Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (2015)	Identification of sites with housing land capacity.
Private Sector Housing Condition Survey (2009)	A detailed picture of housing conditions in the private sector.
Homelessness Statistics	Data relating to housing advice and homelessness cases
Compass Housing Register	Social housing need and demand
Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA)	The JSNA analyses the health needs of the population to inform and guide commissioning of health, wellbeing and social care services.
Census 2011	Provides a detailed snapshot of the population and its characteristics

Current Housing Need

Housing need is affected by a variety of factors. Evidence on the overall housing market in Hartlepool, established in Table 3, can be summarised in that currently:

- Hartlepool is a self-contained housing market on the basis of migration and also in terms of workplace.
- There is a mismatch in market demand compared to availability and aspirations/expectation.
- During the period January 2013 to end of June 2014, median house prices across Hartlepool were £112,000 and lower quartile prices were just under £70,000.

Evidence on the key demographic drivers that affect housing need and demand, established in table 3, can be summarised as being:

- An increasing population with ONS 2012-based population projections indicating an increase of 5.2% from 92,600 in 2014 to 97,400 by 2037.
- Decline in working age populations and increase in elderly population.

Current economic drivers include:

- 67.1% of residents in employment work in Hartlepool Borough.
- Median incomes are lower than the national median but slightly higher than the regional figure.
- There is considerable income polarisation across Hartlepool, with 51.2% of households receiving less than £300 each week, 21.7% receiving between £300 and £500 each week and 27% receiving at least £500 each week.

In terms of dwelling stock:

- 73.3% of properties are houses, 12.1% are bungalows, 13.7% are flats/maisonettes and 0.9% are other property types
- 51% of the housing stock was built before 1964, 7.7% has been built since 2005.
- 84% of the housing stock has 3 bedrooms or less, with 40% having 2 bedrooms or less.
- Housing stock tenure is owner occupier 60.2%, social rented 23.1%, private rented 16% and 0.7% intermediate tenure.
- There is a strong aspiration for houses

All of the above drivers influence the current and future housing market. Through evidence established in the documents listed in table 3, it is demonstrated that there are 4,694 households currently in housing need, representing 11.6% of all households. The current housing need can be used as baseline with which to estimate the future housing need.

Future Housing Need

Using evidence identified in the 2015 SHMA analysis suggests there should be a focus on delivery of:

- 3 bedroom houses and 4+ bedroom semi-detached and detached houses for market sale; and
- Bungalows for both market sale and social rent

Table 4 indicates where there is a lack of a particular type and size of property by ward, based on the aspirations of households planning to move.

Table 4- Comparison between current dwelling stock and market aspirations

Dwelling stock relative to aspirations

Dwelling type	Ward											
	Burn Valley	De Bruce	Fens and Rossmere	Foggy Furze	Hart	Headland and Harbour	Jesmond	Manor House	Rural West	Seaton	Victoria	Total
Detached house/cottage 1-3 Beds	-18.6	-8.5	-17.4	-17.2	-6.8	-17.0	-14.3	-18.9	-2.8	-13.4	-18.8	-14.1
Detached house/cottage 4 or more Beds	-20.8	-23.7	-18.6	-23.4	17.8	-21.3	-23.7	-24.7	17.6	-3.6	-24.8	-13.1
Semi-detached house/cottage 1-2 Beds	-2.7	5.8	3.0	1.9	0.4	0.5	4.9	10.4	-1.8	1.1	3.1	2.2
Semi-detached house/cottage with 3 Beds	5.3	33.5	32.8	23.9	10.6	-0.2	14.3	8.8	1.2	18.6	2.2	13.8
Semi-detached house/cottage 4 or more Beds	7.9	-0.1	2.0	2.3	1.5	-0.8	2.1	-1.8	0.7	-1.0	2.0	1.6
Terraced house/cottage 1-2 Beds	17.6	5.1	4.7	4.1	-2.0	3.0	2.3	25.6	-2.0	-0.8	28.2	7.9
Terraced house/cottage 3+ Beds	29.8	10.9	3.9	18.2	2.5	25.3	38.6	27.3	-0.1	7.4	30.9	17.4
Bungalow	-13.1	-12.7	0.1	-2.7	-15.4	-15.8	-10.9	-18.5	-2.3	-6.7	-16.9	-10.1
Flat	-5.4	-11.9	-10.5	-7.4	-9.1	23.2	-13.3	-8.2	-10.6	-3.6	-7.4	-6.4

	Insufficient dwellings available relative to aspiration
	Sufficient dwellings available relative to aspiration

The Housing Strategy will help deliver and guide this new housing provision alongside the emerging Local Plan.

Chapter 5

Priority 1: Delivering suitable new homes, including affordable homes and older person accommodation

This chapter details how the Council will work with partners to deliver suitable and affordable new homes for all demographic groups. The challenges faced in achieving this priority revolve around delivering high quality new housing which meets identified need, in places where people choose to live whilst continuing to deliver Housing Regeneration.

Summary of Planned Outcomes:

- Deliver new homes that will meet current and future housing needs;
- Ensure new affordable homes are high quality with good standards of design and construction; and
- Support employment through development.

Achievements during the Housing Strategy 2011-2015

- Through the strong working relationship of the Housing Partnership rapid solutions to housing need have been produced and opportunities for development have been successfully explored.
- Continued delivery of affordable housing with 151 affordable houses delivered over the last 4 years.
- Imminent completion of new build on Alexandra Square (Perth and Hurworth Streets Regeneration Scheme) and the Headway site following a successful Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO).
- A continued track record of housing delivery on brownfield sites.
- Continued delivery of executive and family homes at Wynyard and Bishop Cuthbert.
- Production of the 2012 Tees Valley Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA).
- Production of the 2015 Hartlepool SHMA.
- Delivery of schemes through the 2011-15 National Affordable Housing Programme with all new housing built to a minimum Level 3 Code for Sustainable Homes.
- Progression of the Carr/Hopps regeneration scheme with over 150 properties acquired and the demolition contract being finalised.

CASE STUDY 1 – ALEXANDRA SQUARE (RABY ROAD)

Following on from the assembly and demolition of the Perth/Hurworth Street Regeneration Area, Keepmoat were chosen by Hartlepool Borough Council to deliver 83 new homes on the site. North Star (Endeavour Housing Association) contracted with Keepmoat to be the affordable housing provider, initially taking 15 of the homes, which was later increased to 25. The remainder of the new housing will be available to private purchasers.

Work started on site in early August 2013 and the housing association homes were handed over between March and November 2014.

The Endeavour properties are a mixture of 2, 3 and 4 bedroom houses and bungalows, built to a high standard in a range of house types.

The properties provide good space and energy efficiency standards and also Secured by Design accreditation.

North Star invested £2.03m in the scheme including grant support from the Homes and Communities Agency (£480,000) to enable the properties to be let at Affordable Rents.

The properties are popular with customers and the scheme has transformed the area offering the opportunity to live in good quality new housing near to the town centre.



The Evidence and Challenges for the Housing Strategy

Table 5 details the specific challenges associated with delivering this priority.

Table 5 – Priority 1: Key Facts

Table 5 – Priority 1: Key Facts

Key Facts		Source										
Tenure Mix												
<table><tr><th>Tenure</th><th>%</th></tr><tr><td>Owner-Occupier</td><td>60.2%</td></tr><tr><td>Housing Association</td><td>23.1%</td></tr><tr><td>Private Rented</td><td>16%</td></tr><tr><td>Other</td><td>0.7%</td></tr></table>		Tenure	%	Owner-Occupier	60.2%	Housing Association	23.1%	Private Rented	16%	Other	0.7%	Hartlepool Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2015
Tenure	%											
Owner-Occupier	60.2%											
Housing Association	23.1%											
Private Rented	16%											
Other	0.7%											
<p>Tenure profile varies across Hartlepool.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">The proportion of owner occupied dwellings is highest in Rural West (85%) and Hart (80%) wards.Social renting is highest in Manor House (47.3%) and Headland and Harbour (43.8%) wards.Private renting is highest in Victoria (33.9%) and Burn Valley (30.7%) wards.		Hartlepool Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2015										
House Prices												
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Median prices in Hartlepool have been consistently lower than the median prices for the North East and England over the period 2000 to 2014.Overall prices have increased 115.4% from £47,000 in 2000 to £101,250 in 2014. Prices peaked at £115,000 in 2013 but fell in 2014.House prices are relatively lower in Burn Valley and Victoria wards and relatively higher in Hart and Rural West wards.		Hartlepool Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2015										
Relative affordability												
<p>Hartlepool is one of the most affordable districts in the region, with a lower quartile house price to income ratio of 3.9 (i.e. lower quartile house prices are 3.9 x lower quartile gross earnings) compared to 4.6 across the North East as a whole.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">In 2013, the median income for people in employment living in Hartlepool was £24,721 per year compared with £24,560 for the North East and a national median of £27,076.		Hartlepool Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2015										
Income												
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Incomes amongst owner occupiers tend to be high with 40.7% receiving at least £500 per week.63.3% of privately renting households receive less		Hartlepool Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2015										

<p>than £300 gross per week.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 87.7% of households living in affordable housing (social rented or shared ownership) receive an income of less than £300 gross per week and 60.6% receive less than £200 gross per week. 	
Help to Buy	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There have been a total of 221 Help to Buy completions in Hartlepool. 	HM Treasury March 2015
Population Changes	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The proportion of residents aged 65 and over is expected to increase by 50.6%, from 17,000 in 2014 to 25,600 in 2037. In the same time period the proportion of residents aged under 65 is expected to fall by 5% from 75,600 to 71,800. Over the next few decades the population is going to age in Hartlepool and this will put increasing strain on resources directed at the housing and support needs of older people. 	Hartlepool Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2015
New Housing Requirements	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is an affordable housing shortfall of 144 units (net). 	Hartlepool Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2015
Land Availability	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Council has identified a five year housing land supply. The Local Plan is in development and will provide a 15 year housing land supply prioritising land in locations which are well served by public transport and other services. 	Strategic Land Availability Assessment 2015
Housing Regeneration	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2,000 obsolete terraced properties identified as oversupply in 2002. Demolition of 1,200 obsolete properties has already taken place. 	Housing Regeneration Strategy 2002

Why is this a priority?

The Local Planning Context

The Local Plan currently being prepared will replace the existing 2006 Hartlepool Local Plan. The Local Plan is the main document that allocates strategic sites for housing, employment, retail, leisure and infrastructure and safeguards assets in the borough such as the natural environment. Once adopted the Local Plan will replace policies established in the 2006 Local Plan. In terms of housing, over the next 15 years the Local Plan will seek to:

- (i) contribute towards the Housing Market Renewal programme;
- (ii) plan for housing to meet the current and future needs of the borough;
- (iii) allocate new land for housing;
- (iii) outline the mix of housing that is required; and
- (iv) establish affordable housing requirement on private housing developments of 15 units or more.

It is anticipated that the Local Plan will be adopted in 2016.

Delivery of New Housing

In planning for new housing within Hartlepool a number of issues have been identified that need to be taken into consideration. People's realistic aspirations need to be understood fully to be able to match need and demand with provision. The local market and demographics need to be understood and in particular awareness of Hartlepool's changing population.

The development of sustainable communities is integral to the new Housing Strategy. This means local implementation of sustainable communities as illustrated earlier in the document (see page 6). This approach includes future proofing new properties to make sure they are adaptable to a household's changing needs, the development of mixed tenure communities, ensuring high quality design and build, consideration of affordability, and reducing carbon emissions. All of these will be a challenge for this Strategy, but should create places where people will choose to live.

New housing needs to be developed in the right locations encouraging development on previously used (brownfield) land and on the most sustainable greenfield sites, taking into account the associated costs with acquiring and building on both.

Significant community involvement is underway with the development of the Local Plan which will allocate land for 15 years of housing development. The Council is committed to community engagement and this will be strongly encouraged through the Localism agenda and in emerging Neighbourhood Plans.

In Hartlepool, funding and land issues need to be considered, particularly the low value of land and the reluctance of owners to sell, compounded by the lack of Council owned land. There is insufficient previously developed land in the town centre available for all of the new housing development required so there is a need to strike a balance between developing further away from the town centre and the detrimental impact this may have.

Despite the current housing market situation, house building in the borough has continued at around 300 net additional dwellings each year. However, this has been primarily due to the success of publicly funded housing developments supporting ongoing private developments.

The current housing market condition has not only affected new house building, but has also resulted in even attractive new build flats remaining vacant. This is particularly evident within flat developments at the Marina.

When planning new housing developments links to infrastructure, services, health and the economy need to be considered. In particular they need to be responsive to the recently approved sites within the Enterprise Zones. Links need to be made

between job creation, in migration of wealth creators and new homes. This may involve employing local people in all stages of house building; creating training opportunities and attracting people into Hartlepool to live and work.

Delivery of Affordable Housing and Access to New Housing Developments

Affordable housing is defined as housing available to those who are unable to access accommodation suitable for their family's needs, at a price that they can reasonably afford on the open market, whether for rent or home ownership. Affordable housing includes social rented housing and intermediate housing. Intermediate housing is housing at prices and rents above those of social rent but below market price or rents.

As detailed in Chapter 2 the affordable rent product was introduced by the Government in April 2011. Affordable rented homes will be made available to tenants at up to a maximum of 80% of market rent and this will be the key way in which new affordable housing will be funded. Tenancies will be offered through the Compass Choice Based Lettings Scheme (CBL) and are eligible for housing benefit. Affordable rented properties will be owned by RPs and retained in perpetuity in the same way that social rented properties are.

In Hartlepool all RPs also operate in other local authorities and the Council will need to ensure that revenue raised through the introduction of higher affordable rents locally is not used by RPs to fund the delivery of new affordable social housing in another area. It will also be important to assess the impact of potential rent increases on affordability for local residents in housing need.

It is important that through the Housing Strategy the supply of affordable homes is increased and homelessness continues to be prevented in Hartlepool. The successful delivery of affordable housing is dependent upon the relationships with RPs, funding bodies and developers. Work needs to continue with developers to make new homes more affordable. Reductions in funding will necessitate the ongoing use of policies in the 2006 Hartlepool Local Plan and emerging Local Plan to secure affordable housing provision or financial contribution as part of private housing developments; working with the HCA and developing smarter and more affordable building techniques. In addition to the new affordable rent product affordable housing will continue to be delivered, albeit on a smaller scale, through the National Affordable Housing Programme. The current 2015-2018 HCA funding programme awarded funding for a number of schemes in Hartlepool.

As outlined, perhaps the most important way of securing the delivery of affordable housing in the future is through the use of planning obligations. Affordable housing policies will be included in the emerging Local Plan, and seek to secure affordable housing as part of all private housing developments with over 15 units. The level of provision is dependent on the economic viability of an individual scheme and, in some instances, can be provided off-site or as a commuted sum to benefit housing regeneration elsewhere in the Borough.

When building new affordable housing, consideration should also be made to reducing potential service charges as far as possible. This will be achieved through developing self-contained accommodation wherever possible and low maintenance communal facilities where this is unavoidable. Service charges should be avoided

completely on shared ownership products where these costs could be going towards more equity purchase.

Since the start of the economic downturn, mortgage availability has been reduced, higher deposits are required and it is becoming increasingly difficult for first time buyers to get on the housing ladder. Increasing housing costs will impact on household's spare income for food, fuel bills, leisure and recreation. The Strategy will need to be responsive to the potential for increased crime, anti social behaviour, homelessness, fuel poverty and put in place measures to mitigate this.

The central area of Hartlepool where first time buyers traditionally bought is increasingly vulnerable because people who can get a mortgage are now choosing 'estate houses' rather than terraced properties.

The overall health of a housing market relies on a steady flow of first time buyers, particularly as the market is largely based on a system of trading up in the value, type and size of a home. New purchasers need to be encouraged and supported through initiatives to access a first home. Access to home ownership for first time buyers will be partly addressed through house-builders own initiatives such as shared equity, deposit match and the Government backed Help to Buy scheme to encourage the sale of properties. The opportunity for council backed mortgages and deposits will continue be explored during the lifetime of the Housing Strategy.

Housing Regeneration

Housing Market Renewal (HMR) has been an important route in providing new and affordable housing within Hartlepool. It has been an integral part of the success of the Housing Strategy 2011-2015. However, funding streams and housing regeneration interventions have moved on.

Housing market failure continues to persist in some parts of the town, particularly in the central area, typified by:

- Low demand in certain housing sectors including a collapse in the market for terraced properties in particular streets within the central area;
- An imbalance between demand and supply in the local housing market;
- Relatively low house prices;
- Decline in owner-occupation, together with increased concentrations of private landlords;
- Housing management issues, including absentee private landlords;
- High levels of household moves and anti-social behaviour in certain areas of low demand; and
- High levels of dissatisfaction with housing provision reflecting changing aspirations and outdated layouts.

During the last strategy the Council's HMR programme has continued with the acquisition of private properties on the key strategic sites in the town funded by both central government and council funding:

- Raby Road Corridor
- Belle Vue
- Carr/Hopps Street

Through this Strategy it is imperative that Housing Regeneration is continued. Funding for all forms of regeneration has been significantly reduced by Government and this includes all forms of improvement grants. The schemes that come forward involve a partnership and a joint funding requirement. It is therefore essential that future committed sums towards affordable housing are channelled to match any available Government funded programmes.

An example of this includes the Carr/Hopps Regeneration Scheme where the Council has been awarded grant funding to complete the scheme, subject to 50% match funding from the Council. The ability to continue with our plans for Housing Regeneration will be assisted primarily through the use of planning obligations. The Carr/Hopps scheme is match funded from off-site contributions under Section 106 agreements, which forms the planning permission conditions on new build sites in Hartlepool.

It is critical that areas adjacent to HMR sites are monitored to protect the investment in these areas and to continue the successful regeneration of Hartlepool. Housing Regeneration schemes are linked closely to empty homes initiatives and investment in bringing them back into use minimises the risk to these adjacent areas.

The Strategy also aims to support the regeneration activity of the Council's RP partners, such as the acquisition, clearance and redevelopment of the Raby Estate by Housing Hartlepool.

Economic Regeneration

In October 2014 the Council adopted the Constructing Hartlepool Strategy which complements the shared goals of the Hartlepool Vision, Masterplan, Economic Regeneration Strategy and Housing Strategy. These strategies 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.

The Constructing Hartlepool Strategy 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. The Council is currently working with national housing developers to implement this strategy.

ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE PRIORITY 1

During the five years of this strategy we will:

- Maintain an understanding of the current housing needs in the Borough;
- Ensure all new residential developments supply good quality new homes across all tenures to meet local housing need;
- Ensure where appropriate all new developments are linked to the creation of job opportunities and training;
- Ensure all relevant residential developments include an affordable housing provision;
- Continue to work with Registered Providers and developers in the provision of affordable housing;
- Deliver a mix of affordable housing in line with planning policy;
- Ensure new build houses are flexible to the changing needs of future residents;
- Monitor areas adjacent to HMR sites to protect the investment in these areas;
- Continue to tackle the imbalance of supply and demand and pursue funding for housing regeneration programmes;
- Cater for the needs of an ageing population; and
Cater for the needs of the disabled population.

Chapter 6

Priority 2: Making the best use of existing homes; improving quality, conditions and the environment

This chapter details how the Council will aim to improve existing homes across tenures. The challenges faced in achieving this priority include ensuring housing quality and choice across the rented sector. Particular challenges include raising standards within the private rented sector, tackling fuel poverty and helping owner occupiers to maintain their homes.

Summary of Planned Outcomes:

- Improved management standards, housing quality and choice in the rented sector;
- Improved energy efficiency and tackle fuel poverty across tenures;
- Improved neighbourhoods and the environment ; and
- Owner occupiers are better able to maintain and improve their homes.

Achievements during the Housing Strategy 2011-2015

- Enforcement Policy published in October 2011.
- Review of the six Selective Licensing areas (introduced in May 2009) and approval for a second designation in 13 streets (effective from 6th July 2015).
- 100 empty properties purchased through the Empty Property Purchasing Scheme and 60 long-term empty properties refurbished through the Empty Homes Lease Scheme.
- 96% of Registered Provider (RP) stock in Hartlepool improved to Decent Homes Plus standard.
- Review of the Good Tenant Scheme in 2011 which confirmed increased take up of the scheme and identified improvements.
- Year on year increase in the number of empty homes brought back into use.
- All RPs have signed up to the RESPECT – ASB Charter for Housing.
- Baden Street Improvement Project implemented resulting in significant decline in levels of crime and anti social behaviour and 18 long-term empty properties have been brought back into use to date (April 2015.)
- HCA empty homes funding secured.
- £55k health funding secured for the Warmer Homes Healthy Hartlepool project.
- The Council entered into a regional partnership with British Gas and eight other Local Authorities, Warm Up North Scheme.

- Photo Voltaic panels have been installed in Council housing stock and Registered Provider stock across Hartlepool.

CASE STUDY 2 – HOMEPLUS GRANT SCHEME

Concerns were raised by the neighbour of a gentleman who appeared to be having difficulties maintaining his own home. Officers from Housing Services visited and found the home to be in poor condition – the boiler had broken down and the owner had been unable to clean the property, items had accumulated and it had become filthy. The owner was willing to engage with officers and agreed to allow a contractor to carry out a thorough cleanse of his home and to pay for this. The resident was then assisted through the homeplus grants scheme to have a new gas boiler installed and is now able to live safely in their home and able to carry out regular cleaning as well as having the added benefit of heating throughout.

CASE STUDY 3 – WARM HOMES HEALTHY HARTLEPOOL

During 2012/13, the Council received some funding through the Department of Health and this was used to improve the energy efficiency of homes and to carry out essential work to prevent/minimise health effects due to inadequately heated and/or insulated homes.

One female resident aged 67 was referred to the scheme by Connected Care in January 2013. The lady had a disability and was in receipt of means tested benefits. She was an owner occupier and her boiler had broken down leaving her without hot water or heating. Due to her circumstances, she was offered a grant to replace her boiler. Housing staff handled the process for her, obtained estimates, appointed a contractor, supervised the work and then paid the contractor directly once she was satisfied with the work. The whole process took three weeks.

The resident took part in a survey after the work was done and reported a number of positive outcomes including that her health had improved, she could heat more rooms in her home and she'd made fewer visits to the doctors or hospital. She added –

‘This scheme has saved my life. I couldn't have went through another winter without heating. From start to end the scheme was very helpful’

Another resident aged 80 benefitted from the replacement of some draughty windows and extra radiators to previously un-heated rooms. She reported amongst other things, an improvement in her well-being. There were added benefits to residents helped through this scheme. As this resident stated ***‘.....the windows particularly have proved a boon as I can now open them without having to climb on a chair – and to do so at 80!!.....’***

The Evidence and Challenges for the Housing Strategy

Table 6 below details the specific challenges associated with delivering this priority.

Table 6 – Priority 2: Key Facts

Key Facts	Source
Private Renting	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The private rented sector accommodates 16.2% of households across Hartlepool. 20.3% of all private rented dwellings are in Victoria, 17.9% in Burn Valley and 13.3% in Headland and Harbour. The characteristics of tenants are diverse and in particular the private rented sector accommodates lone parents (16.7%), singles under 60 (31.9%), couples with no children (17.9%) and couples with children (15.4%). 43.7% of private renting households have lived in their accommodation for less than 2 years. 63.3% of private renting households receive less than £300 gross each week. 51.1% of heads of household living in private rented accommodation are employed. 	Hartlepool Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2015
Social Renting	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The affordable sector (social rented or shared ownership) accommodates 23.8% of households across Hartlepool. 30.2% are older singles and couples, 30.9% of households are singles under 60, 6.9% are couples with children, 6.2% are lone parents, 9.2% are couples/lone parents with adult children and 12.2% are couples with no children. 87.7% of households receive less than £300 gross each week. 18% of heads of household living in affordable housing are employed. 	Hartlepool Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2015
Overcrowding	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> According to the 2011 Census, 2.7 % of households were overcrowded compared to 4.6% across England. 	Hartlepool Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2015
Housing Conditions (Private sector)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An estimated 11,300 dwellings in Hartlepool (34.8% of the stock) were classed as non decent. The majority of dwellings are non decent because of Category 1 Hazards⁸ (18.5%) and thermal comfort failure (15.4%). In Hartlepool non decent dwellings were most associated with low rise purpose built flats, the private rented sector and properties built pre- 	2009 Private Sector House Condition Survey

⁸ The HHSRS assesses 29 categories of housing hazard, each hazard has a weighting which will help determine whether the property is rated as having Category 1 (serious) or Category 2 (other) hazards.

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/housing/hhsrsoperatingguidance>

<p>1919. Non decency was also associated with heads of households aged 16 to 24 and those aged 75+.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The highest non decency score by sub-area was recorded in the Central sub-area at 44.1%. • 6,000 (18.5%) dwellings were estimated to have at least one Category 1 Hazard. • The highest proportion of Category 1 hazards was found in the Central sub-area followed by the Rural sub-area. • The total funding requirement for repairs in all dwellings that failed under the repair criterion of the Decent Homes Standard was £21.2 million, an average cost of £4,500 per dwelling. 	
Housing Conditions (Social sector)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ALL RP stock in Hartlepool meets the Decent Homes Standard and 96% of stock meets the Decent Homes Plus Standard 	2011-2015 Hartlepool Housing Strategy
Energy Efficiency	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In 2009 there were estimated to be 6,900 (21.2%) dwellings which contain households in fuel poverty within Hartlepool. • The survey indicates that the highest rate of fuel poverty was found in the Central sub-area at 25.8% followed by the South sub-area at 19.1%. • The average energy efficiency level in Hartlepool, using the Government's Standard Assessment Procedure, was 51 (on a scale of 1 to 100). This was slightly above the all England average of 49 from the English House Condition Survey 2006. 	2009 Private Sector House Condition Survey
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In 2012 there were estimated to be 4,616 (11.6%) of households in Hartlepool in fuel poverty compared to 10% of all households nationally 	Department of Energy and Climate Change 2012

Why is this a priority?

The Rented Sector

The private rented sector (PRS) accounts for 16% of housing stock in Hartlepool and has an important role to play in the housing market. The increase in the size of the sector is reflective of a 5% fall in the number of owner-occupied households and 4% fall in the number of social rented households. It provides homes for a variety of people at different stages in their lives, including would-be first time buyers who cannot afford to take the first step onto the property ladder, people who enjoy the flexibility of short tenancies and those who the Council has helped into the sector to prevent them from becoming homeless. Developing products and services that will

respond to those households is also an integral part of the town centre regeneration and underpins regeneration activity.

It is recognised that the PRS presents a number of challenges. These include housing quality, housing management and the unsecure nature of tenancies in the sector.

During the Housing Strategy 2011-2015 good relationships were built with private landlords and agents to improve the management and quality of accommodation.

The long term aspiration is one of a town with a variety of accommodation which is balanced to ensure communities can have a greater choice in where they live and if applicable move around the housing market rather than move out of the Borough.

Through the Strategy the aim is to continue to develop a healthy PRS with improvements in property conditions and management standards supported through the enhanced tenant/landlord service delivered by the Council's Housing Services. This service delivers Selective Licensing which aims to improve the management standards and improve the quality of privately rented accommodation within a designated area. The service also manages the Good Tenant Scheme, a referencing service for tenants which has the express aim of reducing anti social behaviour in the PRS. The Council will also be developing additional complementary measures such as a Voluntary Landlord Scheme (VLS) and General Register of Landlords (GRL) across all areas of the town.

In addition, the Council is in the process of setting up a Social Lettings Agency (SLA) which will provide similar services to a commercial letting and managing agent. However, it will work closely with the landlord and tenant to help establish and sustain tenancies. The SLA aims to provide good quality and affordable housing management services and access to a range of in-house skills and expertise. As a managing agent the Council will insist on good housing standards, reasonable rent levels and effective tenancy agreements. Target tenants will include those facing homelessness, those unable to afford homeownership and who find it hard to secure a tenancy in the existing rented sector.

The responsibility for maintaining private property rests with the home owner. However the Council recognises that intervention and assistance is necessary where areas are in decline, owners are in financial hardship (a problem which is increasing as the impact of the economic recession continues) or landlords refuse to undertake essential repairs or improvements. The Council will take appropriate action where it finds landlords failing in their responsibilities.

The Council will also work closely with landlords and agents to ensure any additional support services are provided when required. The Council actively participates in an annual Tees Valley Landlord Forum which is an essential point of contact between the Council, landlords and agents and is used as a conduit to share information and best practice.

The objective of the Strategy is to improve access and improve information on the PRS which is needed together with work being undertaken with landlords

to promote the sector. The strategy will aim to bring together the package of tools available to the Council and its partners to improve the overall private sector housing offer. This includes the enhanced tenant/landlord liaison service.

The impact of Government changes to Housing Benefit (HB), Local Housing Allowance (LHA) and introduction of Universal Credit (from February 2015 in Hartlepool) on people's ability to afford a home in the rented sector will continue to present challenges.

It is important that the Council works with partners to minimise the impact of these reductions in people's income, particularly if this means people are at risk of being made homeless and unable to afford to maintain their home.

The social rented sector (SRS) accounts for 23.1% of housing stock in Hartlepool. Registered Providers have a key role in providing affordable housing and assisting the Council in its wider housing objectives such as regeneration and the provision of new affordable homes.

As well as providing new homes, it is important that high quality services are provided to people living in the social rented sector. Since the last Strategy 96% of all RP homes have achieved the decent homes plus standard. Through this Strategy all RPs operating in Hartlepool will be encouraged to continue to offer well managed and good quality housing and participate actively in the Housing Partnership.

The Council is working proactively with local housing providers to respond to the outcomes of Welfare Reform. It aims to ensure a tailored service is provided to all residents who have been affected by the changes and to signpost them to relevant services such as Lifeline or addictive behaviour services and support them to get back into work, where appropriate. As a result of the size criteria there is relatively low demand for certain properties in some areas of the town. The Council will continue to work with partners to make best use of existing homes, increase demand and identify opportunities to increase the provision of suitable housing to meet needs.

The Council will monitor and respond carefully to ensure that the needs of local people are not adversely impacted by the measures already implemented and any future government policy.

From 1st April 2015 Housing Services took on the direct housing management role for all properties owned by the Council. This is comprised of 82 properties built during the 2009/10 Local Authority New Build programme and 100 properties acquired through the Empty Property Purchasing Scheme as part of the 2011-2015 Housing Strategy. The Council has taken on this direct role to retain and expand in-house services whilst delivering well managed and good quality accommodation for tenants. Through the lifetime of this Strategy the Council will continue to work with partners to identify opportunities to increase its portfolio.

Neighbourhoods

The level of crime and anti social behaviour within our neighbourhoods destabilise feelings of safety and security and can be a major influence on the health and wellbeing of residents. Any type of anti-social behaviour or crime affects all types of tenure. The Injunction to Prevent Nuisance and Annoyance and the Criminal Behaviour Order (CBO) are two of the new powers that will be available to tackle anti-social behaviour. The injunction will tackle low level anti-social behaviour and CBOs will be used for serious cases which result in criminal conviction. We will continue to work with the Safer Hartlepool Partnership and housing providers to respond positively to reports of anti-social behaviour and help make Hartlepool a safer place to live.

The Safer Hartlepool Partnership is in the process of refreshing ward profiles and wards identified as 'vulnerable localities' will be supported with a sustainability plan.

At a local level multi agency Joint Action Groups will continue to use a localised action plan to tackle community safety issues.

Housing Conditions

The Strategy acknowledges the essential role that good quality housing plays in promoting health, well-being, educational attainment and independence for residents, maintaining quality of life and vibrant local communities.

As evidenced earlier, the private sector in Hartlepool accounts for a large proportion of residential accommodation. A Private Sector Stock Condition Survey undertaken in Hartlepool in 2009 identified that 34.8% of stock did not meet the Government's Decent Homes Standard. It also found that the poorest housing conditions are concentrated in the oldest housing stock. The challenge for the Strategy is to work to improve conditions within the owner-occupied and private rented sectors, targeting the most vulnerable residents including encouraging reporting of poor property conditions.

Where substantial work is required to remedy Category 1 hazards (HHSRS), all available options will be fully considered including assistance, housing options advice or enforcement action, as appropriate.

A further challenge will be the lack of available funding for grants and loans which has previously been available for improvement works.

Energy Efficiency and Fuel Poverty

Fuel poverty refers to a household that cannot afford to heat its home to an adequate standard of warmth and meet its other energy needs, in order to maintain health and wellbeing.⁹

The official definition of fuel poverty is the **Low Income High Cost (LIHC) Indicator** which classes a household as being in fuel poverty if its energy costs are above the average (median) for its household type and this

⁹ An introduction to fuel poverty, UK Health Forum 2014

expenditure pushes it below the poverty line. In 2012, this meant that 11.6% (4,616) of households in Hartlepool were in fuel poverty compared to 10% of all households nationally.¹⁰

Fuel poverty is determined by the interaction between three factors:

- The energy efficiency of the home
- Energy costs
- Household income

During the 2011-2015 Housing Strategy the Council has been able, through a number of measures, to influence the impact of fuel poverty of Hartlepool residents and energy efficiency of homes. These have included:

- One-off health funding
- Home Plus Grants and Regional Loans
- Warm up North
- Collective Energy Switching

A key challenge is to continue to tackle energy efficiency of homes to help reduce fuel poverty and a priority for the strategy will be to identify new sources of funding to continue to provide financial assistance to those in need.

The Council entered into a partnership with British Gas and eight other Local Authorities in the region to deliver a scheme to improve the energy efficiency of homes in the North East and the 'Warm up North' (WuN) scheme was officially launched in September 2013.

A wide range of measures to improve energy efficiency and therefore reduce energy consumption are available through this scheme including, but not limited to, external wall insulation (cavity and solid walls), loft insulation, solar panels and replacement boilers.

Work continues to promote the take up of these measures in partnership with Warm up North and areas will be targeted on a rolling programme as well as ongoing referrals and general promotion through the distribution of literature and attendance at relevant meetings.

The Council has promoted two Collective Switching schemes which have enabled residents to come together, facilitated by an independent organisation, and negotiate with a number of suppliers to secure a better deal on their energy supply. Further schemes will be promoted during the lifetime of the Strategy.

Responding to the challenges of climate change

As a service provider the Council needs to plan ahead to be ready to deal with the likely impacts of climate change. It must consider the risks from intense weather events such as heavy rainfall causing surface water flooding and heat-waves causing homes to overheat as well as the potential for flooding from the sea caused by anticipated sea level rise.

¹⁰ Department of Energy and Climate Change (2012) Annual Report on Fuel Poverty Statistics 2012

There is a need to reduce carbon emissions and prevent further climate change in the future through better design and building techniques and the re-use and recycling of building materials. New developments must be encouraged to incorporate renewable energy generation whether on-site or remotely.

The Government has committed to reduce targeted emissions which cause climate change by 80% by 2050 (based on 1990 levels) including an interim target to reduce emissions by 26% by 2020. The Council has also signed up to the European Covenant of Mayors which commits it to reducing carbon emissions by more than 20% by 2020.

The benefits of improving the energy efficiency of existing homes includes reduced energy bills, reduced fuel poverty, warmer homes, health improvements and reduced carbon emissions.

Retrofitting existing homes to improve insulation levels, enabling them to generate their own electricity and better cope with the impacts of climate change are all important parts of climate change mitigation and adaptation. It is vital homes continue to be healthy, comfortable places to live and wherever possible do not suffer from the effects of flooding, water shortages during droughts, or from over-heating.

ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE PRIORITY 2

During the five years of this strategy we will:

- Make best use of the existing housing stock;
- Utilise the broad range of tools to make the private sector more accountable;
- Improve housing conditions in the private rented sector through the use of all enforcement powers in accordance with the Enforcement Policy;
- Work to ensure decent, safe and healthy homes in the private rented sector;
- Introduce a managing agent scheme for landlords with occupied properties;
- Work with private landlords to improve quality by introducing a second Selective Licensing designation, Voluntary Landlord Scheme and General Register of Landlords;
- Continue to monitor and enforce licences generated under the first selective licensing scheme;
- Continue to gather data any supporting evidence required in order to consider any future selective licensing proposals;
- Continue housing liaison with all Registered Providers and seek to achieve more effective local management;
- Achieve a high level of tenant satisfaction with the management of the council owned stock;
- Work in partnership with Community Safety to help make Hartlepool a safe place to live;
- Work in partnership with Community Safety to influence sustainability plans in vulnerable localities;
- Seek to provide an efficient, co-ordinated response to reports of Anti-Social Behaviour;
- Encourage tenants and home owners to take responsibility for their local living environment;
- Encourage investment into neighbourhoods;
- Support investment into areas that are adjacent to housing regeneration;
- Improve the energy efficiency of existing stock;
- Work to reduce levels of fuel poverty;
- Raise awareness of fuel poverty with agencies who visit residents in their homes; and
- Work with partners in the health and wellbeing sector to reduce health inequalities resulting from poor housing.

Chapter 7

Priority 3: Bringing long-term empty homes back into use

This chapter details how the Council will work with partners to bring long-term empty homes back into use. The challenges faced in achieving this priority include balancing incentive and enforcement action, identifying funding to undertake empty homes work and supporting investment in housing regeneration.

Summary of Planned Outcomes:

- Reduced number of long-term empty homes;
- Work with partners to explore and access funding opportunities; and
- Increased level of funding drawn in to support empty homes initiatives.

Achievements during the Empty Homes Strategy 2010-2015

- Three Compulsory Purchase actions pursued, of which two were successfully completed and one was outstanding at 31st March 2015
- Two Enforced Sales pursued for unpaid Council Tax of which one owner repaid the Council Tax debt and brought his property back into use and the other sold to the Council as part of the Empty Property Purchase Scheme.
- Over 10% of long-term empty properties back into use each year between 2011 and 2014.
- 100 empty properties purchased by Hartlepool Borough Council as part of the Empty Property Purchase Scheme.
- 60 long term empty properties refurbished as part of the Empty Homes Lease Scheme which is operated in partnership with Housing Hartlepool.
- Four long-term empty residential properties purchased by Housing Hartlepool and refurbished and brought back into use.
- Two commercial premises purchased and currently undergoing renovation into six self-contained flat units.
- Development of policies and procedures for Compulsory Purchase Orders, Enforced Sales and Empty Dwelling Management Orders.
- Improvement of Empty Homes information and communication via leaflets and the Council's website.
- Membership of the Empty Homes Network.

CASE STUDY 4 – 27 ALDERSON STREET

Legislation used – Threat of Enforced Sale (Unpaid Council Tax)

Numerous complaints were received from local residents including several reports regarding rats coming from the property – property labelled as “the rat house”. Charging Order and Enforced Sale pursued in respect of unpaid Council Tax. Owner paid Council Tax debt and signed up to the Empty Homes Lease Scheme and the property was refurbished and let at an affordable rent to a local family.

BEFORE



AFTER



CASE STUDY 5 – 36/38 PATTERNDALE STREET

Legislation used –Town and Country Planning Act 1990, Section 215 Action.

Several complaints were received from local residents of nearby properties. Properties were located directly adjacent to a Housing Market Renewal (HMR) site. A Section 215 Notice was served on the owner and the works in default were due to be undertaken by Hartlepool Borough Council. The properties were purchased by Hartlepool Borough Council refurbished, re-rendered and let as part of the Empty Property Purchase Scheme.

BEFORE



AFTER



Key Facts		Source
Vacancy Rates		
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Within Hartlepool the percentage of empty properties in the private sector exceed the national average. In 2014 the total vacancy rate was 4.6% which compared with 2.7% across England. Of these 1.8% were long-term vacant.		Hartlepool Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2015
<ul style="list-style-type: none">As at April 2013 there were 753 properties which had been empty for more than 6 months in the private sector.		HBC Council Tax data

Dwelling stock and occupancy by sub-area					Hartlepool Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2015
Sub-area	Total Dwellings	Total Households	Total Vacant	%vacant	
Burn Valley	4107	3789	318	7.7	
De Bruce	3524	3446	78	2.2	
Fens and Rossmere	3985	3895	90	2.3	
Foggy Furze	3766	3605	161	4.3	
Hart	3616	3536	80	2.2	
Headland and Harbour	3966	3731	235	5.9	
Jesmond	3917	3737	180	4.6	
Manor House	4613	4484	129	2.8	
Rural West	2976	2894	82	2.8	
Seaton	3723	3617	106	2.8	
Victoria	4406	3897	509	11.6	
Total	42599	40631	1968	4.6	

Why is this a priority?

Empty Homes in the Private Sector

In order to make the best use of existing housing and complement Priority 2 of the Housing Strategy; efforts are focussed on bringing long-term empty properties back into use. As at April 2013 there were 753 properties in Hartlepool which had been empty for six months or more. Bringing empty homes back into use can be an effective method for increasing housing supply, whilst helping to reduce the need to build new homes.

Through the Housing Strategy it is important that there is a focus on linking housing need and demand strategically to existing homes and innovative solutions developed to bring these issues together.

The Council will continue to help owners who want to bring empty properties back into use and it will utilise a wide range of enforcement powers where needed.

Tackling empty properties and the use of enforcement powers is a key challenge for the Council which will need to be sufficiently resourced during the lifetime of this Strategy if it is to make a significant impact and a real difference is to be made in local neighbourhoods.

Whilst tackling empty properties across all sectors is important, the biggest challenge for the Council is to concentrate its resources towards the private sector. Responding to empty properties in the social sector will be carried out in partnership with RPs.

The associated issues of the oversupply of pre-1919 terraced properties will continue to be tackled through housing regeneration.

The key aim of this Priority is, therefore, to bring private sector empty homes back into use and to acknowledge the concerns of the community about empty homes and the associated issues that relate to the image of the town. The intention is to bring appropriate empty homes back into use, using a

range of flexible solutions and to reduce the number of empty homes by at least 10% each year until an accepted level of 3% vacancy is achieved. It is accepted that 3% of properties need to be vacant to allow a housing market to function effectively and facilitate residential mobility.

Reasons for tackling long-term empty homes

There are a number of strategic reasons why it is important to tackle the issue of properties remaining long-term empty in the town:

- Empty homes are a wasted asset where there is unmet need for certain types and location of housing.
- To maximise the use of the existing stock and minimise the number of new homes that need to be built each year. However, the mismatch between the existing stock and aspirations needs to be considered.
- To contribute towards neighbourhood sustainability and community well-being through:
 - An increased stock of good quality housing;
 - Reducing nuisance and negative environmental impact caused by empty homes i.e. crime, fly tipping, vandalism, vermin and arson;
 - Safeguarding and protecting new build redevelopments in regeneration areas;
 - Promoting regeneration and investment in affected areas;
 - Reducing damp and other problems for neighbouring properties;
 - Helping to meet local housing need, therefore reducing the need for new build homes and the potential reduction of greenfield land development;
 - Discouraging local property price devaluation;
 - Cutting carbon emissions by renovating and undertaking home improvements rather than building new homes;
 - Increasing health outcomes for people; and
 - Encouraging economic vitality through increased trade for local businesses and increasing employment opportunities.
- To reduce the direct and indirect financial costs borne by empty property owners, neighbours, and public services such as the local authority, police and fire services.

Why do homes become long-term empty?

Homes are empty for different reasons and we need to understand the causes in order to provide effective solutions. The main reason identified for the high number of empty private sector homes is the overstock of small, pre 1919 terraced homes in areas of low demand. Other reasons include:

- Neglect by owners / abandonment due to lack of value;
- Disputes over ownership;
- Inability to sell e.g. negative equity;

- Repossession / bankruptcy;
- Deceased estate / probate disputes;
- Ownership of the property unknown; and
- Speculative purchase (buy to let/buy to leave).

An effective strategy for dealing with empty homes will ensure owners of these properties are informed of all the options available, the benefits of filling an empty home and the enforcement options available to Hartlepool Borough Council.

Existing Initiatives and Joint Working

A number of initiatives to encourage and promote the return of empty properties into occupation and promote sustainability have been identified:

- The Good Tenant Scheme
- Private Sector housing complaints service
- Compulsory Purchase Orders
- Selective Licensing within designated areas
- Development of measures such as the Voluntary Landlord Scheme, General Register of Landlords and Social Lettings Agency as previously mentioned within Priority 2

In addition, from 1 April 2012 there is no longer a 50% discount on an empty property with 100% council tax due after a property is empty for 1 month.

From 1 April 2013 a 150% council tax premium is due for properties which have been empty for 2 years or more.

Provision of Advice and Assistance

The Council will continue to engage owners and, where possible, work in partnership with them to find the right solutions through the provision of advice and assistance on:

- Redevelopment/planning consents;
- Finding a contractor/managing repairs;
- Finding a tenant through the Compass Choice Based Lettings (CBL) scheme;
- How to sell the property;
- Renting/leasing the property or finding a letting agent such as the Council's Social Lettings Agency;
- How to use the Council's Good Tenant scheme;
- How landlords can provide effective management of both occupied and vacant properties;
- Compliance with the Selective Licensing scheme conditions;
- Encouraging private landlords to engage with and promote education and tenancy sustainment programmes; and
- How to work with other organisations e.g. Community Campus 87 Ltd and Hartlepool NDC Trust to refurbish empty properties and bring them back into use.

Direct acquisition of properties – Empty Property Purchase Scheme

The Empty Property Purchasing Scheme involves the Council acquiring empty properties by agreement and refurbishing them, where necessary, in order to bring them back into use. These properties are subsequently owned and directly managed by Hartlepool Borough Council. The Council has received Homes and Communities Agency funding via the 2015-2018 National Affordable Housing Programme to acquire a further 60 properties over the next 3 years.

The Empty Homes Lease Scheme

The Empty Homes Lease Scheme is a partnership between Hartlepool Borough Council and Housing Hartlepool whereby owners of empty properties enter into a lease agreement with Housing Hartlepool for a period of years (usually between 5 and 10 years). This project is based upon a grant/loan approach in order to undertake the refurbishment works necessary to return an empty property back into use. Properties are subsequently managed by Housing Hartlepool (Thirteen Group).

Enforcement Options

- **Tackling security/nuisance issues - Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1982.** This is used to prevent unauthorised entry or for the purpose of preventing the property from becoming a danger to public health. Works can be carried out in default where an owner does not give a verbal agreement to carry out the works and costs are recharged back to the owner.
- **Tackling nuisance issues - Environmental Protection Act 1990.** Used to remove rubbish from empty properties and to carry out works to remedy the cause of the nuisance, e.g. dampness caused by a defect.
- **Tackling visual impact – Section 215, Town and Country Planning Act 1990.** Poor visual impact is one of the most common complaints about an empty home. The Council can serve notice on owners who fail to maintain their properties. It deals with the external appearance (the visual amenity) but does not deal with the internal aspects. It will not necessarily result in the property being returned to use.
- **Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS)** – introduced by the Housing Act 2004 the HHSRS is a system which is used to assess residential properties based on the risks posed to health and safety and places a duty on Local Authorities to take action where Category 1 hazards exist.
- **Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) – Section 17, Housing Act 1985** which removes ownership from the current owner to the Council. It may only be used if the Council can demonstrate that it has taken

other measures to bring the property back into use and has a robust plan for the re-occupation/use/management of the property. This option shifts responsibility from the owner to the Council for bringing the property back into use and requires public resources.

- **Enforced Sale – Section 103, Law of Property Act 1925** which allows the Council to force the sale of a property subject to a local land charge following works in default action by the Council. The sale allows the Council to recover debt owed by the owner and also costs incurred as a result of the enforced sale. This tool may indirectly prompt the new owner to return the property to use.
- **Empty Dwelling Management Order (EDMO) – Section 132 Housing Act 2004** The Council can apply to a Residential Property Tribunal to take over a property and to repair, let and manage it on behalf of the landlord for up to seven years. Costs can be recouped from the rental income. However, it may mean that only properties with relatively low repair costs will be financially viable.

Prioritising Action

A targeted approach will be used to bring properties back into use in areas that have been identified for proactive action. Empty homes will be brought back into use, using a range of flexible solutions appropriate to the property.

Figure 3 outlines the options available and the flowchart that will be followed to determine the course of action that will be taken.

A key action is to bring 10% of all long-term empty properties back into use and to identify properties suitable for enforcement action where engagement with the owner(s) has failed. In order to demonstrate this ongoing work a table of the “Top 20” empty properties has been developed and this monitors progress and assists in implementing the most appropriate form of enforcement action. The table includes properties which have been empty for the longest time and those in key strategic locations or have caused greatest concern to the local community through complaints. Each individual case is assessed on its merits and appropriate informal action taken followed by enforcement action if necessary.

Empty properties are assessed for action using the Empty Property Assessment Form which is a points based system. The Form is used to gauge the most appropriate enforcement action for a particular case. The intention is to return properties to meaningful use based on consistent and transparent criteria and policy. This takes into account factors such as:

- Condition/environmental impact/number of complaints received
- Time empty
- Number of empty properties in the same street

Although most of the proactive work will be within the identified areas it must be recognised that on occasion there will be the need to deal with empty homes outside of these areas and also the need to deal with non residential dwellings.

The appropriate course of action for any individual property will depend upon whether the owner can be located and if they are willing to bring it back into use.

End Use of Properties

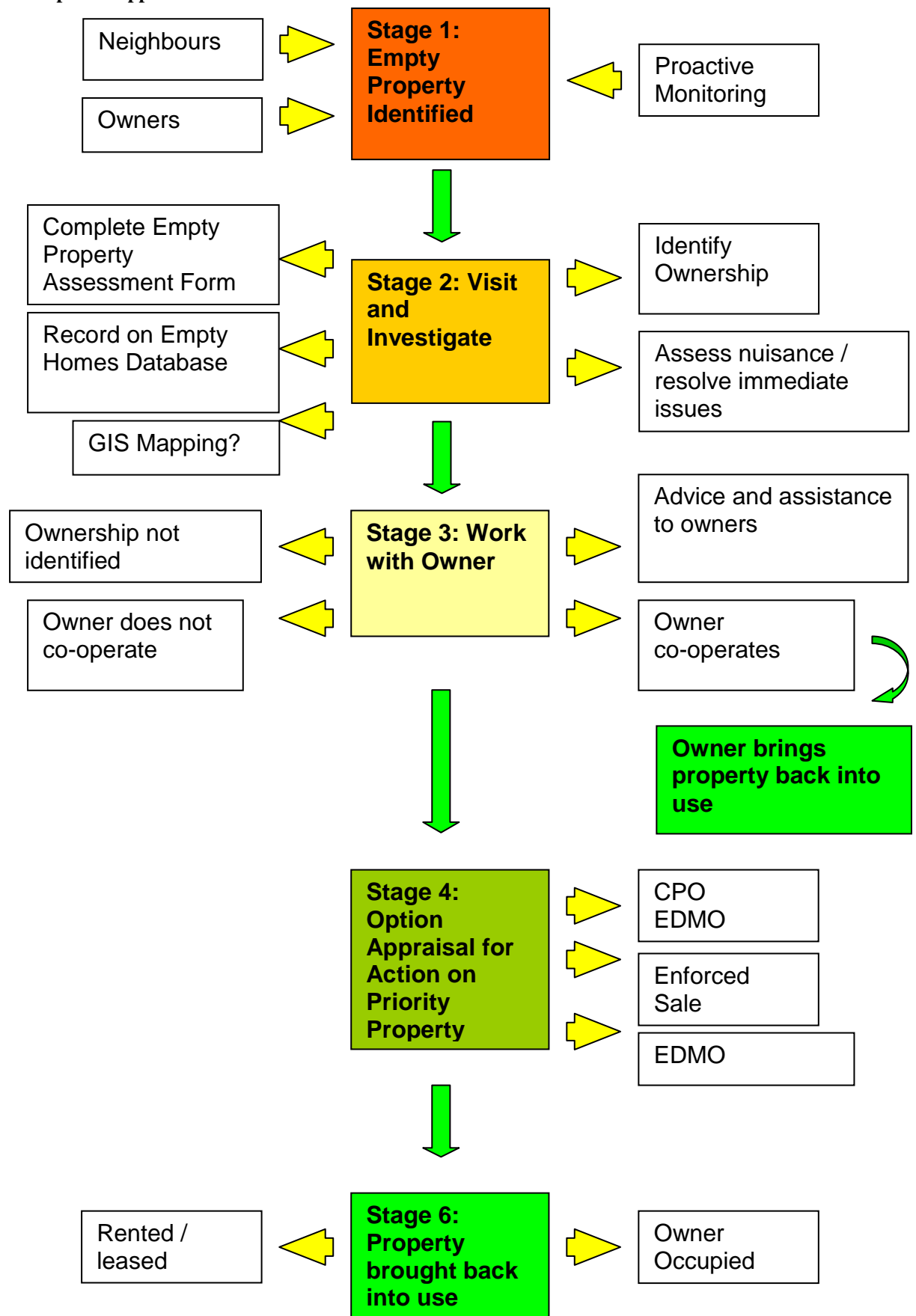
The location and type of property brought back into use will be important in deciding what residential use is appropriate.

Options for end use include:

- Retained ownership – Council Empty Property Purchasing Scheme
- Leasing with Registered Providers e.g. Empty Homes Lease Scheme
- Disposal of Compulsory Purchase Order properties to Registered Providers
- Properties advertised for rent on Compass Choice Based Lettings Scheme
- Properties managed by the Council's Social Lettings Agency
- Disposal of Compulsory Purchase Order properties on the open market

Empty homes brought back into use through this Strategy will be delivered and monitored according to the demand for that property type and location.

Figure 3 - Options Appraisal Framework



ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE PRIORITY 3

During the five years of this strategy we will:

- Bring 10% of the total number of long-term empty homes back into use annually;
- Proactively use flexible solutions and appropriate enforcement action to bring long-term empty homes back into use;
- Where empty properties present a risk to adjoining properties or neighbourhoods, continue to work with residents, landlords and agents to encourage them to be brought back into use;
- Support investment in housing regeneration and adjacent areas through the reduction of long-term empty homes;
- Increase the amount of available good quality and affordable rented housing;
- Work with partners to prevent homes becoming long-term empty; and
- Bring empty commercial properties back into use by converting them into residential accommodation where appropriate.

Chapter 8

Priority 4: Improving health and wellbeing; promoting sustainability by supporting people with specific housing needs

This chapter details how the Council will work with partners to meet the specific housing needs of vulnerable people to support independent living. The challenges faced in achieving this priority include ensuring that there is a variety of housing options to meet different needs. There are particular pressures for finding suitable housing solutions for people with learning and other disabilities, as well as housing for a growing older population, addressing Black and Minority Ethnic housing needs and funding housing adaptations to enable independent living.

Summary of Planned Outcomes:

- People with specific housing needs will have improved housing options;
- There will be increased supported housing options for vulnerable people, including the provision for older people and people with dementia;
- The needs and aspirations of the minority ethnic groups will be clearly understood in order to ensure services are responsive to their needs.

Achievements during the Housing Strategy 2011-2015

Homelessness

- Review of the Compass Allocation Policy in 2012;
- Procedure put in place to inspect the private rented sector on order to discharge the Council's homelessness duty;
- Rose House opened with accommodation and support for young people between 16 and 24 working with social services;
- Rough sleeper count undertaken in October 2011 which found no rough sleepers in Hartlepool.

Independent Living

- Production of The Housing Care and Support Strategy in 2012;
- Increased use of assistive technology by RPs;
- Review of the Adaptations Policy and evidence updated in 2013;
- Monthly housing allocations meetings established specific to the housing needs of people with a learning disability;
- Improved range of information and advice for people with a learning disability and their carers on housing related issues;
- Evaluation of the extra care housing provision in 2013;
- 608 major adaptations undertaken via Disabled Facilities Grant; and
- 4159 low level adaptations undertaken such as grab rails.

CASE STUDY 6 – ADAPTATIONS PANEL

The 2010 Adaptations Policy introduced an *Adaptations Operations Panel*. The purpose of this panel is to bring together appropriate responsible officers from the Council and its partners involved in the process for adapting privately owned and socially rented properties in Hartlepool to meet the needs of residents with physical impairment or disability. The panel meets to discuss referrals when a registered provider has refused to fund an adaptation to their property or where it is a complex case such as an extension, multiple adaptations or changes in circumstances to previous applications. It is responsible for deciding what is reasonable and practicable according to current legislation and guidance in approving applications to provide funding for adaptations to properties.

The panel has successfully dealt with a complex case that has been ongoing since 1995 and has resulted in a positive outcome for the client. This case was brought to the panel in July 2012. It involved a client who needs a wheelchair and who is an owner-occupier. At this time a request had been made for an extension to the front of the property, through floor lift, level access shower and alterations to all the upstairs internal walls. The reason for the referral was due to the cost of the works involved – estimated at £30,000. But, in addition to this it was also deemed that with these alterations the first floor of the property would still not be manageable in a wheelchair and meet the long term needs of the client. Over the previous years adaptations had been made to the property as a compromise and keep the client in their own home, such as the installation of a stair lift and ceiling track hoist. Re-housing had been discussed and the clients applied to the housing waiting list in 2010. However, they were reluctant to move into rented accommodation and use up their equity on rent.

The panel discussed the case in July 2012 and decided that one of the options would be to liaise with developing registered providers to ascertain if any of the bungalows currently being built could be done so on a shared ownership basis and, if so, would the client be interested. The Occupational Therapist and Special Needs Housing Manager contacted the clients and a bungalow which was being built by Housing Hartlepool at Cecil Court was identified as being an attractive option to the client. Liaison took place with Housing Hartlepool and it was decided that the property could be built as a shared ownership unit. The clients have purchased 75% (the maximum amount allowed) and moved into the property in June 2013. The council purchased new laminate flooring and offered to pay for removals for the clients as an incentive for them to be re-housed. In addition Housing Hartlepool purchased their existing property.

CASE STUDY 7 – HOUSING PATHWAY FOR VULNERABILITY

Mr A is 52, has an autistic spectrum condition, a moderate learning disability and other diagnosed conditions including bi-polar disorder and OCD. He finds it difficult to cope with certain aspects of everyday life, for example, interacting with other people, and this has had a negative impact on his quality of his life.

When he lived with other people in a residential home, sharing communal areas and tasks proved difficult for Mr A. Due to his anxieties about things 'being right', his behaviour could sometimes be physically challenging to those around him. Mr A also lived in a warden-controlled building, but his need to be liked and please people became an issue with his neighbours as he would visit them uninvited and would be forceful to gain entry. Mr A is 6ft 3in tall and speaks very loudly, and some of his elderly neighbours felt intimidated and complained to the local authority.

Eventually his support provider, which did not specialise in supporting people like A, felt they could no longer support him and he was admitted to a treatment and assessment centre.

In 2012 Dimensions, a national not-for-profit support organisation for people with autism and learning disabilities, was asked to provide an individualised package of support for Mr A.

Dimensions' Behaviour Support Team focused on autism training and put in place a person-centred Positive Behaviour Support Plan which aimed to eliminate or minimise challenging behaviour and enhance quality of life.

This approach allows for positive outcomes for individuals, and can also reduce costs. The technique allows people to move away from treatment and assessment centres to personalised support in the community.

Dimensions is committed to providing personalised services and tailoring packages of support around people's individual needs, including for people with the most challenging behaviours and complex conditions. The progress Mr A has made demonstrates how a positive behaviour approach can change people's lives, and why it is important to move away from institutional settings.

Since Mr A began being supported by Dimensions there has been some incidents deemed as challenging behaviour. The staff team that he personally recruited still work with him. They have helped Mr A to replace negative experiences, which gained him a reputation for being aggressive, with a more positive view that Mr A is a friendly, happy and caring man.

He is also proud to say he now has his own permanent home and tenancy with Four Housing.

BME Housing Needs

- Regular monitoring through Compass of housing applications and lettings to minority ethnic groups; and
- Honour Based Violence and Forced Marriages (HALO) project established to support victims.

The Evidence and Challenges for the Housing Strategy

Table 7 details the specific challenges associated with delivering this priority

Table 7 – Priority 4: Key Facts

Table 7 – Priority 4: Key Facts				
Key Facts				Source
Population Changes				
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Over the next few decades there is expected to be an increase in the number and proportion of residents aged 65 and over which will increase by 50.6%, from 17,000 in 2014 to 25,600 in 2037;In the same time period the proportion of residents aged under 65 is expected to fall 5% from 75,600 in 2014 to 71,800 in 2037.				Hartlepool Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2015
Dementia Rates				
The numbers of people in Hartlepool who will have dementia is projected to increase considerably:				HBC Child and Adults Department
	2014	2020	2030	
aged 65+	1,171	1,358	1,811	
aged 85+	492	629	894	
Waiting List				
As at March 2015 there were 18,655 active applicants on the Tees Valley housing register, of which 3,092 were registered in Hartlepool. 1,012 were banded in Priority Bands 1-3.				Compass Housing Register
Across the Tees Valley the age profile of active applicants is:				
Under 25		13%		
25 – 59		63%		
60+		24%		
83% of current applicants are registered as White British.				
Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG)				
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Funding since 2010/11 has increased for DFGs with additional funding identified from health and from social care.During 2013/14 116 DFGs were completed and The average waiting time for referral from Occupational Therapy to a DFG application was 195 days.RP's continued to fund adaptations for tenants in				Hartlepool Housing Adaptations Policy Review 2013

their own stock. However 24% of the Council's budget in 2012/13 was spent on RP properties.																
Ethnicity																
<table border="1"><tr><td>White British</td><td>97.6</td></tr><tr><td>Other Ethnicity</td><td>2.4</td></tr><tr><td></td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Mixed</td><td>0.8</td></tr><tr><td>Black</td><td>0.1</td></tr><tr><td>Asian</td><td>1.1</td></tr><tr><td>Other Ethnic Group</td><td>0.4</td></tr></table>		White British	97.6	Other Ethnicity	2.4			Mixed	0.8	Black	0.1	Asian	1.1	Other Ethnic Group	0.4	Census 2011
White British	97.6															
Other Ethnicity	2.4															
Mixed	0.8															
Black	0.1															
Asian	1.1															
Other Ethnic Group	0.4															
BME Households																
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The two most ethnically diverse wards are Victoria (5.6% of heads of household have an ethnicity other than White British) and Burn Valley (3%).• 35.5% are owner-occupiers, 29.4% rent privately and 35.1% live in affordable housing (social rented or intermediate tenures).• 40.8% have a gross income of less than £200 each week.• 17.5% are in some form of housing need (mobility impairments, other special needs, sharing facilities).• 40 people with Gypsy and Traveller ethnicity living in 12 households.		Hartlepool Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2015														

Why is this a priority?

Supporting People to live independently

In 2013, the Council reviewed the way housing adaptations, Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs) and rehousing options are utilised to enable people to live independently in their current or future homes. The Housing Adaptations policy aims to deliver the vision of supporting people to live as independently as possible in homes that are safe and comfortable. This Strategy reinforces the key principles of improving services for people with disabilities and improving the standard of living, health and well-being of communities.

Changes to the funding regime now mean that the DFG budget is included in the Better Care Fund. Housing Services will continue to work in partnership with social care and health to look for new opportunities for meeting the housing needs of people with physical disabilities that might arise from the integration of services through the Better Care Fund.

The Council recognises that health, housing, social care and support are inextricably linked. Appropriate support and care services can help people to remain independent and enjoy living in their homes for as long as possible. Well maintained, warm, secure and suitable housing can help prevent unnecessary admissions to hospital or institutional care.

It is recognised that the Council has a valuable contribution to make to this priority through the provision of new housing appropriate to the needs of

vulnerable people, an effective advice service and housing related support. The Council can also help by assisting people to maintain their current home, or making it more suitable for their needs.

Housing Related Support provided by the Council's Child and Adult Services department offers vulnerable people the opportunity to improve their quality of life by giving them access to the support they need to live more independent lives. The ongoing delivery of Housing Related Support services is therefore vital to the strategy's aim of improving housing options and supporting independent living.

The housing needs of vulnerable people have to be balanced against other priorities. However, the Council supports people to remain in or work towards independent living, helping them to participate in mainstream society and make a contribution to the local economy. This will be achieved through looking at a range of opportunities to help improve access to different types of housing, delivering services to people's homes and where appropriate developing purpose built specialist accommodation to meet needs. In the future, work will be focussed on assisting people to live independently with support. Affordability issues for people to move into appropriate accommodation will also need consideration.

The challenge is to meet the needs of individuals by providing greater housing choice. To do this the focus will be on developing new homes where feasible but primarily making best use of the existing homes available. A number of options will be utilised to support this approach, ranging from carrying out home adaptations to providing low level support to people to help them maintain independent living. This needs to be considered in the context of what future funding will enable the Council to do.

The Council works with partners to ensure the housing needs of people with disabilities are addressed. When available, affordable rented accommodation that has been specifically designed or adapted is prioritised for people with disabilities. This is achieved through Compass CBL where vacancies are advertised specifically for people with a mobility problem.

A challenge for the Strategy is to work towards ensuring the Lifetime Homes Standard is applied to all suitable housing sites. When new homes are built the Council will, where there is identified need on a site by site basis, encourage that a percentage of all housing is capable of being adapted for households with a disability.

Supporting People with Learning Disabilities

Approximately 1.5% of Hartlepool resident are living with a learning disability, a number that is predicted to remain steady in the years to 2020. Since the last Strategy the number of people with a learning disability in Hartlepool who live in settled accommodation such as the family home, own tenancy, etc has increased from 65% to 72%. The aim over the next 3 years is to improve this figure to 75%. In Hartlepool there has been a reduction in residential care as the housing model of choice.

In 2009 a local needs analysis was undertaken and this informed the Housing, Care and Support Strategy for People with Learning Disabilities and this was approved by the Disability Partnership Board. The analysis identified 6 key recommendations and these were used to develop the Housing Care and Support Strategy for People with Learning Disabilities' Action Plan.

While residential care is the most appropriate option for some people, it is not the solution for everybody. Promoting choice and independence are key themes in national and local priorities, and reflect what many people with learning disabilities want.

Comprehensive planning for housing need is integral to the Housing Strategy. Work will continue to ensure that a variety of options, including different forms of supported and shared living, exist. This will enable people to live as independently as possible, if that is the option they choose.

The Council will continue to work with partners to improve housing options for people with learning disabilities. However, it is recognised that there is still work to be done to ensure that people with learning disabilities do not face unnecessary barriers in accessing homes that meet their needs.

Supporting People on the Autistic Spectrum

In Hartlepool, 1% of the population is identified on the autistic spectrum. In 2015 a self-assessment was undertaken in line with the recommendations from the Autism Act 2009. The Department of Health¹¹ identified essential quality outcomes for local delivery. For people in this client group the design of light and sound within the property is an important issue and through the Housing Strategy the housing needs of people with autism needs to be considered.

Supporting People with Mental Health Needs

In 2015, there were 9000 people aged 18-64 in Hartlepool with a common mental health disorder, this is expected to decrease slightly to 8,943 by 2018.

In 2014 Hartlepool hosted a day-long event to gather the views of people (and their families) who use mental health services. These consultations confirmed the view that accommodation is a significant issue for people with mental health issues.

Housing Related Support

Housing related support and services provided by RPs can have a significant impact on the physical health and mental well-being of their tenants. The homes and services they provide can help to tackle health inequalities, work to prevent re-admissions to hospital and speed up hospital discharge. The

¹¹ Towards "Fulfilling and rewarding lives", Department of Health, 2010

Council has responsibility for contracting with providers and monitoring performance through individual outcomes monitoring.

Supported housing providers in Hartlepool provide support to older people with support needs, offenders, people with learning disabilities, people with mental health problems, people with alcohol problems, single homeless people, teenage parents, women at risk of domestic violence and young people at risk.

Since the last Housing Strategy, the Council has re-commissioned the following:

- supported housing for young people at risk;
- supported housing for offenders;
- alcohol service; and
- floating support service for complex needs.

The Council has a structured process for commissioning supported housing services going forward. The Council will continue to work with supported housing providers to assist the most vulnerable in communities to access the correct services and to ensure that such services are able to react to change.

Older People (including supporting people with dementia)

The Council aims to ensure that older people are enabled to remain in their own home if that is what they choose, including specialist accommodation such as extra care housing. There is an emphasis on moving from commissioning residential and nursing care and instead providing home based support and preventative work to enable people to live at home for longer. It is recognised that a greater number of support services will be required to achieve this. Investment will be required in a range of innovative solutions and services including aids and adaptations.

Over the next few decades the older population in Hartlepool will continue to rise and this will present ongoing challenges in terms of ensuring access to housing choice. The Council will seek to identify and deliver a range of alternative accommodation and support models, in order to improve the housing options available to older residents. Providing older people with sufficient information and advice to make informed choices about their housing, care and support needs is critical.

The last Strategy identified that 457 units of extra care accommodation had been developed in Hartlepool and over 105 units of bedsit accommodation have been decommissioned in the town by Housing Hartlepool and Anchor Trust.

It will also be encouraged where there is identified need and on a site by site basis that a percentage of all new affordable houses, bungalows and ground floor flats are built to mobility standards. This will help to ensure that the Council can focus on helping people to stay in their own homes for as long as possible and ensure those who cannot, have access to a suitable home to meet their needs.

Increasing life expectancy means more people will reach older age. As life expectancy rises it is expected that dementia related illnesses generally associated with older age will also rise.

The numbers of people in Hartlepool who will have dementia is projected to increase considerably over the period to 2030. In March 2012 the Government launched 'challenge on dementia' which set out a series of commitments, including creating dementia friendly communities. The Council recognises that the traditional support systems that see people with dementia as an 'exception' will not be able to cope and that the best option is for people to live in the community.

Access by people with dementia or cognitive impairment to mainstream physical support, and accommodation can be problematic. The North Tees Dementia Collaborative has started to make inroads into some of these issues as is the "Working to Build a Dementia Friendly Hartlepool" project.

In terms of accessing alternative accommodation, the ability of a person with dementia to adapt to a new environment is critical. Changes are best made as early as possible so that they can learn and orientate themselves to the new environment. This is acknowledged in the extra care allocation procedure. Through this Strategy we aim to work in partnership with social care to develop the role housing can play in meeting the challenges of creating dementia friendly communities.

A recent investigation by the Council's Audit and Scrutiny Committee working party into the support available to people with dementia reported to full Council in March 2015. Their conclusions include:

- One of the key messages regarding dementia is that 'people can live well with dementia' and it is important that people understand this. There is also a need for appropriate support to be provided to people with dementia to help them live at home for as long as possible;
- Services for dementia have improved over the years and this progress now needs to be built upon with all sectors and organisations;
- Hartlepool as a dementia friendly community was supported by the group; and
- Regarding early diagnosis, it is essential that people have knowledge of the signs / symptoms of dementia and also the services available in order to help the individual person.

Dementia therefore needs to be addressed in all settings including housing and appropriate accommodation.

It is recognised, however, that meeting the housing needs of older people cannot happen only through new provision. A greater understanding is needed of what housing and related support provision will be required.

Priority through the Allocation Policy

For people whose housing conditions have a detrimental impact on their health, priority is given through the allocation policy to ensure that their housing needs are appropriately met. Medical priority will be awarded according to the extent to which the health of the applying household is affected by their housing conditions and the expected benefit of providing suitable alternative accommodation. Welfare priority may also be awarded to applicants who cannot be expected to live in their current accommodation without suffering detriment, such as: people assessed as ready for independent living who need to move as part of an agreed plan to re-integrate into the community; people with learning disabilities who are assessed as having to move in order to receive care and support; or where their current housing is having a detrimental effect on their quality of life and ability to live independently; or people leaving local authority care following a referral from social services e.g. people leaving rehabilitative care to return to independent living.

Black & Minority Ethnic (BME) Housing Needs

During the Housing Strategy 2011-2015 monitoring has taken place regarding the number of lettings to applicants from the BME community in Hartlepool. The percentage of applicants on the Compass CBL waiting list has remained consistent at 1.4%. During 2013-14, 4.3% of all lettings went to BME applicants, which was an increase from 1.27% during 2012-13.

The 2011 BME Housing Study identified the following:

- BME groups still desire to be homeowners;
- Shared ownership schemes are an option for the younger, working aged community (20-44);
- There is a lack of understanding of eligibility for social housing and a negative image of the CBL system;
- There is limited knowledge of available housing products, eligibility and access;
- The options for social housing are limited due to size and location of properties;
- There are poor standards of accommodation for participants in the study who are living in private rented accommodation;
- Overcrowding issues among BME communities are evident in the private rented sector and in owner-occupation;
- Neighbourhood problems exist in relation to anti-social behaviour and racial harassment.

Work will continue during the lifetime of this Strategy to respond to these issues.

Gypsies and Travellers

In 2014, a Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment was carried out in Hartlepool which found a hypothetical need for five Gypsy and Traveller pitches in Hartlepool between 2016 and 2031. In theory, demand for four of those pitches is likely to occur over the next five years, with the remaining

pitch being required at some time in the following five year period. The assessment found that there was no requirement to carry out an analysis of plot requirements for Travelling Showpeople because none are living in Hartlepool.

Taking all the evidence into consideration the report suggests that in the first instance, the provision of a dedicated Gypsy and Traveller site in the Borough, whether permanent or stop-over, may not offer the best solution to meeting the small theoretical housing need established through the accommodation assessment. The report concludes that no actual demand to live on a dedicated site is ever likely to be forthcoming and therefore the Council has committed to proactively supporting any member of the Gypsy and Traveller community needing re-housing, to explore their housing options, and does not seek to provide a dedicated site for Gypsy and Travellers in the new Local Plan. Support from the Council will include access to currently available bricks and mortar housing, with referral to support agencies if necessary, as well as awareness-raising about the full range of accommodation options and how to pursue them.

ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE PRIORITY 4

During the five years of this strategy we will:

- Improve the range of housing options and support for vulnerable people;
- Improve the range of housing options and support for older/disabled people;
- Maintain people in local communities to avoid unnecessary admission to long-term residential and nursing care;
- Promote the health, wellbeing and independence of older and disabled people through housing related services;
- Monitor the needs of the BME and gypsy and traveller communities via Choice Based Lettings;
- Understand the needs and aspirations of the local BME (including gypsy and traveller) population and ensure services are responsive to their needs;
- Manage our Disabled Facilities Grant budgets to ensure that we can help as many people as possible by working with partners to ensure that adapted properties remain adapted in perpetuity;
- Work with partners to develop integrated services that meet the housing needs of people with physical disabilities through the Better Care Fund; and
- Work in partnership with social care to develop the role of housing in creating a dementia friendly town.

Chapter 9

Priority 5: Preventing homelessness and providing options

This chapter details how the Council will work with partners to deliver improved early intervention and homelessness prevention services to residents in Hartlepool who find themselves homeless, threatened with homelessness or in a housing crisis. The challenges faced in achieving this priority include ensuring that there is a variety of housing options to meet different needs. There are also challenges in addressing the wider areas of health, employment and developing skill capacity for people to be independent. Mitigating the impact of welfare reforms on vulnerable households' ability to obtain and sustain affordable housing are also important issues to be addressed.

Summary of Planned Outcomes:

- A joined up multi agency approach to homeless prevention in place;
- High quality advice, assistance and early intervention in place to prevent homelessness;
- There is minimal impact of welfare reform on residents; and
- Improved access to social housing.

Achievements during the Homelessness Strategy 2010-2015

- Expansion of the eviction protocol to all RPs.
- Implementation of No Second Night Out and provision of a crash pad at Scott Grange.
- Protocol developed for homeless 16/17 year olds.
- Supported Housing Panel continues to facilitate successful move on.

CASE STUDY 8 – EVICTION PROTOCOL

A registered provider had a long standing tenant who had been with them for 10 years. However, in 2014 the tenant ceased making rent payments and received a letter from the landlord to advise them that they would be evicted as the arrears had reached over £1,000.

The tenant was being charged for under occupation of their three bedroom house and also had an overpayment of benefit to be paid back. The landlord had previously helped by awarding the tenant £9 each week from their own discretionary housing fund but the tenant did not keep up their side of the arrangement. The tenant's son would turn 18 soon and will be entitled to JSA but up until then the tenant had not had any income for him.

Investigations by the Housing Advice Team identified that the tenant suffered from Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease, her ex-partner and siblings suffered from mental health issues and she did not have anyone to support her.

The Housing Advice Team applied for assistance from the local welfare support team to support a Discretionary Housing Payment (DHP) claim and also to pursue match funding (up to £300) for any financial support that the tenant might be able to receive from her parents.

Following more discussions the tenant admitted a gambling problem which they insisted was over but had caused obvious issues in the past.

Intervention via the Eviction Protocol resulted in the tenant being assisted with a successful DHP application which paid out £400. The tenant also received £300 from the Preventing Repossessions Fund. The warrant for eviction was suspended for 28 days on the condition that the tenant paid £10 weekly and the Housing Advice Team assisted a further DHP application in April 2015. At present the tenant continues to be supported to sustain their long-term tenancy and is being assisted with the other underlying issues which were identified during the eviction protocol process.

The Evidence and Challenges for the Housing Strategy

Key Facts					Source
Homelessness decisions and acceptances					
In 2013/14 homelessness acceptance figures increased to 35 from 9 the previous year.					CLG P1E Returns
Homelessness acceptances are highest amongst young people.					
People seeking housing advice					
					CLG P1E Returns
	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15*	
Number of people seeking help from the Housing Advice Team	3,516	3,171	3,416	2,526	
*These figures were collected until the Housing Advice Team moved out of the Housing Options Centre in June 2014					
The number of people seeking help from the Housing Advice Team has increased considerably from 1,755 in 2010/11 to over 3,000 in subsequent years.					
These figures relate to everyone who accessed the service from one off advice queries to completing a housing or good tenant scheme application.					
Homelessness prevented and housing advice					
					CLG P1E Returns
	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	
Homelessness	331	277	322	297	

Prevented					
Housing Advice given	1,371	1,125	1,059	1,136	
These figures relate to active casework where intervention is required.					

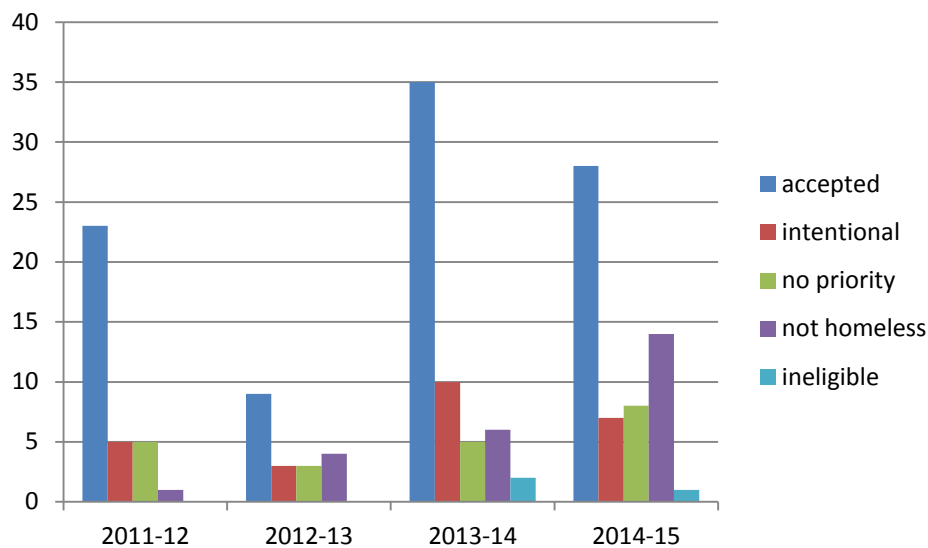
Homelessness Strategy Review

A review of homelessness in Hartlepool was undertaken to inform this priority of the Housing Strategy. This review identified that:

- Homelessness is prevented for approximately 300 households each year;
- Demand for services has increased since the introduction of welfare reform with the number of people seeking help from the Housing Advice Team almost doubling;
- Resources have reduced during the 2010-2015 Homelessness Strategy with cuts in Housing Related Support and a number of schemes decommissioned;
- Demand for family sized accommodation in some areas of the town has decreased and bidding activity on Compass has reduced with certain properties being advertised on multiple bidding cycles;
- There has been a reduction in the number of under 25's approaching the Housing Advice Team for assistance;
- Clients with chaotic lifestyles, substance misuse and mental health problems continue to have limited housing options;
- Hartlepool has the second highest level of re-offenders across England;
- At March 2015 there were 612 clients in drug treatment, of these 51 presented to treatment as no fixed abode and many more have become homeless at some point during their treatment journey;
- No clients have used the crash pad at Scott Grange through the No Second Night Out initiative, however 15 people have occupied it as emergency accommodation, which were mainly prison leavers;
- Just half of clients surveyed during February 2015 knew the Housing Advice Service existed at the Civic Centre;
- Two thirds of clients surveyed thought there were barriers to being re-housed, the biggest barrier being their past housing history;
- One third of clients surveyed admitted to having mental health issues;
- Agencies identified the following main issues:
 - Lack of properties with support for 16-18 year olds
 - Impacts of welfare reform
 - Access to a bond for the private rented sector
 - Need for support for people with mental health issues
 - Lack of independent living skills to sustain a tenancy
 - Family and relationship breakdowns
 - Social exclusion for people leaving institutions or with mental health issues
 - Benefit sanctions
 - Lack of information about all services
 - Access to services via the phone and internet

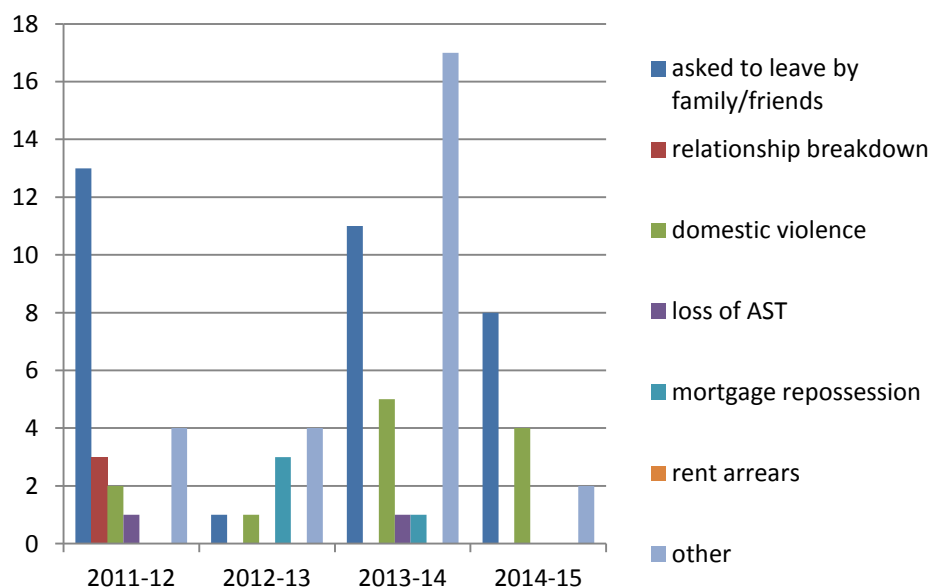
Levels of homelessness continue to be low in Hartlepool, however it can be seen that since the Welfare Reform Act 2012 that homeless acceptances have increased with a peak during 2013-14.

Figure 2 - Homeless Acceptances



Traditionally the main cause of homelessness in Hartlepool has been 'asked to leave by family and friends'. This and other main causes have reduced through timely and effective housing advice. Since the introduction of Welfare Reform there has been an increase in 'domestic violence' and 'other' as a reason for homelessness. Other includes issues such as asylum seekers and people seeking assistance specifically as a result of Welfare Reform.

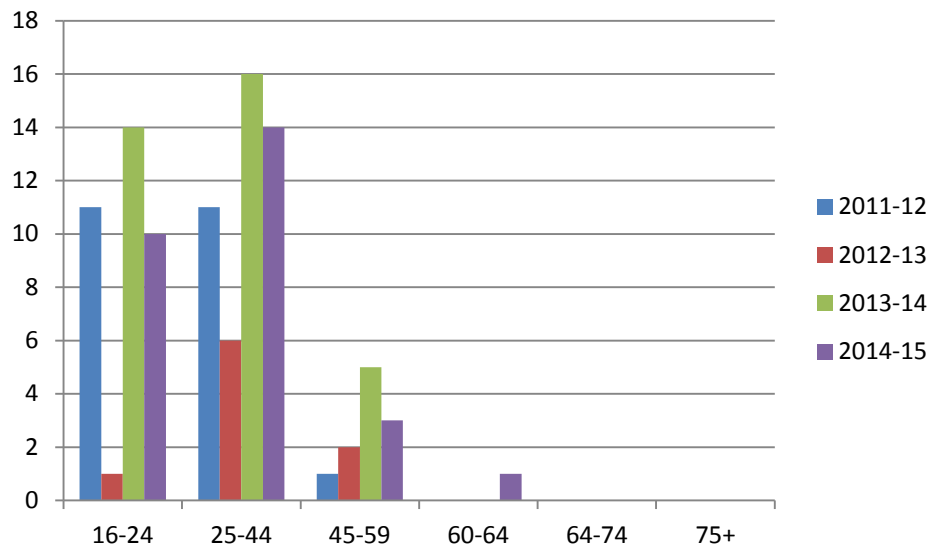
Figure 3 - Reasons for Homelessness



Since the 2010-15 Homelessness Strategy homeless acceptances have mainly come from applicants in the 25-44 age category rather than from the under 25 age groups as was the trend previously. This reflects successful mediation with

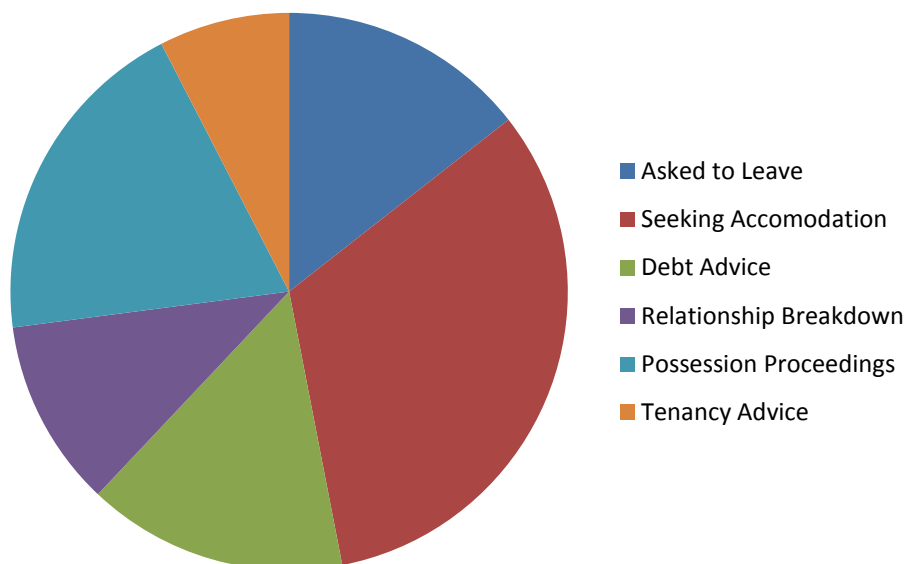
families to avoid relationship breakdown. The impact of welfare reform on working age people unable to afford their homes is reflected in the older client group. These clients will not be engaged with any services but have elements of mental health issues and are therefore 'falling through the net'. There has also been an increase witnessed in younger people with learning disabilities who have not received a statement of special educational needs.

Figure 4 - Age Range of Homeless Acceptances



During 2014-15 the Housing Advice Team have provided casework for 1,504 clients offering a range of advice and assistance to help people resolve their housing problems. The main presenting problems are illustrated below.

Figure 5 - Main Presenting Problems



Provision of Supported Accommodation

Stonham provides:

10 units of supported housing accommodation, one emergency 'crash pad' facility and 28 units of floating support for 16 to 25 year olds at **Gainford House**.

11 units of accommodation for ex-offenders and 8 units of floating support at **Scott Grange**.

11 units of accommodation for single homeless people at **Avondene** and 42 units of floating support within community services

Thirteen Care and Support provides:

7 units of supported housing accommodation, one emergency 'crash pad' facility for 16 to 24 year olds and one unit for a looked after child who has gone to university returning to Hartlepool during the break at **Rose House**.

6 units of supported housing accommodation for young parents aged 16 to 24 years old and 20 units of floating support at **Anna Court**.

Sanctuary Supported Living provides:

6 units of supported housing accommodation and floating support for people with alcohol dependency issues.

Richmond Fellowship provides:

8 units of supported housing accommodation for people with mental health needs at **Eamont Terrace**.

Accent in partnership with **Cornerstone** provides:

6 units of supported housing accommodation and 2 'crash pad' facilities for 18 to 35 year olds with low support needs.

Community Campus 87 provides:

A range of accommodation based and outreach support for people recovering from substance misuse .

A range of floating support and general and supported housing accommodation.

The Supported Housing Panel, a multi-agency partnership, continues to assist people with appropriate and timely 'move on' when people are ready to sustain an independent tenancy.

CASE STUDY 9 – GAINFORD HOUSE SUPPORTED HOUSING

Gainford House provides 10 units of supported housing accommodation, an emergency 'crash pad' facility and 28 units of floating support to young vulnerable people living in Hartlepool. The support can last up to two years within supported accommodation and a further two years for floating support.

Jess was 16 years old when she was referred to the service in February 2011. Jess had issues with self-harm and was involved with mental health services. She had been found statutorily homeless at the time of the referral (due to a breakdown in relationships with her mother and step-father) and was being supported in temporary accommodation with family members as the host by Children's Services. Jess had reported a safeguarding issue around sexual abuse within the wider family. In addition Jess also struggled to mix with her peers, although attending school every day and gaining her qualifications she identified herself as an 'outsider' and had strong feelings of isolation.

Jess moved into Gainford House in March 2011, was allocated a key worker and was supported by a wider staff team to offer guidance, support and advice around the clock.

Jess felt unable to address her mental and emotional health issues initially and would question how meeting with a stranger and discussing what she was struggling to deal with could possibly help. For the first few months of her tenancy link working was done in the lounge to encourage her to leave her flat. Jess found this very difficult and felt as though she had no control. In order to support her through this time, a person centred support plan was developed in which only a few goals at a time were listed and time frames were generous. Throughout the time Jess was determined to complete her AS levels at college and her main motivation spanned from this.

By June 2011 Jess felt able to start to address some of her mental and emotional needs. Her key worker supported her to visit her GP and discuss a re-referral to the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS).

In August 2011, Jess experienced a setback; she had not scored highly on her AS exams. Gainford Staff worked in partnership with Jess's college to explore her options. It was agreed that she would return to repeat her first year at college. Monthly meetings were arranged between Gainford House, the college and Jess to discuss her progress, any issues and all work together so she received the support she felt was appropriate.

During the rest of the year, Jess improved so much she began to get actively involved in the service delivery of Gainford House and set up a 'buddy' system which meant new residents were matched up to current residents in order to settle in better and feel part of the 'community'. This also helped Jess with the requirements for her Health and Social Care NVQ.

By March 2012, Jess had made positive steps with her self-harming behaviour and was discharged from all statutory services. Jess's main aim then turned to securing a place at university to study to become a mental health nurse.

In August 2012, she moved from an inside flat to an external flat giving her more independence and preparing her for independent living. She also received her AS level results - a distinction and 2 A's.

In January 2013, commissioners granted permission for Jess to continue to live at Gainford House beyond the two year time frame due to staff supporting her to go on to university. From January to April, Jess was supported to attend open days, visit student accommodation and eventually decided on the University of Lincoln. Staff supported Jess with the student loan application process, securing accommodation, investigating further funding streams and liaising with university support services to ensure Jess was well supported.

In August 2013, Jess moved out of Gainford House and into student accommodation in Lincoln. Jess continues to stay in touch with the service and will visit when she is in Hartlepool. Jess is doing very well and is expected to graduate in June 2016.

Why is this a priority?

National Context

The Government's current thinking in relation to developing effective homelessness prevention, housing advice and options services is set out in its strategy, 'Making Every Contact Count, A Joint Approach to Preventing Homelessness.'¹² The approach to preventing homelessness is the promotion of joined up services and of a modern homeless response where a preventative approach takes precedence. No single agency can eradicate homelessness but partnership working can make a significant impact.

The Government has asked the sector to adopt its '**Gold Standard**', a ten point challenge encouraging local authorities to develop strong local leadership and partnerships, and ensure essential links are made between services:

The Gold Standard is:

1. To adopt a corporate commitment to prevent homelessness which has buy-in across all local authority services;
2. To actively work in partnership with voluntary sector and other local partners to address support, education, employment and training needs;
3. To offer a Housing Options prevention service to all clients including written advice;
4. To adopt a No Second Night Out model or an effective local alternative;
5. To have housing pathways agreed or in development with each key partner and client group that include appropriate accommodation and support;

¹² Making Every Contact Count, A Joint Approach to Preventing Homelessness August 2012 DCLG

6. To develop a suitable private rented sector offer for all client groups, including advice and support to both client and landlord;
7. To actively engage in preventing mortgage repossessions including through the Mortgage Rescue Scheme;
8. To have a homelessness strategy which sets out a proactive approach to preventing homelessness, reviewed annually to be responsive to emerging needs;
9. To not place any young person aged 16 or 17 in Bed and Breakfast accommodation; and
10. To not place any families in Bed and Breakfast accommodation unless in an emergency and for no longer than 6 weeks.

Through the delivery of the Housing Strategy the Council and its partners will work towards achieving these standards.

As detailed in Chapter 2, the Government has introduced a range of policy and legislative changes to reform welfare with the aim of improving work incentives, simplifying benefits and tackling administrative complexity. These ongoing changes present challenges to both private and social sector housing providers, support services, the voluntary sector and to vulnerable people.

Preventing and Tackling Homelessness

The Council is working towards its long term vision to end homelessness within Hartlepool and to ensure all residents have access to a safe, secure and suitable home.

The Council prevents homelessness by providing advice and help to people when they are at risk of becoming homeless, including referral to specialist agencies which may enable them to stay where they are living, and debt advice to avoid eviction through arrears.

The Council has a strong record in tackling and preventing homelessness in Hartlepool. An important priority of the Strategy is to focus on prevention measures, where possible, to enable people to remain in the homes they already occupy, either through negotiation with private landlords and Housing Benefits team, or through negotiation with mortgage lenders or families. Close working will continue with the private sector to secure alternative accommodation for clients. As detailed in Priority 2 the Council is in the process of setting up a Social Lettings Agency. This aims to provide a lettings service to those who may not be able to access private rented accommodation without help whether it is through homelessness, low income or with an immediate housing need.

Homelessness prevention depends on good partnership working, and on organisations sharing information. Severe budget pressures and cuts to Housing Related Support will continue to impact on homelessness in Hartlepool.

There is a significant challenge faced in improving homelessness prevention. Young people continue to be represented amongst those presenting as homeless

and often have complex needs that require additional and on-going support. Young people leaving care and those aged 16 or 17 will also be assisted by joint working within the Council.

The Council's Housing Advice Service has been challenged by the economic recession and by welfare reform measures. This has had repercussions for people dealing with personal debt and in affordability for housing costs. In extreme cases this has led to people facing homelessness when they have no longer been able to keep up rent or mortgage payments.

During the 2010-2015 Homelessness Strategy the Council extended its Eviction Protocol to all RPs operating in Hartlepool and this acts as a final safety net to try and avoid homelessness wherever possible for social housing.

Further challenges for the Council include improving access to housing and services for people with offending or substance misuse issues and addressing the complex issues of socially excluded adults.

Impact of Welfare Reform and Digital Inclusion

The Welfare Reform Act 2012 has brought about the biggest overhaul of the benefits system since the 1940s, impacting upon local people on low incomes as well as housing providers. With the Government committing to austerity measures until 2018 at least, further reforms to welfare benefit are expected. As around 70% of social housing tenants rely on some form of welfare benefit, social housing providers are already feeling the impact, as rising rent arrears result in reduced income streams.

The housing sector has seen an increase in rent arrears as household incomes have reduced and their outgoings have increased. Housing providers and other partners are working closely together to monitor the impact of Welfare Reform and ensure that people are being supported to cope with the effects.

Implications which we will need to ensure that we take into account when planning services for the future include:

- Decreasing demand for family size accommodation in certain areas;
- Increased demand for one and two bedroom properties;
- Need for budgeting, computer skills and internet access for all households;
- Need to safeguard advice and support services in the face of funding pressures in the public and voluntary sectors;
- Need to understand and remove barriers to downsizing, whether through help to find a suitable property, practical help to move, or support with the cost of moving;
- Reduction in the funds available for Discretionary Housing Payments.

In 2014 the National Audit Office stated that there were 7.4 million people who had never been online and 16 million people with low levels of digital literacy. As the Government shifts towards a 'digital by default' stance, with welfare benefits being delivered online since October 2013 in the form of Universal Credit, tackling digital exclusion has emerged as a challenge for this Strategy.

Through the lifetime of this Housing Strategy we will need to monitor any adverse impacts from the move towards digital services. Providers across Hartlepool are increasingly making public access points available for people to make on-line applications for housing and benefits. However, this is not generally accompanied with support for people who may have difficulty and are not computer literate.

Housing Related Support

Issues concerning to housing related support are detailed in the previous chapter.

Working with the Private Rented Sector

The majority of private rented accommodation is let on an Assured Shorthold Tenancy basis (usually for 6 months) and offers far less security of tenure than social housing tenancies. The standard of accommodation and management within the private sector can vary widely and there is a far higher turnover of tenants than within the social sector.

We will continue to develop effective working relationships with private sector landlords and their agents to improve management standards and tenancy sustainability. The Council is also working towards new initiatives (as detailed in Priority 2) which aim to ensure decent, safe and well managed homes in the private rented sector.

Reducing Re-Offending

From a probation perspective homelessness and the lack of suitable accommodation can be a significant factor leading to reoffending. Offenders and ex-offenders are a group for who access to housing and support to maintain a tenancy can help prevent re-offending.

The Council has produced a Reducing Re-offending Strategy in response to figures which illustrate that Hartlepool has the second highest rate of re-offending nationally. Improving pathways out of re-offending through the provision of local services is an important issue for this Strategy.

Work undertaken by the Durham Tees Valley Probation Trust during 2012/13 showed that re-offenders have a different criminogenic profile to those who do not re-offend with accommodation, employability, drugs and alcohol and financial managements being the key factors addressing their offending behaviour.

Through this Strategy we will continue to work with the Safer Hartlepool Partnership and Probation to identify appropriate support, accommodation and resources for specialist services and provide local solutions to re-offending.

We will also continue to be involved in the Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements to help offenders resettle and reduce the risk of re-offending with targeted solutions to ensure there are accommodation options available for these client groups.

People with complex and multiple needs

There are increasing numbers of vulnerable households, particularly single people with mental health issues, who are becoming homeless as a result of their inability to maintain their home.

As part of the Make Every Adult Matter (MEAM) approach, Community Campus has secured funding for a part-time coordinator within Hartlepool, assisted through the Regional Homeless Forum. A worker was put in place in January 2015 and aims to introduce a different way of working through agencies. People with at least two needs will be identified and assessed through a nationally recognised audit system. Up to eight people will be worked with at any one time and these will mainly be people whose contact with services has been ineffectual in the past where no one service is meeting their needs effectively. MEAM sits within the Supported Housing Panel to identify and work with those people who cannot go into supported living.

People with substance misuse problems often have housing problems and can find it difficult to access and maintain suitable accommodation, additionally poor housing and homelessness can have a major impact on a person's ability to address their substance misuse problems.

Currently 51 clients in the Hartlepool Action Recovery Team (HART) presented to treatment as 'no fixed abode' and many more have become homeless at some point during their treatment journey. We will work in partnership with local agencies and housing providers to ensure advice and support is available for people with substance misuse problems to enable them to access and sustain suitable accommodation.

In addition, where appropriate, we also work in partnership with the Troubled Families Programme to support families in complex situations who are on the programme and have identified housing needs.

Emerging support services and providers

As a result of the reforms to social housing and welfare benefits there has been the emergence of new support services and providers within Hartlepool during the lifetime of the 2011-2015 Housing Strategy.

HAPEN (Hartlepool Advice Partnership Evolving Network) was established in 2014 as an on-line referral system to bring different support agencies together, managed by the West View Advice and Resource Centre. It is used to share information between providers, including housing

Hartlepool also opened its first foodbank in 2013 and this is increasingly used by Council departments to refer people who are in crisis.

ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE PRIORITY 5

During the five years of this strategy we will:

- Tackle the barriers to permanent housing;
- Improve and promote access to social housing;
- Maintain preventative services for all client groups;
- Ensure good quality private sector accommodation for homeless households;
- Provide suitable and specialist accommodation for young people;
- Assess the impact of Universal Credit on the affordability of the rented sector;
- Work with those most affected by welfare reform to mitigate the negative impact it has on their lives;
- Improve our homeless prevention service and achieve the best practice Homelessness Gold Standard;
- Work with partners to help people overcome digital inclusion barriers which prevent them from finding or keeping a home;
- Work with partners in Mental Health Services and Probation to achieve better housing outcomes for those leaving institutional care;
- Improve engagement from key statutory agencies in service delivery; and
- Work with partners to help offenders resettlement and reduce the risk of reoffending.

Chapter 10 - Monitoring and Resourcing the Housing Strategy

This chapter considers how the strategic priorities will be achieved, how progress will be monitored and the work resourced. An action plan has been produced that details how the aims and objectives of the Strategy will be achieved.

Achievements during the Housing Strategy 2011-2015

- The Housing Service relocated to the Civic Centre to deliver all services from a single location.
- The Terms of Reference for the Housing Partnership was updated to reflect the role of the Partnership in monitoring the Housing Strategy.
- The Tees Valley Tenancy Strategy was adopted.
- Charges for appropriate enforcement work have been introduced.
- Clusters of Empty Homes funding was secured to purchase empty properties.
- Housing Market Renewal Fund Transitional funding was secured and match funded by the Council.
- A works in default budget was established.
- There has been a significant growth in new build social housing stock.

Performance and Monitoring

Delivery of the actions set out in this Housing Strategy will be managed and monitored quarterly, overseen by the Housing Partnership. The action plan will be reviewed annually to ensure that progress is being achieved as well as to ensure that it is kept up-to-date with any changes in national or local policy.

Resources

There are considerable pressures on the amount of resources that are available to deliver the aims of the Strategy and resource and budgets are limited as the Council has to achieve considerable savings. To maximise resources it will be important to work with partners, sharing expertise and good practice, avoiding duplication, jointly funding or procuring projects and identifying opportunities to combine resources and bid for any available funding streams.

The key sources of funding for the Strategy have been identified as:

- Developer contributions delivered through a Section 106 Legal Agreement;
- Affordable housing on-site provision through Section 106 Legal Agreement;
- HCA funding for affordable homes through National Affordable Housing Programme;
- HCA funding for empty homes through National Affordable Housing Programme;
- Better Care Fund - Disabled Facilities Grant for adaptations;
- DCLG funding for housing advice and homelessness activity;
- DCLG funding for housing-related support;
- Registered Provider (RP) investment to continue improvements in social housing stock;
- The sale and efficient use of Council assets and prudential borrowing subject to income streams to cover repayments;
- Income achieved through the Council's Social Lettings Agency; and
- Any other national funding that becomes available during the lifetime of the Strategy (usually on a bid for funding basis).

GLOSSARY

Affordable Housing	Housing options available to residents who cannot afford to rent or buy a home in the private market. Includes social rented housing, affordable rented housing and intermediate housing solutions such as shared ownership. The Council will be widening this current definition to include the Affordable Rent Model.
Affordable Rent	Homes made available to tenants at up to a maximum of 80% of market rent and allocated in the same way as social housing is at present. Registered Providers (RPs) will have the freedom to offer Affordable Rent properties on flexible tenancies tailored to the housing needs of individual households.
Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB)	Activity that impacts on other people/communities in a negative way.
Better Care Fund	The Better Care Fund is a pooled budget that shifts resources into social care and community services for the benefit of the NHS and local government.
Black and Minority Ethnic (BME)	A term to describe someone who is said to belong to an 'ethnic minority'. Most often used to refer to groups or policies that affect people from non-white-UK ethnic backgrounds.
Brownfield Land	A site which has previously been developed .
Category 1 Hazard Failures	Hazards identified using the method of assessment as set out by the Housing Health and Safety Rating System upon which the local authority has a duty to act.
Choice Based Lettings (CBL)	Scheme for the allocation of social housing designed to offer more choice and involvement for customers in selecting a new home. Social rented housing is advertised allowing customers to 'bid' (register an interest) for those homes.
Compass	The names of the CBL scheme in Tees Valley.
Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO)	The process that a public authority (such as the council or a central Government department) can use to take land and/or property from the owner. The owner is paid, but cannot refuse to sell.
Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG)	The UK Government department for communities and local government in England and has responsibility for housing policy.
Decent Homes	Homes which meet or exceed specified minimum standards and state of repair.
Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG)	Government funding provided to local housing authorities to provide adaptations and other facilities to disabled people enabling them to live independently.
Energy Efficiency	The energy output of a product, e.g. a house, at a given point in time.
Extra Care Housing	Housing for elderly and disabled people, where individual care needs are provided for on-site.

Flexible Tenancy	A new power for Registered Providers to offer a new 'flexible' tenancy with a minimum term of two years that ends the automatic 'home for life'.
Fuel Poverty	Where a household cannot afford to keep adequately warm at reasonable cost.
Good Tenant Scheme	A service for prospective tenants to obtain references to enable them to access private rented accommodation in Hartlepool.
Greenfield Land	Grassed or previously undeveloped land.
Hartlepool Housing Partnership	A group of public, private and voluntary agencies that work in partnership together to ensure that there is access to good quality and affordable housing in neighbourhoods and communities where people want to live.
Help to Buy	Help to Buy is an umbrella term for a range of government funded schemes designed to help people to get onto the property ladder. There are several options available, including equity loans, rent to buy and shared ownership.
Homes and Communities Agency (HCA)	The national housing and regeneration agency for England. A non-departmental public body, sponsored by the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG). It provides funding for affordable housing and is the social housing regulator.
Homelessness	The 1996 Housing Act states that a person is homeless if: there is no accommodation that they are entitled to occupy; or they have accommodation but it is not reasonable for them to continue to occupy this accommodation.
Housing Benefit	An allowance to people on low or no income to meet whole or part of their rent.
Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS)	A risk based evaluation tool to help local authorities identify and protect against potential risks and hazards to health and safety from any deficiencies identified in residential dwellings.
Housing Needs	The requirements that individuals and households have for housing.
Housing Related Support	The system for funding the support that is provided for people with care needs to go alongside their housing needs.
Indices of Multiple Deprivation	A defined set of indicators used to measure the level of deprivation in an area.
Intermediate Tenure	<p>Housing at prices and rents above those of social rent but below market price or rent. This can include shared equity, shared ownership, other low cost homes for sale, and intermediate rent.</p> <p>Shared equity - a new form of joint ownership/joint mortgage that the Government is promoting as a way of helping first time buyers to get on the property ladder.</p>

	<p>Shared ownership - Where a person buys part of the value of a house from a Registered Provider and pays rent on the other part, and the Registered Provider keeps part ownership.</p> <p>Intermediate rent - new build homes to rent at 80% (or less) of typical market rents.</p>
Lifetime Homes	Homes fit for a lifetime by virtue of design, enabling easy adaptation as required.
Local Development Framework (LDF)	A raft of local development documents that together form the Development Plan for the Borough.
Local Housing Allowance (LHA)	The Local Housing Allowance is used to work out how much Housing Benefit is received for renting from a private landlord. The amount of Benefit will depend on the area, property type and household size.
Localism	This concept aims to give local communities more control over housing and planning decisions.
Private Landlord	A company or individual (e.g. not a local authority or registered provider) who owns and lets properties for an income.
Property Developer	A company or individual who secures planning permission for the development of residential property.
Registered Provider (RP)	Also known as Housing Associations / Registered Social Landlords (RSLs). They are not for profit organisations that provide social housing and are regulated through Homes and Communities Agency (HCA).
Section 106 Agreements (S106)	An agreement under section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 regarding the use or development of land. Such planning obligations are often used as a legally binding agreement between a local authority and developer to deliver a percentage of affordable social housing within a development.
Selective Licensing	A compulsory scheme where an area has been designated under part 3 of the Housing Act 2004, as a licensing area for privately rented dwelling houses. Local Authorities have discretion to adopt a scheme subject to meeting one of two sets of conditions: that the area is, or is likely to become an area of low demand; or, that the area is experiencing a significant and persistent problem caused by anti-social behaviour.
Social Housing	A general term for subsidised rented and intermediate tenure housing provided by Registered Providers (RPs).
Social Lettings Agency	Social lettings agencies work in a similar way to conventional lettings agencies. They manage houses on behalf of landlords and rent them out to tenants.
Standard Assessment Procedure (SAP)	The Government's Standard Assessment Procedure for energy rating of dwellings.
Sustainable Communities	Communities that can meet the needs of existing and future residents, contribute to a high quality of life and provide opportunity and choice in areas such as housing, health, education and jobs.

Tenure	Type of property a person resides in. There are three main types of tenure; owner-occupied, private rented and social rented.
Universal Credit	Universal Credit is set to replace the present benefit structure and it will simplify the benefits system by bringing together a range of working-age benefits into a single streamlined payment.

Hartlepool Housing Strategy Action Plan

2015 – 2020



CONTENTS:

- Section 1: Delivering Suitable New Homes
- Section 2: Making the Best Use of Existing Homes
- Section 3: Bringing Long-Term Empty Homes Back Into Use
- Section 4: Improving Health and Wellbeing
- Section 5: Preventing Homelessness and Providing Options
- Section 6: Communication and Governance Actions
- Section 7: Funding / Financial Actions

SECTION 1: DELIVERING SUITABLE NEW HOMES

PRIORITY 1 – DELIVERING SUITABLE NEW HOMES, INCLUDING AFFORDABLE HOMES AND OLDER PERSON ACCOMMODATION

A OUTCOME – DELIVER NEW HOMES THAT WILL MEET CURRENT AND FUTURE HOUSING NEEDS

Performance Indicator	Data Source & Responsible Organisation	Collection Period	Annual Target
Overall housing provided (net additional dwellings)	Housing Monitoring System HBC	Annually	325
Affordable homes delivered (gross)	Housing Monitoring System HBC	Annually	144

	KEY ACTIONS	LEAD	TIMESCALE
1A1	Review the 2015 SHMA and assess whether this needs updating when the Local Plan goes to Public Enquiry during 2016/17	Andrew Carter Planning Services Manager	March 2017
1A2	Liaise with employers through the ongoing Hartlepool Vision and Masterplan to ensure there is appropriate housing for their workforce	Rob Smith Principal Regeneration Officer	March 2020
1A3	Monitor delivery of the 2015-2018 National Affordable Homes Programme	Amy Waller Principal Housing Regeneration Officer	March 2018
1A4	Monitor the number of affordable homes secured and numbers delivered through Section 106 Legal Agreements	Andrew Carter Planning Services Manager Amy Waller Principal Housing Regeneration	March 2020

		Officer	
1A5	Work with Registered Providers to secure new affordable housing developments in the town (outside of NAHP), for example through affordable rent revenue	Amy Waller Principal Housing Regeneration Officer	March 2020
1A6	Develop a masterplan for the delivery of new build homes on the Carr/Hopps Street regeneration site	Andrew Carter Planning Services Manager Amy Waller Principal Housing Regeneration Officer	March 2016
1A7	Work with partners to develop accommodation for older people	Nigel Johnson Head of Housing	March 2020
1A8	Where a need has been identified, develop more bungalows to full mobility standards in affordable housing schemes	Andrew Carter Planning Services Manager Nigel Johnson Head of Housing	March 2020
1A9	Consider any development opportunities to expand the Council's housing stock	Nigel Johnson Head of Housing Andrew Carter Planning Services Manager Dale Clarke Estates and Regeneration Manager	March 2020

PRIORITY 1 – DELIVERING SUITABLE NEW HOMES, INCLUDING AFFORDABLE HOMES AND OLDER PERSON ACCOMMODATION

B OUTCOME – ENSURE NEW AFFORDABLE HOMES ARE HIGH QUALITY WITH GOOD STANDARDS OF DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION

Performance Indicator	Data Source & Responsible Organisation	Collection Period	Annual Target
New homes constructed to lifetime homes standard	Housing Monitoring System HBC	Annually	144

	KEY ACTIONS	LEAD	TIMESCALE
1B1	Encourage greater space standards in the private sector	Andrew Carter Planning Services Manager	March 2020
1B2	Encourage developers to ensure new build developments are easily adaptable for an ageing population	Andrew Carter Planning Services Manager	March 2020
1B3	New Builds – environmental and sustainable i.e. smart meters, solar panels, on-site energy generation	Andrew Carter Planning Services Manager	March 2020

PRIORITY 1 – DELIVERING SUITABLE NEW HOMES, INCLUDING AFFORDABLE HOMES AND OLDER PERSON ACCOMMODATION

C OUTCOME – SUPPORT EMPLOYMENT THROUGH DEVELOPMENT

Performance Indicator	Data Source & Responsible Organisation	Collection Period	Annual Target
Overall employment rate (proportion of people of working age population who are in employment)	Annual Population Survey, NOMIS, HBC	Quarterly	

	KEY ACTIONS	LEAD	TIMESCALE
1C1	Deliver the Hartlepool Youth Investment Project targets which will support an increase in apprenticeship starts by working with employers and training providers.	Patrick Wilson Principal Employment Officer	December 2018
1C2	Implement the Constructing Hartlepool Strategy to encourage employment and training to be included in procurement and Section 106 Legal Agreements as part of relevant new development	Andrew Carter Planning Services Manager Scott Campbell Performance Officer	March 2020
1C3	Support the delivery of the European Structural and Investment Fund Strategy by working with the five Local Authorities to submit bids to funds, such as Youth Employment Initiative.	Patrick Wilson Principal Employment Officer	March 2020

SECTION 2: MAKING THE BEST USE OF EXISTING HOMES

PRIORITY 2 – MAKING THE BEST USE OF EXISTING HOMES; IMPROVING QUALITY, CONDITIONS AND THE ENVIRONMENT

A OUTCOME – IMPROVED MANAGEMENT STANDARDS, HOUSING QUALITY AND CHOICE IN THE RENTED SECTOR

Performance Indicator	Data Source & Responsible Organisation	Collection Period	Annual Target
Number of properties where identified HHSRS Category 1 and actionable Category 2 hazards are dealt with through formal or informal enforcement action	Authority Public Protection (APP) System HBC	Quarterly	None – the number of complaints received on an annual basis will vary
Percentage of licensable properties within current designated selective licensable areas that have a license.	HBC	Annually	
Number of properties managed via the Council's Social Lettings Agency	HBC	Annually	2015/17 = 100
Percentage of Council tenants satisfied with the repairs service	HBC	Quarterly	

	KEY ACTIONS	LEAD	TIMESCALE
2A1	Review the Enforcement Policy to incorporate changes following new legislation and guidelines	Joanne Burnley Principal Environmental Health Officer (Housing)	March 2016
2A2	Monitor the outcome of delivery of the Enforcement Policy	Joanne Burnley Principal Environmental Health Officer (Housing)	March 2020
2A3	Explore opportunities to update our stock condition data which is currently based on a stock condition survey carried out in 2009	Nigel Johnson Head of Housing	March 2017
2A4	Undertake joint promotion with the fire authority and work to educate landlords about The Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarm (England) Regulations 2015	Joanne Burnley Principal Environmental Health Officer (Housing)	December 2015
2A5	Implement The Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarm (England) Regulations 2015 and incorporate provisions into inspection criteria and enforcement activity	Joanne Burnley Principal Environmental Health Officer (Housing)	December 2015
2A6	Develop a robust and rolling programme of HMOs to ensure that they meet the prescribed standard and have a valid licence if required	Joanne Burnley Principal Environmental Health Officer (Housing)	April 2016
2A7	Deliver the rolling programme of HMOs to ensure that they meet the prescribed standard and have a valid licence if required	Joanne Burnley Principal Environmental Health Officer (Housing)	March 2020
2A8	Review the information available to landlords on property maintenance and good management standards	Joanne Burnley Principal Environmental Health Officer (Housing) Lynda Igoe Principal Housing Advice Officer	April 2017
2A9	Implement a monitoring programme of local letting	Lynda Igoe	

	agents to ensure they are compliant with the terms of the Redress Scheme	Principal Housing Advice Officer	
2A10	Establish a General Register of Landlords to record the details of all private landlords operating in the town	Lynda Igoe Principal Housing Advice Officer	December 2015
2A11	Publicise and share the General Register of Landlords across the town and across Tees Valley	Lynda Igoe Principal Housing Advice Officer	March 2020
2A12	Work in partnership with national landlord organisations to establish and promote membership to a Voluntary Landlord Scheme, with the aim of encouraging good management and maintenance standards	Lynda Igoe Principal Housing Advice Officer	March 2016
2A13	Implement Selective Licensing Designation 2 from 6 th July 2015	Lynda Igoe Principal Housing Advice Officer	August 2015
2A14	Continue to gather any supporting evidence required in order to consider any future selective licensing proposals	Lynda Igoe Principal Housing Advice Officer	March 2020
2A15	Host events for private tenants, landlords and managing agents to promote high management standards and advise landlords on their legal responsibilities	Lynda Igoe Principal Housing Advice Officer	March 2020
2A16	Ensure the Council's owned stock is well managed by regularly reviewing and monitoring our services through the use of STAR satisfaction surveys and quarterly benchmarking	Karen Kelly Principal Housing Strategy Officer	March 2020
2A17	Develop and agree the Decent Homes Plus standard for Council owned homes	Joanne Burnley Principal Environmental Health Officer (Housing)	March 2016
2A18	Establish a programme and improve all Council owned homes to meet the Decent Homes Plus standards	Amy Waller Principal Housing	March 2020

		Regeneration Officer	
2A19	Establish policies and procedures to support the delivery of services through the Social Lettings Agency	Gemma Day Principal Housing Officer	September 2015
2A20	Implement the housing management services through the Social Lettings Agency in line with the Business Plan	Gemma Day Principal Housing Officer	March 2017
2A21	Explore opportunities for business development to increase the portfolio of the Social Lettings Agency and enhance services	Gemma Day Principal Housing Officer	March 2020
2A22	Deliver Thirteen's investment programme for Housing Hartlepool and Tees Valley Housing Group properties in Hartlepool (including external fencing, windows, kitchen, bathroom works)	Kay Glew Head of Housing Thirteen Group	March 2020

PRIORITY 2 – MAKING THE BEST USE OF EXISTING HOMES; IMPROVING QUALITY, CONDITIONS AND THE ENVIRONMENT

B OUTCOME – IMPROVED ENERGY EFFICIENCY AND TACKLE FUEL POVERTY ACROSS TENURES

Performance Indicator	Data Source & Responsible Organisation	Collection Period	Annual Target
Number of households which have benefitted from energy saving measures through Warm Up North	British Gas HBC	Annual	None
Number of excess cold HHSRS Category 1 hazards rectified	Authority Public Protection (APP) System HBC	Quarterly	None – the number of complaints received on an annual basis will vary

	KEY ACTIONS	LEAD	TIMESCALE
2B1	Continue to participate in the Warm Up North Programme	Joanne Burnley Principal Environmental Health Officer (Housing)	December 2018
2B2	Actively promote the Warm Up North Scheme using a variety of methods in conjunction with the British Gas Communications Team	Joanne Burnley Principal Environmental Health Officer (Housing)	December 2018
2B3	Establish a service to offer Energy Performance Certificates to other landlords and managing agents in compliance with the legislation	Joanne Burnley Principal Environmental Health Officer (Housing)	December 2016
2B4	Deliver the service offering Energy Performance Certificates to other landlords and managing agents in compliance with the legislation	Joanne Burnley Principal Environmental Health Officer (Housing)	March 2020

2B5	Develop the partnership with OVO helping residents to fuel switch	Kay Glew Head of Housing Thirteen Group	December 2018
2B6	Improve the energy efficiency and reduce carbon emissions of existing social housing stock through targeted initiatives using new technologies and systems	All Registered Providers	
2B7	Assist and educate tenants about the costs associated with pre-payment meters and 'friendly credit' schemes and explore other options to minimise fuel debts	All Registered Providers	
2B8	Identify and draw down available funding for energy efficiency projects and initiatives	Nigel Johnson Head of Housing Joanne Burnley Principal Environmental Health Officer (Housing)	March 2020

PRIORITY 2 – MAKING THE BEST USE OF EXISTING HOMES; IMPROVING QUALITY, CONDITIONS AND THE ENVIRONMENT

C OUTCOME – IMPROVED NEIGHBOURHOODS AND THE ENVIRONMENT

Performance Indicator	Data Source & Responsible Organisation	Collection Period	Annual Target
Number of properties visually improved through the implementation of a Section 215 notice	Authority Public Protection (APP) System and iLAP Planning System HBC	Quarterly	None – the numbers of properties visually improved will be recorded

	KEY ACTIONS	LEAD	TIMESCALE
2C1	Undertake proactive estate walkabouts of Council social rented estates and neighbourhoods	Joanne Burnley Principal Environmental Health Officer (Housing) Amy Waller Principal Housing Regeneration Officer	March 2020
2C2	Undertake proactive estate walkabouts of social rented estates and neighbourhoods	All Registered Providers	March 2020
2C3	Undertake proactive walkabouts in private sector areas to identify issues before complaints arise and keep areas under regular review	Joanne Burnley Principal Environmental Health Officer (Housing)	March 2020
2C4	Deliver Thirteen Group Environmental Programme to make environmental improvements to green spaces, parking areas and external communal areas in conjunction with HBC	Kay Glew Head of Housing Thirteen Group	March 2020

2C5	Update the housing element of Ward Profiles to highlight key strengths and weaknesses in areas and produce priorities for action	Karen Kelly Principal Housing Strategy Officer	March 2016
2C6	Develop Neighbourhood Sustainability Plans and measure progress against supporting action plans	Helen Ivison Neighbourhood Manager Thirteen Group	December 2018
2C7	Ensure that policies and procedures for responding to anti social behaviour meet the RESPECT ASB Charter for housing	All Registered Providers Karen Kelly Principal Housing Strategy Officer	March 2017
2C8	Develop a monitoring / sustainability framework to review the effects of the Baden Street Regeneration Initiative	Gemma Day Principal Housing Officer	December 2015
2C9	Implement the monitoring / sustainability framework to review and measure the effects of the Baden Street Regeneration Initiative	Gemma Day Principal Housing Officer	March 2020

PRIORITY 2 – MAKING THE BEST USE OF EXISTING HOMES; IMPROVING QUALITY, CONDITIONS AND THE ENVIRONMENT

D OUTCOME – OWNER OCCUPIERS ARE BETTER ABLE TO MAINTAIN AND IMPROVE THEIR HOMES

Performance Indicator	Data Source & Responsible Organisation	Collection Period	Annual Target
Number of properties improved through the grants or loans schemes	Authority Public Protection (APP) System HBC	Quarterly	None – the numbers of properties improved will depend on funding – the overall aim to reduce waiting list

	KEY ACTIONS	LEAD	TIMESCALE
2D1	Continue to make the best use of recycled funding (through loans repayments) to assist vulnerable owner occupiers and households in need	Joanne Burnley Principal Environmental Health Officer (Housing)	March 2020
2D2	Explore avenues of funding in addition to the Homeloans partnership	Joanne Burnley Principal Environmental Health Officer (Housing)	March 2020

SECTION 3: BRINGING LONG-TERM EMPTY HOMES BACK INTO USE

PRIORITY 3 – BRINGING LONG-TERM EMPTY HOMES BACK INTO USE

A	OUTCOME – REDUCED NUMBER OF LONG-TERM EMPTY HOMES
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Performance Indicator	Data Source & Responsible Organisation	Collection Period	Annual Target
Number of long term (over 6 months) empty homes brought back into use	Authority Public Protection (APP) System and Council Tax data HBC	Quarterly	10% of long term (over 6 months) empty homes brought back into use annually
Number of long term empty homes receiving improvement works and re-occupied through the Council's NAHP allocation for EPPS Phase 2	HBC	Annually	2015/16 = 10 2016/17 = 20 2017/18 = 30 Total 60 by 2018
Number of empty homes which have had improvement works completed through the NAHP funded lease scheme	Thirteen Group	Annually	2015/16 = 6 2016/17 = 6 2017/18 = 6 Total 18 by 2018

	KEY ACTIONS	LEAD	TIMESCALE
3A1	Use enforcement action, where appropriate, against long-term empty properties	Amy Waller Principal Housing Regeneration Officer	March 2020
3A2	Negotiate with owners of long-term empty properties to bring them back into use, using suitable incentives	Amy Waller Principal Housing	March 2020

		Regeneration Officer	
3A3	Explore ways of partnership working with individual investors and private agencies to bring empty homes back into use through early intervention and prevention measures	Amy Waller Principal Housing Regeneration Officer	March 2020
3A4	Continue to identify low demand areas and develop innovative regeneration schemes to address this	Amy Waller Principal Housing Regeneration Officer	March 2020
3A5	Complete the selective demolition programme on the Carr/Hopps Street regeneration site	Amy Waller Principal Housing Regeneration Officer	March 2016
3A6	Complete improvement works to empty homes through the lease scheme (2015-18 NAHP) in partnership with Thirteen Group	Amy Waller Principal Housing Regeneration Officer Mark Dutton Head of Partnerships and Resources Thirteen Group	March 2018
3A7	Identify suitable incentive or enforcement actions for each of the top 20 empty properties in order for them to be brought back into use	Amy Waller Principal Housing Regeneration Officer	March 2020
3A8	Complete the purchase and refurbishment of 60 long-term empty homes through the EPPS Phase 2 (2015-18 NAHP)	Amy Waller Principal Housing Regeneration Officer	March 2018
3A9	Undertake a minimum of 2 Open Days each year to showcase refurbished long-term empty properties (acquired through the EPPS Phase 2) and identify suitable tenants	Amy Waller Principal Housing Regeneration Officer	March 2018
3A10	Develop a range of homeownership options for the long-term use of properties acquired through empty homes projects	Amy Waller Principal Housing Regeneration Officer	March 2020

PRIORITY 3 – BRINGING LONG-TERM EMPTY HOMES BACK INTO USE

B	OUTCOME – WORK WITH PARTNERS TO EXPLORE AND ACCESS FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES – INCREASED LEVEL OF FUNDING DRAWN IN TO SUPPORT EMPTY HOMES INITIATIVES
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Performance Indicator	Data Source & Responsible Organisation	Collection Period	Annual Target
Number of bids made for empty homes initiatives	HBC	Annually	None – the number of bids made will depend on the number of bidding rounds available

	KEY ACTIONS	LEAD	TIMESCALE
3B1	Explore opportunities for financial assistance for private owners	Amy Waller Principal Housing Regeneration Officer	March 2020
3B2	Continue to investigate sources of potential funding for Empty Homes initiatives	Amy Waller Principal Housing Regeneration Officer	March 2020
3B3	Bid for further funding to expand the Empty Homes Programme as the opportunity arises	Amy Waller Principal Housing Regeneration Officer	March 2020
3B4	Work with RP partners to secure funding and bring empty homes back into use	Amy Waller Principal Housing Regeneration Officer	March 2020

SECTION 4: IMPROVING HEALTH AND WELLBEING

PRIORITY 4 – IMPROVING HEALTH AND WELLBEING; PROMOTING SUSTAINABILITY BY SUPPORTING PEOPLE WITH SPECIFIC HOUSING NEEDS

A	OUTCOME – PEOPLE WITH SPECIFIC HOUSING NEEDS WILL HAVE IMPROVED HOUSING OPTIONS
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Performance Indicator	Data Source & Responsible Organisation	Collection Period	Annual Target
Average waiting time for a Disabled Facilities Grant to be completed	Time Monitoring Spreadsheet HBC	Quarterly	None – monitoring PI to reduce the time taken and set a baseline for future targets
Time taken from first contact to completion of a Disabled Facilities Grant	HBC	Quarterly	
Number of minor adaptations completed	HBC	Quarterly	
The number of households receiving assistance to secure more suitable accommodation in relation to their disability	HBC	Quarterly	
Number of properties with major adaptations carried out to Thirteen homes	Thirteen	Quarterly	None – based on demand for service

	KEY ACTIONS	LEAD	TIMESCALE
4A1	Support the recommendation of the joint CCG/HBC Mental Health Plan; in particular to develop appropriate emergency accommodation to support	Neil Harrison Head of Service (C&AS)	March 2018

	and meet the requirements of people with mental health needs who are in crisis		
4A2	Review all out of area placements for people with mental health needs to find appropriate accommodation in the town where possible	Neil Harrison Head of Service (C&AS)	March 2020
4A3	Respond to the Transforming Care Agenda (the closure of forensic inpatient beds and hospital beds for adults with learning disabilities) with a view to providing good quality local housing	Neil Harrison Head of Service (C&AS)	March 2017
4A4	Contribute to the refresh of the Tees Autism Strategy and identify gaps in provision/future needs for people on autistic spectrum disorders	Neil Harrison Head of Service (C&AS)	December 2015
4A5	Develop the new Centre for Independent Living which is a one stop shop for people with a range of disabilities including autism	Neil Harrison Head of Service (C&AS)	September 2016
4A6	Improve the accommodation and the uptake of technology to support people with a Sensory Loss to live independently in their own home	Neil Harrison Head of Service (C&AS)	March 2020
4A7	Continue to deliver disabled adaptations via DFG to enable residents to live independently and keep the waiting list under review through access to additional funding streams that are made available	Karen Kelly Principal Housing Strategy Officer	March 2020
4A8	Explore additional funding streams and available contracts to expand the minor adaptations service	Karen Kelly Principal Housing Strategy Officer	March 2020
4A9	Explore the feasibility of establishing a service to project manage a private disabled adaptations service for residents	Karen Kelly Principal Housing Strategy Officer	March 2017

PRIORITY 4 – IMPROVING HEALTH AND WELLBEING; PROMOTING SUSTAINABILITY BY SUPPORTING PEOPLE WITH SPECIFIC HOUSING NEEDS

B OUTCOME – THERE WILL BE INCREASED SUPPORTED HOUSING OPTIONS FOR VULNERABLE PEOPLE, INCLUDING THE PROVISION FOR OLDER PEOPLE AND PEOPLE WITH DEMENTIA

Performance Indicator	Data Source & Responsible Organisation	Collection Period	Annual Target
Access to equipment and telecare users with telecare equipment	HBC	Quarterly	2015/16 = 1600 2016/17 = 1650

	KEY ACTIONS	LEAD	TIMESCALE
4B1	Review existing supported living schemes for people with low level mental health needs	Neil Harrison Head of Service (C&AS)	March 2016
4B2	Continue the work with providers around de-registration of care homes where appropriate and increase the level of supported living accommodation for people with learning disabilities	Neil Harrison Head of Service (C&AS)	March 2020
4B3	Continue to develop alternatives to residential care for people with dementia	Jeanette Willis Head of Strategic Commissioning (C&AS)	March 2020
4B4	Continue to increase the number of people using assistive technology as a means to remain independent	Jeanette Willis Head of Strategic Commissioning (C&AS) John Lovatt Head of Service (C&AS)	March 2020

PRIORITY 4 – IMPROVING HEALTH AND WELLBEING; PROMOTING SUSTAINABILITY BY SUPPORTING PEOPLE WITH SPECIFIC HOUSING NEEDS

C OUTCOME – THE NEEDS AND ASPIRATIONS OF THE MINORITY ETHNIC GROUPS WILL BE CLEARLY UNDERSTOOD IN ORDER TO ENSURE SERVICES ARE RESPONSIVE TO THEIR NEEDS

Performance Indicator	Data Source & Responsible Organisation	Collection Period	Annual Target
Percentage of applicants on the CBL housing register indicating they are from a minority ethnic origin	COMPASS CBL system Housing Hartlepool	Quarterly	To achieve a % that is equal to the overall % BME population in Hartlepool Census 2001 – 1.2% Census 2011 – data expected in 2012

	KEY ACTIONS	LEAD	TIMESCALE
4C1	Take account of the Census data and consider if further engagement work is needed with BME communities to identify specific housing needs and requirements	Nigel Johnson Head of Housing Karen Kelly Principal Housing Strategy Officer	March 2020
4C2	Ensure all housing services staff are aware of and access translation and other services that are available to assist minority ethnic groups	Nigel Johnson Head of Housing Karen Kelly Principal Housing Strategy Officer	March 2020

SECTION 5: PREVENTING HOMELESSNESS

PRIORITY 5 – PREVENTING HOMELESSNESS AND PROVIDING OPTIONS

A OUTCOME – A JOINED UP MULTI AGENCY APPROACH TO HOMELESS PREVENTION IN PLACE

Performance Indicator	Data Source & Responsible Organisation	Collection Period	Annual Target
Number of households where homelessness has been prevented through Local Authority action	Homelessness Database HBC	Quarterly	None – this PI is for monitoring

	KEY ACTIONS	LEAD	TIMESCALE
5A1	Expand the membership of the Homelessness Strategy Working Group to key and complementary partners agencies who are not already regularly attending meetings and to any new agencies working in Hartlepool	Karen Kelly Principal Housing Strategy Officer Nicola Dent Stonham	December 2015
5A2	Review the membership and Terms of Reference of the Homelessness Strategy Working Group on an annual basis	Karen Kelly Principal Housing Strategy Officer Nicola Dent Stonham	March 2020
5A3	Following the Gold Standard Peer Review of the housing advice service use the recommendations to produce an action plan	Lynda Igoe Principal Housing Advice Officer Karen Kelly	December 2015

		Principal Housing Strategy Officer	
5A4	Incorporate all actions arising from the Gold Standard Peer Review into the Housing Strategy Action Plan	Karen Kelly Principal Housing Strategy Officer	March 2016
5A5	Continue to work in partnership with the Safer Hartlepool Partnership's on their Reducing Reoffending Strategy	Karen Kelly Principal Housing Strategy Officer	March 2017
5A6	Review the joint working protocol with Children's Services to ensure that 16 and 17 year olds who are homeless receive appropriate support and can access suitable accommodation when needed	Lynda Igoe Principal Housing Advice Officer	March 2017
5A7	Ensure that the Safer Hartlepool Partnership, Childrens Services and Housing Services work proactively to guarantee housing options are effectively integrated to support chaotic adults and troubled families	Roni Checksfield Think Family, Think Communities Coordinator (C&AS) Clare Clark Community Safety and Engagement Manager Lynda Igoe Principal Housing Advice Officer	March 2020
5A8	Encourage Registered Providers and support providers to establish and deliver pre-tenancy training courses to prospective tenants	Lynda Igoe Principal Housing Advice Officer All Registered Providers All support providers	March 2017
5A9	Work in partnership with mental health services, Probation and the Leaving Care Team to achieve better housing outcomes for those leaving institutional	Lynda Igoe Principal Housing Advice Officer	December 2016

	care by establishing baseline data to monitor this		
5A10	Working in partnership with mental health services, Probation and the Leaving Care Team continue to improve housing outcomes for those leaving institutional care	Lynda Igoe Principal Housing Advice Officer	March 2020
5A11	Review the use of temporary accommodation to assess standards and value for money	Lynda Igoe Principal Housing Advice Officer	March 2016
5A12	Improve housing outcomes for residents of temporary accommodation in partnership with in reach services	Lynda Igoe Principal Housing Advice Officer Vicky Husband Stonham	March 2020
5A13	Review options in relation to implementing Foyers as one delivery model for supporting young people with support needs	Kay Glew Head of Housing Thirteen Group	March 2016
5A14	Enhance access for Substance Misuse clients to emergency, move on and sustainable accommodation in the rented sector	Karen Clark Treatment Effectiveness Manager	March 2020

PRIORITY 5 – PREVENTING HOMELESSNESS AND PROVIDING OPTIONS

B OUTCOME – HIGH QUALITY ADVICE, ASSISTANCE AND EARLY INTERVENTION IN PLACE TO PREVENT HOMELESSNESS

Performance Indicator	Data Source & Responsible Organisation	Collection Period	Annual Target
Number of referrals received through the pre-eviction protocol	HBC	Quarterly	
Number of cases where homelessness is prevented through referral to the pre-eviction protocol	HBC	Quarterly	

	KEY ACTIONS	LEAD	TIMESCALE
5B1	Monitor and analyse outcomes through the pre-eviction protocol which was agreed in March 2015 by all Registered Providers	Karen Kelly Principal Housing Strategy Officer Lynda Igoe Principal Housing Advice Officer	March 2017
5B2	Monitor and analyse the data collected on tenancy failure and use any finding to identify future actions	Karen Kelly Principal Housing Strategy Officer	March 2020
5B3	Review the impact of mortgage advice letters received into the service to assess outcomes for households at risk of repossession	Lynda Igoe Principal Housing Advice Officer	December 2016
5B4	Deliver and measure the success of Support to Stay in maintaining tenancies for new and existing customers	Kay Glew Head of Housing	December 2018

	within Thirteen	Thirteen Group	
5B5	Develop Know Your Money and young voices in order to improve financial advice and employability outcomes for younger Thirteen customers	Kay Glew Head of Housing Thirteen Group	December 2018
5B6	Develop and implement initiatives to support new and existing tenants to maintain their tenancies	All Registered Providers (except Thirteen Group)	March 2020
5B7	Develop a risk based approach to after care for people leaving rehabilitation for substance misuse and assess the impact of early intervention to prevent tenancy failure	Karen Clark Treatment Effectiveness Manager	March 2020

PRIORITY 5 – PREVENTING HOMELESSNESS AND PROVIDING OPTIONS

C OUTCOME – THERE IS MINIMAL IMPACT OF WELFARE REFORM ON RESIDENTS

Performance Indicator	Data Source & Responsible Organisation	Collection Period	Annual Target
Number of people helped into work	Thirteen Group	Quarterly	25
Number of people helped into training	Thirteen Group	Quarterly	50
Number of people helped into digital activities	Thirteen Group	Quarterly	50
Amount (£) of extra benefits gained for customers as a result of access to the money advice service	Thirteen Group	Quarterly	£400K
Percentage of customers who have had arrears reduction as a result of access to the money advice service	Thirteen Group	Quarterly	50%
Percentage of customers who terminate their tenancy within the first 12 months	Thirteen Group	Quarterly	Less than 10%

	KEY ACTIONS	LEAD	TIMESCALE
5C1	Delivery of the 3 year Inclusion Strategy for Thirteen Group	Kay Glew Head of Housing Thirteen Group	December 2018
5C2	Work with partner agencies and housing providers to provide advice and access to employment and training	Penny Thompson Business Manager – First	March 2020

	opportunities	Contact and Support Hub	
5C3	Promote the concept of early intervention and prevention for households impacted by Welfare Reform	Penny Thompson Business Manager – First Contact and Support Hub	March 2020
5C4	Assist tenants impacted by Welfare Reform to maintain their tenancy through early intervention to prevent crisis	All Registered Providers	March 2020
5C5	Provide coordinated advice and support to households impacted by Welfare Reform, promote the use of discretionary housing payments and other available funds to prevent homelessness	All Registered Providers	March 2020
5C6	Through involvement in the Financial Inclusion Partnership ensure the Homeless Strategy Working Group members are updated on all impending changes to Welfare Reform	Karen Kelly Principal Housing Strategy Officer	March 2020
5C7	Identify and provide any additional tenancy support that is required to minimise the risk of tenancy breakdown	All Registered Providers	March 2017
5C8	Improve access to digital services and work to improve digital inclusion in the social rented sector	All Registered Providers	March 2018

PRIORITY 5 – PREVENTING HOMELESSNESS AND PROVIDING OPTIONS

D OUTCOME – IMPROVED ACCESS TO SOCIAL HOUSING

Performance Indicator	Data Source & Responsible Organisation	Collection Period	Annual Target
Number of lettings made within each Priority Band	Compass HBC	Quarterly	None – the number of lettings will depend on the number of properties available

	KEY ACTIONS	LEAD	TIMESCALE
5D1	Implement amendments to the Compass system to ensure flexible lettings cycles are introduced	Karen Kelly Principal Housing Strategy Officer All Registered Providers	December 2015
5D2	Promote the use of mutual exchange and mobility schemes to help social tenants to move in conjunction with the Government's Right to Move statutory guidance	All Registered Providers	March 2017
5D3	Monitor advertisements and marketing information on the new Compass Customer Housing Portal to ensure properties are attractive to prospective tenants	All Registered Providers Karen Kelly Principal Housing Strategy Officer	March 2020
5D4	Explore alternative ways of making social housing attractive to prospective tenants through partnership working and targeting of specific local employers	Karen Kelly Principal Housing Strategy Officer	March 2020

SECTION 6: COMMUNICATION AND GOVERNANCE ACTIONS FOR DELIVERY OF THE 5 PRIORITIES

COMMUNICATION AND GOVERNANCE

**OUTCOMES - ENSURE THAT THE HOUSING PARTNERSHIP RECOGNISES THE CHALLENGES IN DELIVERING THE HOUSING STRATEGY
IMPROVED ENGAGEMENT WITH ALL COMMUNITIES**

	KEY ACTIONS	LEAD	TIMESCALE
6.1	A member of the Housing Services Team to attend meetings, where appropriate, and be available to comment on residential planning applications and policy issues	Amy Waller Principal Housing Regeneration Officer	March 2020
6.2	Undertake a review of the Terms of Reference and Membership of the Housing Partnership to reflect the role of the Partnership in monitoring the Housing Strategy	Karen Kelly Principal Housing Strategy Officer	December 2015
6.3	Develop on-line housing services that are easily accessible and encourage residents to access information and advice	Karen Kelly Principal Housing Strategy Officer	March 2020
6.4	Explore the use of social media and council linked websites such as 'Hartlepool Now' to promote all housing services	Karen Kelly Principal Housing Strategy Officer	March 2020
6.5	Publish an Annual Report to all Council tenants	Karen Kelly Principal Housing Strategy Officer	March 2020

SECTION 7: FINANCIAL / FUNDING ACTIONS FOR DELIVERY OF THE 5 PRIORITIES

FINANCIAL AND FUNDING ISSUES

**OUTCOMES - EXPLORE POTENTIAL OPPORTUNITIES TO SUPPORT AND EXPAND THE HOUSING SERVICE
MAXIMISE INCOME GENERATION TO SUPPORT AND EXPAND THE HOUSING SERVICE**

	KEY ACTIONS	LEAD	TIMESCALE
7.1	Explore opportunities for housing services to generate additional income	Nigel Johnson Head of Housing	March 2020
7.2	Maximise the income received by housing services through the promotion of payment methods, promotion of rent in advance and awareness of the responsibility to pay for all housing related debts	Nigel Johnson Head of Housing Amy Waller Principal Housing Regeneration Officer	March 2020

Consultation Report
Hartlepool Housing Strategy 2015 – 2020



Contents

1. Consultation Timetable
2. Stage 1 and Stage 2 Consultation Findings
3. Stage 3 Consultation results
4. Contact Details

1. Consultation Timetable

Hartlepool Borough Council developed its new 5 year Housing Strategy for 2015 to 2020 in consultation with its partners and stakeholders, including local residents.

The consultation for the Housing Strategy was completed in various stages.

Stage 1

During September 2014, 3 consultation workshops were held at the Civic Centre. Invitations to the workshops were sent to a range of organisations across Hartlepool including members of the Housing Partnership; colleagues within Housing Services, Child and Adult Services, Community Safety, Planning; Members; Registered Providers; Probation; Private Landlords; Developers and the voluntary sector.

The purpose of these workshops were to gather views and identify issues from a range of key partners, colleagues and stakeholders on the 3 main topics that will comprise the new Housing Strategy:

- Delivering New Homes, contributing to Sustainable Communities
- Improving Existing Homes, supporting Sustainable Communities
- Meeting Specific Housing Needs

The workshops also aimed to seek views on what we have done well as a strategic housing authority, identify the areas for improvement and explore where we want to be by 2020.

The issues raised across the 3 topic areas were used as a basis for further consultation and as background the development of the 1st draft of the new Housing Strategy.

Stage 2

During Mid October 2014 to 10th January 2015 a questionnaire was posted on the Council's website as a mechanism for consulting with residents about the priorities that emerged during the 3 workshops. Printed copies were also available upon request.

The purpose of the questionnaire was to seek residents' views in Hartlepool before the draft Housing Strategy and Action Plan was written. This was promoted to all staff at Hartlepool Borough Council via the intranet and email; an article in the Hartlepool Mail, an article in Hartbeat and through the use of social media.

Stage 3

The results from the 3 workshops and the on-line community consultation were used to develop the 1st draft of the Housing Strategy 2015 – 2020.

The draft Strategy was formally consulted on for 6 weeks from 23rd April to 3rd June 2015.

This took the following format:

23.4.15 A copy of the 1st draft document was emailed to all members of the Housing Partnership and the Homelessness Strategy Working Group, all Members who are on email, all workshop attendees and relevant colleagues not included in other circulation lists.

The draft document was also posted to all Members not on email and to other respondents to the previous consultation who do not have email.

The 1st draft and consultation questions were also posted on Hartlepool Borough Council's website.

18.5.15 A copy of the 1st draft document was emailed to the respondents to the questionnaire who provided their address requesting a copy.

A letter with a link to the HBC website was posted to respondents to the questionnaire who provided their postal address requesting a copy.

23.4.15 – 3.6.15

The 1st draft document was promoted to the public via the HBC website; articles in the Hartlepool Mail, an article in Hartbeat and through the use of social media.

Stage 4

Following the extensive consultation period the final draft of the Housing Strategy and the associated Action Plan were written during June 2015. These documents reflect the formal feedback received and the views, suggestions and issues that were raised at the community events.

A number of action planning meetings were also held with the key respondents to the 1st draft document and their knowledge was used to develop the final draft of the Action Plan.

2. Stage 1 and Stage 2 Consultation Findings

2.1 Housing Strategy Workshops, September 2014

In total, 50 different people attended the workshops with some people attending all 3. The organisations represented were:

- Hartlepool Borough Council
- Thirteen Group
- Endeavour Housing Association
- Home Group
- Keepmoat
- Renaissance Research
- DISC
- Joseph Rowntree Housing Trust
- Community Campus

There was also good representation at each workshop from Members.

All three workshops were very positively received and feedback indicated that 83% of attendees were totally and very satisfied with the events. Feedback demonstrated that attendees appreciated the opportunity to have the time and space to discuss issues in an interactive forum with good debate from a variety of professionals and organisations. It also offered the opportunity to network and share experience.

The main issues identified at the workshops were used to develop the 1st draft document of the Housing Strategy.

2.2 Workshop 1 held on 10.09.14: Delivering New Homes, contributing to Sustainable Communities

The issues that were identified around new homes were centred on the following themes:

- Jobs / apprentices / training / people leaving town to find work / economic regeneration
- Older people / responding to the needs of an ageing population
- Student accommodation
- Regeneration / Neighbourhood Issues
- Planning Issues and Developer Issues
- Affordability
- Needs, Aspirations, Supply and Demand
- Energy Efficiency / design

2.3 Workshop 2 held on 19.9.14: Improving Existing Homes, supporting Sustainable Communities

The issues that were identified around existing homes were centred on the following themes:

- Provision of Good Quality Accommodation in Private Rented Sector
- Provision of Good Quality Accommodation in Social Rented Sector
- Management Issues in Private Rented Sector
- Management Issues in Social Rented Sector
- Selective Licensing Issues
- Encouraging Good Tenancies in Private Rented Sector
- Encouraging Good Tenancies in Social Rented Sector
- Neighbourhood Management Issues
- Bringing Empties back into Use
- Supply and Demand Issues
- Housing Conditions in the Private Sector
- Anti-social Behaviour in the private sector
- Retrofit / Fuel Poverty / Housing Conditions and Health Issues

2.4 Workshop 3 held on 24.9.14: Meeting Specific Housing Needs

The issues that were identified around meeting specific needs were centred on the following themes:

Homelessness:

- Multi Agency Working / Partnerships
- Mental Health Issues
- Accommodation Issues / Welfare Reform / Demand
- Support Issues / Social exclusion / Access to services
- Digital / financial inclusion

Independent Living:

- Needs / Aspirations / Supply and Demand
- Accommodation Issues
- Access Issues
- Funding / Support
- Dementia / Mental Health Issues
- Evidence of Need

Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) Housing Needs:

- Evidence of Need / Communication / Engagement
- Gypsies and Travellers

In relation to the 3 objectives the workshops also considered a vision for 2020 and what the Strategy should aim to deliver. Attendees were requested to consider a “wish list” in addition to their professional knowledge about what can and can not be achieved.

The following issues were raised:

New Homes/Sustainable Communities:

- Hartlepool needs its own masterplan on “Housing that meets the needs of Hartlepool People”
- Flexibility with developers in changes to plans - Innovative and flexible provision
- More choices on “affordable” housing
- Sustainable communities
- Address housing stock – 2, 3 and 4 bedroom
- Attract new people to live and visit
- Housing Strategy in line with Vision
- Need robust local plan and SHMA which is refreshed on a more regular basis
- Keen to raise profile of joint working opportunities e.g. bulk buying fuel
- People see new houses and nothing else
- There are some signs that economy is improving but, risk taking and hard decisions must be made by the Council
- Facilitating but enforcing when necessary
- Sales pitch – Tees Valley – affordable housing and good quality with space etc
- Utopia – to live in a property in an area they want suited to their needs
- Town centre links – need to link to all sites in the Vision, better access to key areas of Hartlepool

- RPs need up to date information so they know what to build
- Absolute need for new accommodation
- Training embedded in housing delivery – long lasting apprenticeships
- Clear definition of ‘affordable’
- Sprinklers as a safety system – safety issues
- Heating systems
- Top end of quality and design – simple design in some cases
- Code level 5 won’t be achieved
- Infrastructure necessary in new residential developments
- Understanding of current housing needs – include locality and areas people want to live
- New developments linked to creation of job opportunities and training, including enterprise

Existing Homes/ Sustainable Communities:

- Holistic approach to tackle ‘problems’
- Well managed neighbourhoods
- Address demand in low demand areas
- Have people aspire to live in all areas
- Support/expand on successes in town
- Continue to develop/build social lettings agency
- Consider other ‘models’ of sustainment
- Develop profile ‘bad’ landlords – prioritise action plan – intensive approach
- Multi agency toolbox
- Awareness of good practice elsewhere
- Pressure on urban green space
- Mortgage provision / intervention / shared equity
- Sufficient incentives to owners of empty properties
- Commercial properties
- Recognition that each strategic action has an impact on health
- Health and wellbeing – accountability
- Homelessness – reluctance to use private sector and put the most vulnerable into poorer properties
- Thirteen Group’s focus in Hartlepool – decent standards and retrofit
- Commitment to HBC – to the town and community – i.e. Titan House
- Sustaining existing tenancies
- Management of private rented stock by the Council
- Council mortgages

Meeting Specific Needs:

Homelessness:

This group did not identify anything

Independent Living:

- Dementia friendly town

- Older people having fun – not being institutionalised – more chance of people living in a mixed tenure scheme?
- Different models of housing beyond the common model
- Managing Universal Credit (Impact assessments) – can support be provided?
- Preventative measures through various areas, especially working in partnership with health
- Increase in high quality older person accommodation
- Sustainable communities to make the best use of existing stock by partnership working
- Increase in floating support provision across the town
- Redefining services – the right provision for community areas
- Consultation of future possible tenants
- Emergency accommodation suitable for all needs
- New care builds
- Care Bill
- Multiple needs as a specific vulnerable group
- Impact on health care
- Digital inclusion – advice and guidance i.e. for people with sensory loss, autism

BME Housing Needs:

- Understand needs of local Gypsy & Traveller population

2.5 Emerging themes from the Workshops

It can be demonstrated from the three workshops that took place that some themes emerged and also overlapped between the main topic areas.

In summary, the emerging themes included:

- Understanding needs and aspirations
- Oversupply of some types of property
- Impacts of Welfare Reform on supply and demand, needs and aspirations
- Social issues – anti social behaviour needs managing, management standards need improving
- Need for wider partnership, multi agency working and improved communication
- Cost of energy efficiency measures versus development costs and affordability
- Need for local apprentices / local employers to undertake works
- Need to attract students and provide more student accommodation
- Need to respond to the needs of the ageing population and increasing levels of people with dementia

2.6 On-line Questionnaire Results

In total, 273 people completed the on-line questionnaire. Not all respondents answered all the questions and this explains why some of the results do not add up to 100%.

Of the 273 respondents, 46% were female and 54% male.

The majority of respondents were between 45 and 64 (59%) and 99.54% indicated their ethnicity to be white with 0.46% mixed race.

Responses were received from people living in all wards in Hartlepool, although the majority were received from people living in Rural West (20%), Fens and Rossmere (13%), Burn valley (12%), Hart (12%) and Seaton (11%)

85% of respondents said that they own their own home, 4% are living in the private rented sector, 10% rent from a social landlord and 1% part rent, part own their home.

13% of respondents considered themselves to have a disability.

The questionnaire asked respondents to prioritise all the issues identified at the 3 workshops and the results for each objective are as follows:

Objective 1 – New Homes / New & Sustainable Communities

The top 5 priorities that were identified were:

- Need to tackle social problems in low demand and declining neighbourhoods
- Use local employment and local suppliers in new developments
- Look at the impact of new builds on empty properties and on housing in low demand 'central' areas of the town
- Build new affordable housing
- Cater for the needs of an ageing population including the aspiration for bungalows

The issues which were given the least priority include:

- Provision of student accommodation
- Getting the balance right with regards to housing due to aspirations changing
- Need to attract jobs in the right environment which includes housing for workers
- Tackle low demand through regeneration with limited resources and funding

Objective 2 – Existing Homes / Ensuring Sustainable Communities

The top 4 priorities that were identified were:

- Deal with difficulties with enforcing against anti social behaviour
- Need to manage social issues and people's behaviour adopting a Neighbourhood Management approach
- Deal with disrepair and poor condition with owner occupation
- Work with landlords with low expectations in areas of deprivation

The issues which were given the least priority include:

- Capture information, data and statistics relating to fuel poverty
- Undertake a private sector housing condition survey
- Making it easier for people to move by simplifying processes and removing barriers e.g. providing furniture, white goods, gardening tools
- Impact of the lack of funding for grants and loans

Objective 3 – Meeting Specific Needs

This was divided into 3 parts and people were asked to identify their priorities for homelessness, independent living and BME housing needs.

The top priorities that were identified for homelessness were:

- Multi agency approach to homelessness
- Lack of single person accommodation
- Improve information sharing between agencies
- Impact of Welfare Reform

The issues which were given the least priority include:

- Issues of digital inclusion and exclusion
- Reduce barriers to accessing Compass Choice Based Lettings and overlooking people
- Mental health and substance misuse issues for offenders

The top priorities that were identified for independent living were:

- Best model for dementia care – accommodation and facilities
- Deal with lack of substantially adapted houses
- Sustain investment in adaptations through Disabled Facilities Grant and housing providers' funding

The issues which were given the least priority include:

- Increased cost of lifetime homes
- Cost of services for interventions with individuals

The top priorities that were identified for BME housing needs were:

- Need to build relationships and engagement with communities
- Deal with possible creation of communities within communities

The issues which were given the least priority include:

- Cater for the needs of gypsies and travellers in the Local Plan
- Respond to the needs of asylum seeker families e.g. adaptations for cultural and religious needs

10% of respondents disagreed that the 3 objectives will address the housing issues in Hartlepool during 2015 – 2020.

3. Stage 3 Consultation Findings

The results from Stages 1 and 2 of the consultation were used to develop the writing of the 1st draft of the Housing Strategy document for 2015 – 2020.

In total, formal responses to the 1st draft consultation were submitted by:

Penny Thompson	First Contact and Support Hub - HBC
Damien Wilson	Assistant Director (Regeneration) - HBC
Julie Bower	Housing Services – HBC
Dave Pickard	Group Director of Operations - Thirteen
Monica Vaughan	Resident
Members via attendance at a Members Briefing on 26.5.15	

The specific comments, issues and suggestions received from the above individuals and organisations were incorporated into the final draft of the Strategy and into the Action Plan as appropriate.

Noticeable changes that were made to the draft strategy are as follows:

- Rewording of the vision
- Updated information within Chapter 2 about emerging National Housing Policy
- Wording amended within Chapter 4 to clarify the future housing need of Hartlepool
- Inclusion of an additional achievement to reflect strong partnership working during the last Strategy
- Inclusion of an additional action to achieve Priority 1 around catering for the needs of the disabled population
- Priority 2 outcomes amended
- Inclusion of additional actions to achieve Priority 2 around selective licensing and the local living environment
- Priority 3 outcomes amended
- Priority 4 outcomes amended
- Priority 5 outcomes amended
- Within Priority 5 the key facts tables were made clearer to explain the housing advice figures
- Within Chapter 10 a further key source of income was identified as income generated through the Social Lettings Agency

4. Contact Details

For further information about this report or the Housing Strategy 2015 – 2020 please contact:

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Principal Housing Strategy Officer

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Regeneration and Neighbourhoods	Regeneration - Housing Services	Housing Services	Nigel Johnson Head of Housing										
Function/ Service	Housing Strategy 2015 – 2020 (replaces the 2011 – 2015 Strategy) and Action Plan												
Information Available	<table><tr><td>Information Available</td></tr><tr><td>Hartlepool Strategic Housing Market Assessment (2015)</td></tr><tr><td>Tees Valley Strategic Housing Market Assessment (2012)</td></tr><tr><td>Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (2014)</td></tr><tr><td>Hartlepool Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (2015)</td></tr><tr><td>Private Sector Housing Condition Survey (2009)</td></tr><tr><td>Homelessness Statistics</td></tr><tr><td>Compass Housing Register</td></tr><tr><td>Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA)</td></tr><tr><td>Census 2011</td></tr></table>			Information Available	Hartlepool Strategic Housing Market Assessment (2015)	Tees Valley Strategic Housing Market Assessment (2012)	Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (2014)	Hartlepool Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (2015)	Private Sector Housing Condition Survey (2009)	Homelessness Statistics	Compass Housing Register	Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA)	Census 2011
	Information Available												
	Hartlepool Strategic Housing Market Assessment (2015)												
	Tees Valley Strategic Housing Market Assessment (2012)												
	Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (2014)												
	Hartlepool Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (2015)												
	Private Sector Housing Condition Survey (2009)												
	Homelessness Statistics												
	Compass Housing Register												
	Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA)												
Census 2011													
This new Housing Strategy builds upon the 2011-2015 Strategy and the issues and priorities are quite similar. They have been developed to respond to the economy and ongoing Government policy. Therefore there are minimal changes, since the previous Strategy, which impact on the protected characteristics identified through the Equality Act 2010.													
Relevance Identify which strands are relevant or may be affected by what you are reviewing or changing	Age	X											
	Disability	X											
	Gender Re-assignment												
	Race	X											
	Religion	X											
	Gender												
	</												

Information Gaps	The Private Sector Housing Condition Survey was undertaken in 2009 and is therefore quite outdated information. In response, a target of March 2017 has been set to explore opportunities to update our stock condition data for residents living in the private sector.		
What is the Impact	<div>1. Age – positive impact on the prioritisation of housing and support needs of the growing elderly population</div> <div>2. Disability – positive impact for the housing and support needs of disabled people, including those with learning disabilities, mental health issues and dementia - No Impact- No Major Change</div> <div>3. Race – positive impact for accessibility of housing services to BME communities - No Impact- No Major Change</div> <div>4. Religion – certain groups may not be able to access loans “with interest” for initiatives such as empty homes work, mortgages, property renovation, energy efficiency - Adverse Impact but Continue</div>		
Addressing the impact	1. Age - No Impact- No Major Change - there is no potential for discrimination or adverse impact on the above		
	2. Disability - No Impact- No Major Change - there is no potential for discrimination or adverse impact on the above		
	3. Race - No Impact- No Major Change - there is no potential for discrimination or adverse impact on the above		
	4. Religion - Adverse Impact but Continue – although certain groups may not be able to access loans with interest they will not be prohibited from accessing their own funding to participate in any initiatives relating to empty homes work, property renovation, etc.		
In summary, during the development of the Housing Strategy 2015-2020 the relevant strands were identified to ensure that the Strategy and the associated Action Plan do not adversely impact against these protected characteristics.			
Actions			
There are a number of actions and performance indicators in the Housing Strategy Action Plan that relate to the housing and support needs of disabled and older people. In addition the following actions have also been identified to respond to this equality impact assessment.			
Action identified	Responsible Officer	By When	How will this be evaluated?
Take account of the Census data and consider if further engagement	Nigel Johnson Head of Housing Karen Kelly Principal Housing	March 2020	Monitored through the Housing Strategy Action Plan

work is needed with BME communities to identify specific housing needs and requirements	Strategy Officer		
Ensure all housing services staff are aware of and access translation and other services that are available to assist minority ethnic groups	Nigel Johnson Head of Housing Karen Kelly Principal Housing Strategy Officer	March 2020	Monitored through the Housing Strategy Action Plan
Explore opportunities to update our stock condition data which is currently based on a stock condition survey carried out in 2009	Nigel Johnson Head of Housing	March 2017	Monitored through the Housing Strategy Action Plan

Date sent to Equality Rep for publishing	29/06/15
Date Published	00/00/00
Date Assessment Carried out	29/06/15

FINANCE AND POLICY COMMITTEE

27th July 2015



Report of: Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods

Subject: **COUNCIL HOUSING STOCK DEVELOPMENT – JULY 2015**

1. TYPE OF DECISION/APPLICABLE CATEGORY

1.1 Key Decision test (i) Forward Plan Reference No. RN 13/15.

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

2.1 To enable the Committee to:

- (i) consider the business case for the purchase of 14 bungalows on the former Raby Road Corridor/Perth Street Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) site, subject to a successful bid for additional Homes and Community Agency (HCA) funding; and
- (ii) to refer the proposals to Council on 6th August 2015 for approval of the capital funding required as part of the business case.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 In 2010 the Council became a 'Council House' stock holding Local Authority again and its current stock and those to be delivered in the pipeline up until 2018, consists of 253 units. Since April 2015 these properties have been directly managed by the Council's Housing Services team.
- 3.2 The stock consists of two, three and four bedroom houses/flats and 2 bedroom bungalows. The make-up of the stock is both new build properties and properties acquired via the Empty Homes Programme. The Council has been delivering the Empty Homes Programme across the town, since 2012 and it will continue until 2018.

4. PROPOSALS

- 4.1 The Council have been presented with a further opportunity to develop its Council housing asset by acquiring fourteen additional bungalow units on the Alexander Square site (this was formerly the Perth, Hurworth Street CPO site). Keepmoat, the developer of this key housing regeneration site have sought a planning permission variation in order to build out the remaining 30% of the site, however the original purchaser of the 14 bungalows, is no longer able to proceed with the purchase of the units as they have failed to secure the necessary financial funds.
- 4.2 The Council previously approved the recommendation to purchase seven bungalows at Committee on 24th November 2014 and these units are currently under construction and are due for completion in September 2015. Keepmoat has approached the Council offering the opportunity to purchase a further 14 bungalows on the same basis as the first 7 bungalows. All 21 bungalows will be located on adjacent roads on the site, which allows for efficient future management, by the Housing Services team.
- 4.3 Initial discussions have taken place with the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) about an application to the National Affordable Homes Programme to access funding and indications are that the Council is likely to be successful in obtaining this funding if it decides to take the scheme forward.
- 4.4 It is also important to highlight that the new social rented bungalows are in high demand in the town. This is evidenced by the housing waiting list for this type of accommodation and by the current and future demographic evidence about the population of Hartlepool. The Victoria ward is also a popular ward in terms of housing requests for this type of property, due to its proximity to the town centre and its links to services and the public transport network. The properties will all be built with level access to entry points in line with current HCA requirements; additionally all the bungalows will be built with level access showers which will alleviate future pressures on the disablement facilities budget.
- 4.5 The developer also intends to build out the remaining 14 houses on the site under this proposal and market these for sale this will see the site fully completed and have the effect of generating a new community in this area which has suffered for many years from the lack of full resident occupation. The units all meet the Design Quality Standards in line with HCA requirements, which are in line with the National Housing Federation standards for registered providers, all property is designed and constructed to high standards to produce energy efficiency and improved comfort levels.

5. FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 5.1 The business case for the proposal is based on the same underlying principals and prudent assumptions as those used for the previous 7 units

and other housing schemes. The proposed funding for the scheme consists of:

- HCA grant;
- Prudential Borrowing – the annual rent income, net of management and maintenance costs, will meet the cost of annual borrowing repayments;
- Section 106 contributions already received and intended for off-site affordable housing provision;

5.2 Two options for the mix of Prudential Borrowing and Section 106 contributions have been identified and both are financially viable and sustainable:

- **Option A** - Prudential Borrowing of £876,000 (i.e. £62,572 per property) repayable over 50 years, which equates to 70% of the total project funding and Section 106 funding of £55,000. This option leaves uncommitted Section 106 funding to support future housing schemes of £141,000.
- **Option B** - Prudential Borrowing of £735,000 (i.e. £52,500 per property) repayable over 40 years, which equates to 58% of the total project funding and Section 106 funding of £196,000. This option fully commits all Section 106 funding received to date for social housing contributions.

5.3 The key financial elements of the two options are summarised below:

	Option A	Option B
	£000	£000
Cost per Unit	90	90
Total Cost (14 units)	1,260	1,260
Funded by:		
Borrowing	876	735
HCA Grant	329	329
Section 106	55	196
	1,260	1,260

6. RISK IMPLICATIONS

6.1 As described above, the business case is contingent on the Council being successful in receiving the HCA grant. If this is not approved then the scheme will not proceed.

6.2 Bungalows are considered a low risk option as there is less likely to be a failure to let the properties and find tenants as bungalows are in high demand and a waiting list exists for these unit types in Hartlepool. The future demographic information for the town also evidences high needs for

bungalow accommodation. This area of the town is also a popular with applicants for housing.

- 6.3 The business case has been based on prudent assumptions for rent income, management and maintenance and borrowing costs. The Council is able to benefit from historically low levels of borrowing, which can be locked in for the duration of the 40 to 50 year loan period, depending on the borrowing option approved by Members.
- 6.4 This proposal will take the Council's housing stock above 200 units, which is the trigger point which may require the Council to re-establish a 'Housing Revenue Account' (HRA). Officers have informed the Department of Communities and Local Government of this proposal and at the time this report was prepared they were considering this issue to determine whether they would approve either:
- an increase above 200 units without requiring the Council to re-establish a HRA, or
 - require the Council to re-establish the HRA.
- 6.5 In practice, the Council is already undertaking much of the administrative, accounting and regulatory requirements expected as part of the Housing Revenue Account framework, which has changed since the Council transferred its housing stock in 2004. Council housing is now expected to be self funding in a similar way to the current arrangements. The full consequences of reopening a HRA need to be explored, including the Government sanctioning the borrowing needed for the business case within the national housing limit. It is anticipated that any minor additional administrative costs of operating an HRA can be funded within the existing business case.

7. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY CONSIDERATIONS

- 7.1 There are no equality or diversity implications. In fact these type of properties help to improve the offer and range of units required to improve equality.

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

- 8.1 There are no Section 17 implications.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

9.1 It is recommended that the Committee approve the proposal to purchase 14 bungalows on the Alexander Square development on condition that:

- i) there is a successful outcome of the bid for £329,000 HCA Grant under the National Affordable Homes Programme;
- ii) the Department for Communities and Local Government approve the arrangements for either increasing the HRA exemption, or approve the arrangements for the Council re-establishing the HRA. To note that any minor additional administrative costs of operating an HRA can be funded within the existing business case;
- iii) to approve one of the following options for referral to Council for funding the balance of the scheme costs, noting that both options are financially viable and sustainable:

Option A – use Prudential Borrowing of £876,000 (i.e. £62,572 per property), which equates to 70% of the total project funding and Section 106 funding of £55,000.

Option B – use Prudential Borrowing of £735,000 (i.e. £52,500 per property), which equates to 58% of the total project funding and Section 106 funding of £196,000.

- iv) To note that if bid for HCA grant is successful and the scheme proceeds, the total capital budget for this scheme will be £1,260,000.
- v) To note that if the approvals detailed at recommendations (i) and (ii) are not successful, the scheme will not proceed.

10. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

10.1 This proposal develops the stock of Council owned housing and delivers the type and size of units which are in high demand in central Hartlepool. It also represents good value for money and is a valuable opportunity to develop the Council's housing stock.

11. BACKGROUND PAPERS

11.1 Finance and Policy 24th November 2014.
Council 14th December 2014.

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FINANCE AND POLICY COMMITTEE

27 July 2015



Report of: Chief Executive and Assistant Chief Executive

Subject: WORKFORCE ARRANGEMENTS

1. TYPE OF DECISION/APPLICABLE CATEGORY

- 1.1 Key Decision (test (i)). Forward Plan Reference No - CE64/14 - Workforce Arrangements.

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 2.1 To advise on progress in respect of Workforce Arrangements and seek Finance and Policy Committee's response to the result of the ballot of local trade union members.
- 2.2 The trade unions confirmed to the Council on the 23rd June 2015 that they have not been mandated, via a ballot of their members, to enter into a collective agreement to reflect the changes to terms and conditions agreed, in principle, at Finance and Policy Committee on 30 January.
- 2.3 As a consequence it will not be possible to implement the whole package, as planned, on the 1st October 2015, and it is necessary for Finance and Policy Committee to consider the impact on the MTFS, the available options for moving forward, and the alternatives to find savings.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 An update of the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) was submitted to Finance and Policy Committee on 24th November 2014 and detailed 2015/16 budget proposals were approved by Council on 18th December 2014 including £200k from changes in employee's terms and conditions. The report advised Members of the proposals to balance the 2015/16 budget and the further cuts of £14.8m which will need to be made over the period 2016/17 to 2018/19. These further cuts equate to 17%. The level of cuts could be higher if the actual grant cuts exceed the current planning forecasts. The report indicated that even more difficult decisions will need to be implemented from 2016/17 to balance the budget. If these measures are not achieved alternative savings/cuts will need to be implemented.

- 3.2 The Single Status Agreement (agreed in 2008 but backdated to 1 April 2007) was the last time significant consideration was given to employees conditions of service (including overtime enhancements, weekend enhancements, protection arrangements etc). The financial outlook was different at that time and a key objective for the Single Status Agreement was to address the significant equal pay risks associated with pay. It was important that the workforce supported the changes to the pay arrangements and it was not appropriate, at that time, to make significant changes to the other terms and conditions. All schools and academies have adopted the Single Status Agreement. By law, Community schools have to pay their employees in accordance with the Council's pay and grading structure, although this does not apply to Academies, Aided and Foundation schools.
- 3.3 The Council introduced a Hartlepool Living Wage of £7.26 per hour (equivalent to spinal column point 10) by merging Bands 1-3 into a single pay band in September 2013. This is the lowest hourly rate paid to Council employees on Council conditions of service. All schools and some of the Academies in Hartlepool are also paying the Hartlepool Living Wage. This contributed to the Council's Anti Poverty Strategy.
- 3.4 After 3 years of pay restraint a 1% pay rise was agreed for employees on NJC for Local Government Services (Green Book) conditions of service with effect from 1 April 2013. A further pay award of 2.32% for spinal column point 10 and 2.2% for all other spinal column points applies for the period 1 January 2015 and 31 March 2016. As a result the Hartlepool Living Wage (and SCP10) is currently of £7.43 per hour.
- 3.5 The National Minimum Wage which for those aged 21 and over is currently £6.50 per hour, will rise to £6.70 per in October 2015, and is reviewed each October. The National Living Wage is currently £7.85 per hour and is reviewed each November. Accredited Living Wage employers have six months from November each year to implement the new national Living Wage rate. In addition, accredited employers are required to ensure contracted workers over 18 (but excluding apprentices) are paid the National Living Wage where the worker is on the employer's premises for two or more hours per week, for eight or more consecutive weeks in the year. There is no requirement for the Living Wage to apply in other contracts. The Government announced on the 8th July 2015, that from April 2016 there will be a compulsory Living Wage (for workers aged above 25), initially set at £7.20 per hour, with a target, subject to sustained economic growth, of it reaching £9 per hour by 2020.
- 3.6 In a European Court of Justice decision and, late last year, a high profile Employment Appeal Tribunal (EAT) decision on holiday pay, it has been established that non guaranteed overtime (i.e. overtime which does not have to be provided by employers but which the employee contractually has to work if it is offered) should be reflected in holiday pay.

3.7 Unison are urging Council's to sign up to their ethical care charter for care workers which includes the following demands:

- Time allocated to visits should match client needs.
- Visits should be scheduled so home care staff do not have to rush time with clients or leave early.
- Staff should be paid for travel time.
- Staff should have permanent contracts not zero-hour contracts.
- Staff should be paid at least the living wage.
- Staff should receive regular training and the opportunity to meet colleagues to share best practice and limit isolation.

3.8 Finance and Policy Committee, at its meeting on 30 January 2015, agreed, in principle, to a number of changes to employees conditions of service in relation to:

- Car allowances
- Unsocial working enhancements
- Overtime enhancements
- Protection
- Living Wage
- Annual leave
- Travel
- Subsistence
- Holiday pay
- Standby
- Transport
- Cancellation of requirement to work at short notice
- Unison Ethical Care Charter

3.9 Further details of the changes which were agreed, in principle, can be found in the exempt Appendix A. **This item contains exempt information under Schedule 12A Local Government Act 1972 (as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006) namely, (para 4) Information relating to any consultations or negotiations, or contemplated consultations or negotiations, in connection with any labour relations matter arising between the authority or a Minister of the Crown and employees of, or office holders under, the authority.**

3.10 As detailed in the November 2014 MTFs report, funding for potential one-off protection costs arising from the achievement of permanent 2015/16 savings from the Terms and Conditions review have been identified from a combination of reviewing reserves and the 2014/15 outturn. This proposal formed part of the Council's multi-year financial strategy which aimed to provide the best possible financial position for managing the impact on sustained cuts in Government funding and to manage other one off financial risks.

4. **PROGRESS SINCE FINANCE AND POLICY COMMITTEE MET ON 30 JANUARY 2015**

- 4.1 Further discussions took place with the trade unions and authority was given, at national trade union level, for the trade unions to ballot their members. As a result of the discussions some of the agreed changes were refined and further details of these can be found in the exempt Appendix A. **This item contains exempt information under Schedule 12A Local Government Act 1972 (as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006) namely, (para 4) Information relating to any consultations or negotiations, or contemplated consultations or negotiations, in connection with any labour relations matter arising between the authority or a Minister of the Crown and employees of, or office holders under, the authority.**
- 4.2 Briefings took place between 11 and 29 May 2015 where the package of proposed changes were explained by the previous Chief Executive to Council and School employees and the trade unions spoke to their members. More detailed briefings also took place in respect of the standby and transport changes. Individual letters were sent to employees after the briefings ended which detailed the potential impact of the proposed changes (with a summary of the changes attached).
- 4.3 The trade union ballot of their members ran from Monday 1st June to Friday 19th June. On Tuesday 23rd June the trade unions confirmed to the Council that they have not been mandated, via a ballot of their members, to enter into a collective agreement to reflect the changes to terms and conditions agreed, in principle, at Finance and Policy Committee on 30 January. Following the Trade Union ballot outcome and in the context of the current worsening position of the MTFS, a range of alternative proposals have been identified for Finance & Policy Committee consideration, these can be found in the exempt Appendix B. **This item contains exempt information under Schedule 12A Local Government Act 1972 (as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006) namely, (para 4) Information relating to any consultations or negotiations, or contemplated consultations or negotiations, in connection with any labour relations matter arising between the authority or a Minister of the Crown and employees of, or office holders under, the authority.**

5. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 5.1 That Members note the report and consider the detailed recommendations in the exempt Appendix B.

6. **REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 6.1 The trade unions have indicated that they have not been mandated, via a ballot of their members, to enter into a collective agreement to reflect the specific changes to terms and conditions.

- 6.2 As a consequence of the outcome of the Trade Union ballot, it will not be possible to implement the proposals on 1st October 2015 and it is now necessary to consider the impact on the MTFS and the available options for moving forwards and the alternatives to find savings.

7. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Finance and Policy Committee report 23 August 2013
Finance and Policy Committee report 18 October 2013
Finance and Policy Committee report 24 November 2014
Finance and Policy Committee report 30 January 2015

8. CONTACT OFFICER

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FINANCE AND POLICY COMMITTEE

27th July 2014



Report of: Assistant Chief Executive

Subject: EMPLOYEE SICKNESS ABSENCE
ANNUAL REPORT 2014/15

1. TYPE OF DECISION/APPLICABLE CATEGORY

Non Key Decision.

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 2.1 To update the Committee on the Council's performance in 2014/15 in relation to employee sickness absence and seek approval for the sickness absence targets (paragraph 3.7) and key focus areas (paragraph 3.8) for 2015/16.

3. BACKGROUND

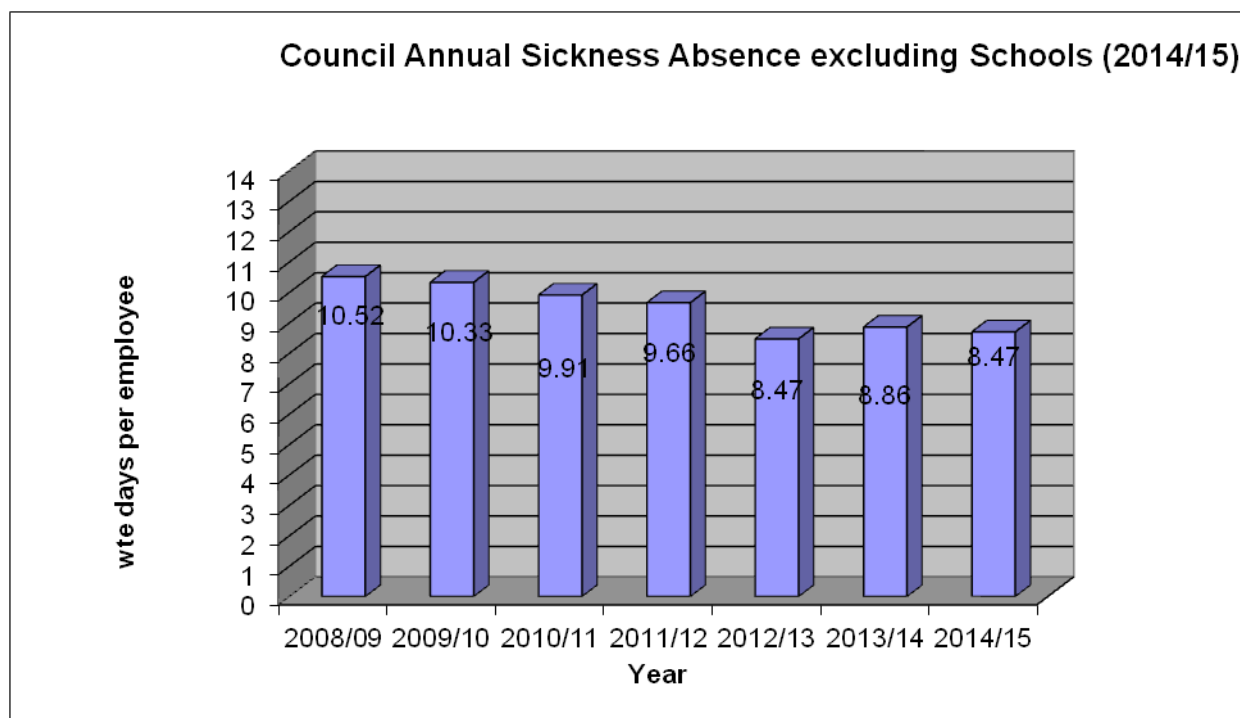
- 3.1 The extent to which employees are absent from work due to illness has a direct impact on the quality, level and cost of the provision of services. As such the Council have included this as a Local Performance Indicator (HRPI 5A) – The number of working days/shifts lost due to sickness absence in its group of Corporate Health Performance Indicators.

4. SICKNESS ABSENCE PERFORMANCE INFORMATION 2014/15

4.1 Sickness Absence Performance 2014/15

The Council have introduced a new measure this year to monitor employee sickness excluding School employees and set a target of 8.9 wte for 2014/15 which was met with a performance of 8.47 wte for the year as demonstrated in Figure 1 below. As more schools move to academy status and as options for HR services opens up to the competitive market, the Council will move away from reporting sickness absence including Schools and this will become the main indicator for performance of sickness absence.

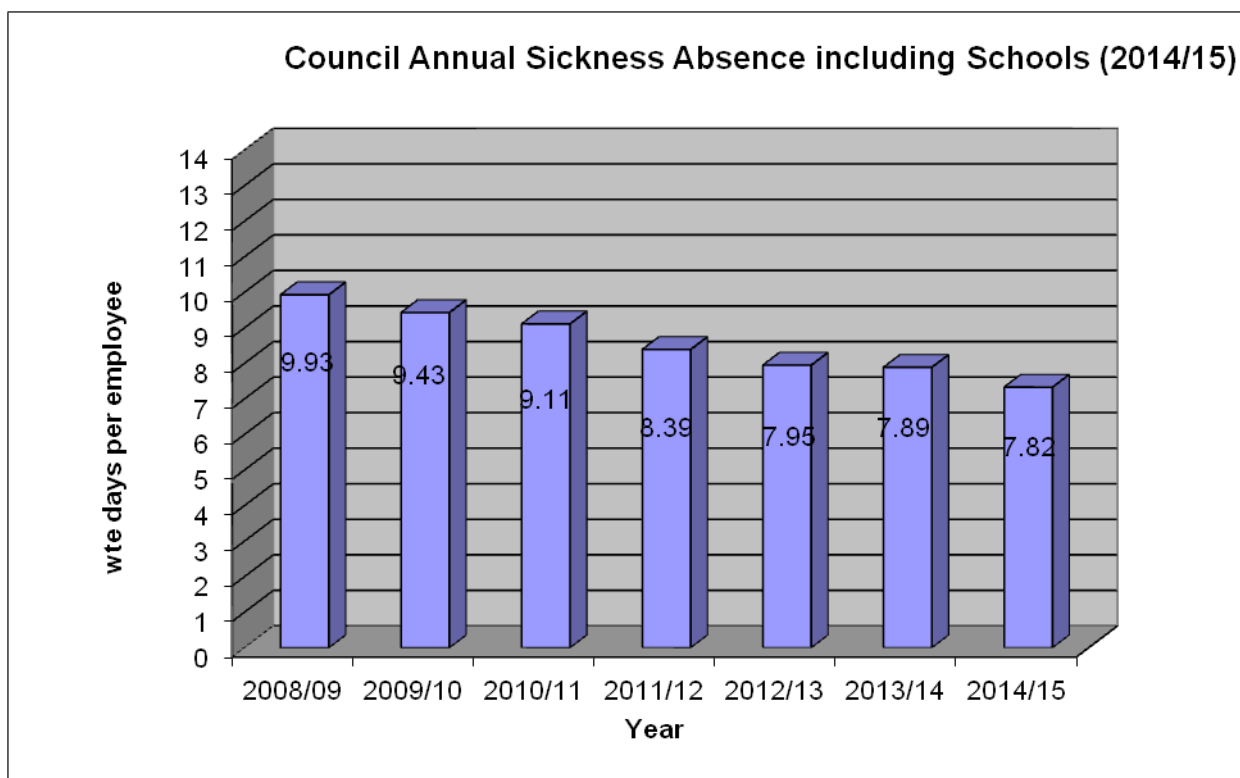
Figure 1 below shows the Council performance excluding Schools employees.



- 4.2 The target figure for 2014/15 for the Council including Schools is 7.40 wte days absence per wte employee (whole time equivalent). The end of year figure, is slightly over target but still shows an improved figure of 7.82 days per wte per employee per annum as illustrated in Figure 2 below.

This shows a continued reduction in levels of sickness absence rates for the seventh year running and represents a reduction of 2.11 wte days per employee / annum since 2008/9. The Council continues to focus on sickness absence management to drive these figures down further. This commitment is demonstrated in the target proposed at paragraph 4.7.

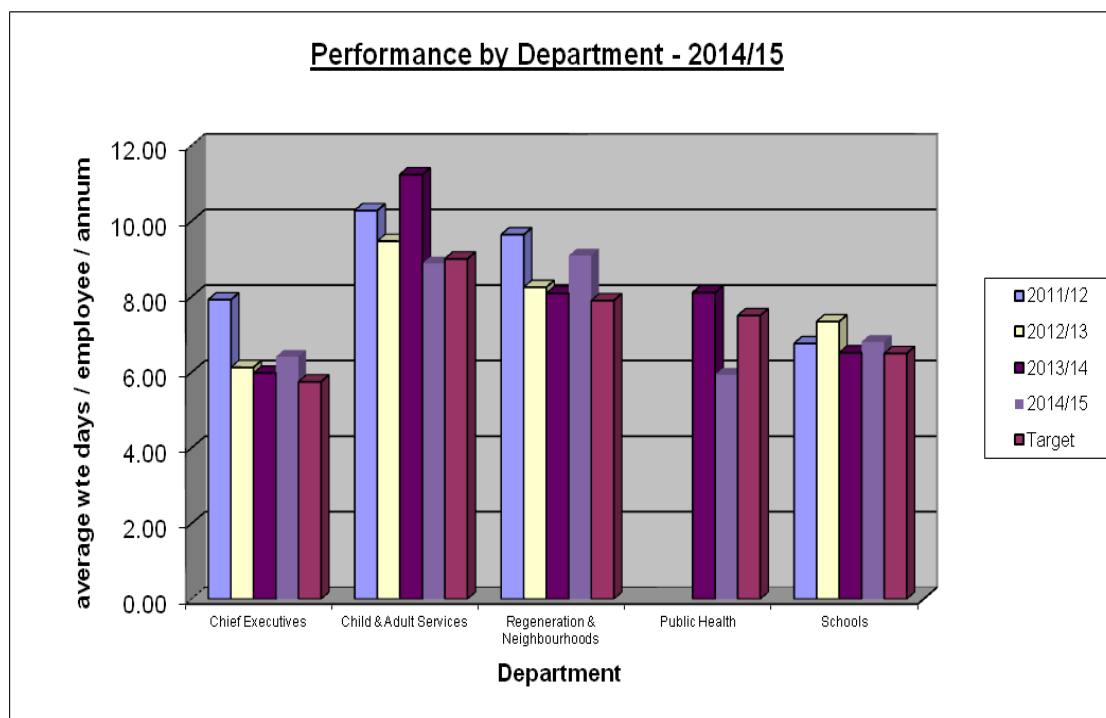
Figure 2



- 4.3 Figure 3 below illustrates the actual performance for each Department and Schools as at 31 March 2015. This can be compared to performance over the last three years in Chief Executives and Schools. However due to corporate restructuring, the Public Health Department shows the last two years data. The final column shows the 2014/15 annual target set by each Department and Schools.

The figure identifies that there is a downward trend in sickness absence rates in Public Health and Child & Adult Services. There has been an increase in rates in both Chief Executives and Regeneration & Neighbourhoods due to the number of long term ill health cases in these departments during the 12 month period, although the increase is marginal in Chief Executives. However, overall the Council, excluding schools, has achieved an overall reduction in annual sickness rates from 8.86 to 8.47 wte.

Figure 3



- 4.4 The Corporate Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) in their annual survey report 2014 report the average sickness rate at 6.6 days per employee across all sectors. The public sector sickness averages have decreased from 8.7 days per employee in 2013 to 7.9 days per employee in 2014. The not for profit sector average is 7.4 days per employee and the private service sector average is 5.5 days / employee.

The Department for Education in their School Workforce in England report 2013 advised that in Schools the figure for Teachers is 7.9 days per employee which is a reduction from the average of 8.1 days lost in 2012.

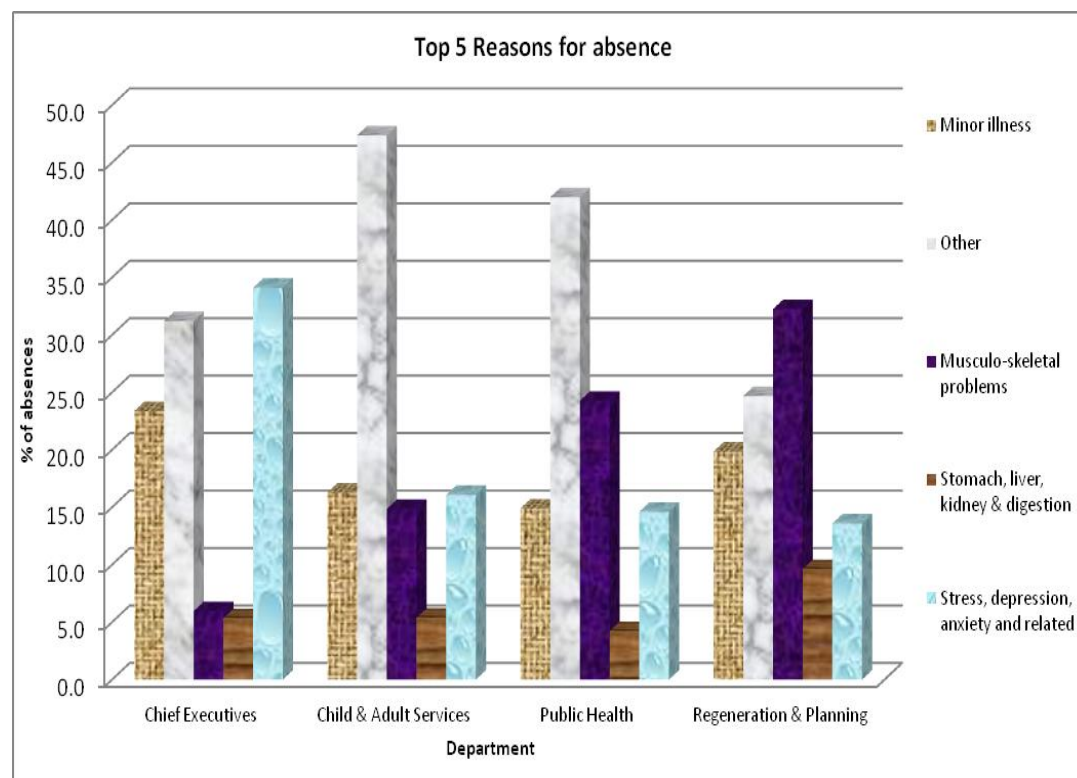
- 4.5 The CIPD Annual Survey Report 2014 identifies that for short term sickness absence the main cause is for minor illnesses (for example, colds, flu, stomach upsets, headaches and migraines).

The CIPD Annual Survey Report 2014 reports that the top 5 common causes of long term absences for manual workers in the public sector is stress at 77%, musculoskeletal injuries at 72%, acute medical conditions (for example stroke, heart attack and cancer) at 65%, back pain at 55% and mental ill health at 52%. For non manual workers in the public sector, it is 82% for stress, 66% for acute medical conditions, 66% for musculo skeletal injuries and 55% for mental ill health.

Within the Council one of the main causes of absence is due to stress, depression and anxiety (both personal stress and work related) with all 4

departments having this as one of their top 5 most common causes of sickness absence. Chief Executives have this as their top reason for absence as illustrated in Figure 4 below.

Figure 4 below identifies the rates for the top 5 reasons for sickness for each Department.



According to the CIPD annual survey report 2014, within Public Services there has been a significant increase over the last 12 months in the amount of stress related absence, with 56% of respondents reporting that there had been an increase. Research indicates that the main cause of work related stress in the Public Sector was workloads/volume of work with 57% of respondents reporting this as their top reason. Considerable organisational change/restructuring was at 37% and job insecurity had reduced to 10% which is half the proportion it was 3 years ago. Research indicates that the changes in the scale of redundancies in the public sector, coupled with a stronger employment market generally, may have contributed to this reduction

As a Council we take a pro active approach to managing stress, depression and anxiety within the workplace. Stress risk assessments are conducted Council wide to manage and resolve stress prior to an employee being absent on sick leave or when an employee has been absent due to stress to assist them in returning back to work. Referrals to Hartlepool MIND are also used to assist employees in managing their mental well being. The Council

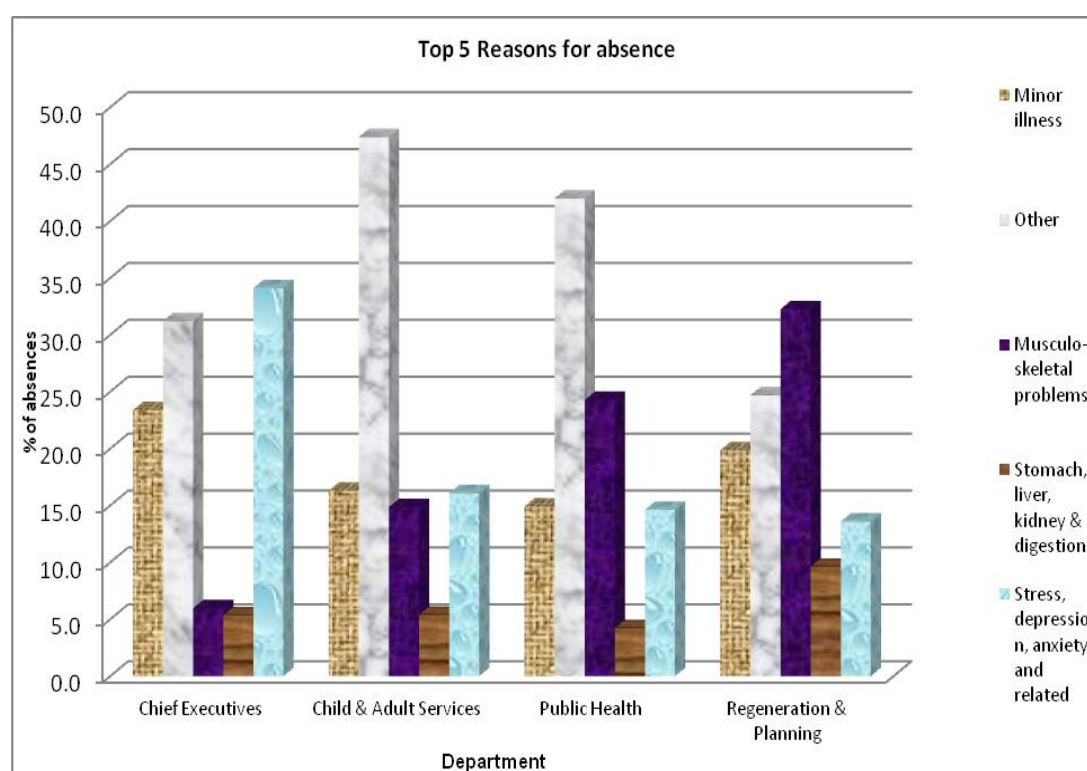
have also ran mental health briefings to assist managers to support employees who are suffering from mental ill health.

Musculo-skeletal problems are cited as the main cause of sickness absences within Regeneration & Neighbourhood's.

As a Council we adopt a number of pro-active strategies aimed at reducing the number of staff absent from work due to musculo-skeletal injuries. These include regular refresher training on manual handling, hand arm vibration awareness, use of personal protective equipment and referrals to Physiotherapy services. The Health, Safety and Wellbeing Team also conduct annual risk assessments throughout Departments and Schools, aimed at reducing the need for the use of manual handling by providing lifting aids.

As a Council we continue to take a pro active approach to managing the well being of employees with the aim of reducing the overall sickness absence levels in the Council further.

Figure 5 below identifies the Department rate for each of the top 5 reasons for sickness



4.6 Long, Medium and Short Term Sickness Absence

Long term = 20 days plus
 Medium term = 5 to 20 days
 Short term = under 5 days

Figure 6

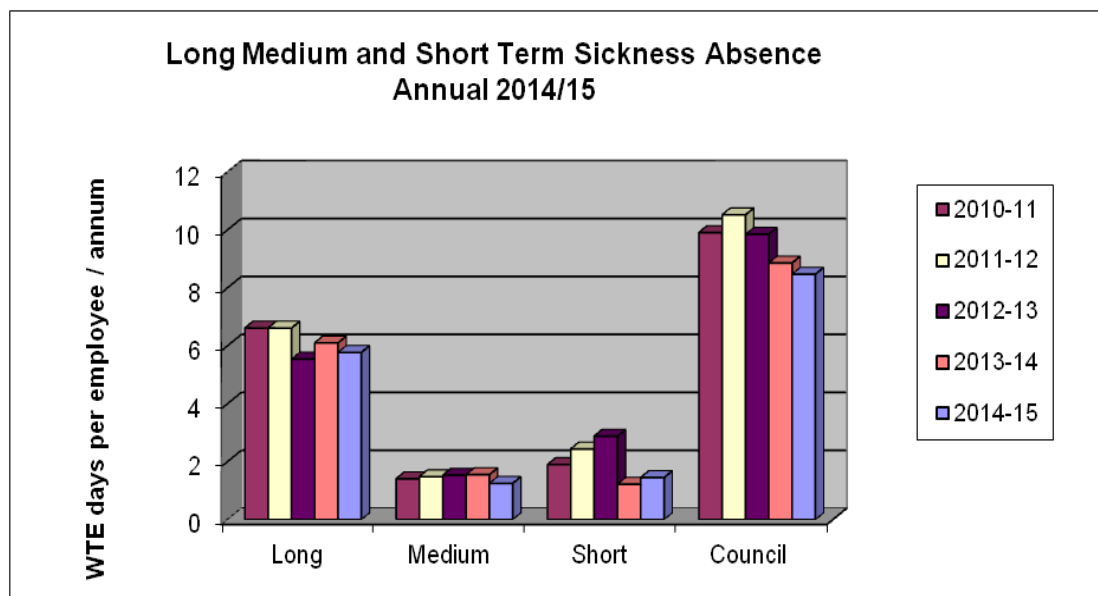


Figure 6 shows a breakdown of long, medium or short term sickness absence for the past 5 years up to March 2015. The final column shows the impact this had on the overall Council sickness absence figure.

In 2014/15 there has been a small decrease in long and medium term cases and a slight increase in short term rates. There is still a year on year improvement in the management of sickness absence for the Council to date.

4.7 Sickness Absence Targets

Each Department has set their average sickness absence targets for 2015/16 as detailed in Table 1 below. The first two columns show the target and actual sickness for 2014/15 and the final column shows the proposed targets for 2015/16.

Table 1

Department	2014/15 Actual	2014/15 Target	2015/16 Proposed Target
Chief Executive's	6.41	5.75	5.75
Child & Adult Services	8.88	9.0	8.75
Regeneration & Neighbourhoods	9.09	7.9	8.75
Public Health	5.94	7.5	6.00
Schools	6.81	6.5	6.00
Council (Excluding Schools)	8.47	8.9	8.2
Council (Including Schools)	7.82	7.4	7.3

The Council target agreed by CMT for 2014/15 is based upon individual targets set by departments and for schools. The target represents a realistic sickness absence performance for a 12 month period.

4.8 Sickness Absence Management Key Performance Aims 2015/16

The following are key issues for effective sickness absence management and are supported by the Council within their working practices:

- Early intervention is key and the sooner support is provided the quicker the employee is able to return to their job. The Council support this by monitoring absence at an early stage.
- Work in a well managed workplace is shown to aid recovery and an early return aids both physical and mental health
- Discussions can lead to simple adjustments that enable an early return before 100% fitness
- Encouraging health and wellbeing and supporting employee participation in health initiatives can have a positive effect

There is a commitment to explore the following areas which will assist in driving performance. However it should be noted that this work is ongoing subject to resources.

- In the current climate of annual redundancy programmes; loss of colleagues and increased workloads then the Council need to monitor and reduce workloads to reduce stress related absences
- Further developing and celebrating a culture of wellbeing such as the recognition for employees with 5 years of no sickness absence

- Review of the Council's sickness absence policy and management arrangements
- Continue to promote flexible working measures, including home working
- Work together with trade unions to manage sickness absence in the Council

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Committee notes the information in relation to employee absence in 2014/15 and approves the sickness absence targets (paragraph 4.7) and key focus areas (paragraph 4.8) for 2015/16.

6. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None.

7. CONTACT OFFICER

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FINANCE AND POLICY COMMITTEE

27 July 2015



Report of: Director of Child and Adult Services and Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods

Subject: INTEGRATING HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE SERVICES TO DELIVER THE BETTER CARE FUND PLAN

1. TYPE OF DECISION/APPLICABLE CATEGORY

1.1 Non-key decision.

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

2.1 The purpose of the report is to:

- provide an update on integration of adult social care and health services as part of the delivery of Hartlepool's Better Care Fund Plan.
- seek approval for the Council to lease office accommodation from the North Tees & Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust (FT) on the University Hospital of Hartlepool site to facilitate the creation of a co-located service that is a key element of the Better Care Fund Plan.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 The Better Care Fund (BCF) Plan for Hartlepool has been approved through the Health & Wellbeing Board and has the following key aims and objectives:

- To maximise independence and quality of life and help people to stay healthy and well through the development of integrated community health and social care services with a focus on long term conditions, frail elderly (including end of life) and dementia. This will be delivered through the roll out of an integrated care model building on existing care planning, care co-ordination, risk stratification and multi-disciplinary working.
- To streamline care and reduce activities that are carried out by multiple organisations ensuring the right services are available in the right place, at the right time through an integrated community approach providing

rapid response to support individuals to remain at home and avoid admission.

- To improve people's experience of services through the introduction of a single point of access across health and social care, utilising the NHS number.
- To improve outcomes for service users and carers through clearer and simpler care pathways and proactive management of people with long term conditions.
- To improve access to community health and social care services 7 days a week to improve user experience and provide responsive services in and out of hours, reduce delayed discharges and improve support to empower people to live independently.

3.2 The BCF Plan is based on three key themes, one of which is Intermediate Care. The strategic objective for this theme is as follows:

- We will support people in their own homes and in the community to prevent avoidable admissions to hospital and to prevent or postpone permanent admissions to residential care through providing a range of community based alternatives. Services will be provided seven days a week across health and social care with a focus on supporting people in their own homes wherever possible through enhanced community nurse and social care intervention building upon and enhancing the model of community services already in place – the Community Integrated Assessment Team (CIAT) and Teams Around Practices (TAPS). This approach will be further enhanced through the availability of community based step up provision, which will focus on lower level health needs which currently account for high numbers of avoidable emergency admissions. When a hospital admission is necessary and can't be prevented, integrated health and social care services will work together to ensure that hospital discharge is timely and seamless and that people are supported through reablement services to regain their confidence, maximise their abilities and develop the skills and capacity to retain their independence for as long as possible.

3.3 Within this theme, it is identified that the BCF will be used to:

- Invest in a co-located early intervention model that supports hospital discharges through additional social work and occupational therapy capacity and procurement of additional capacity within the independent sector to deliver reablement packages following a period of assessment. This will facilitate smooth hospital discharges and enable NHS community services (and specifically the Rapid Response Nursing Service) to discharge people efficiently following a period of intensive involvement.

4. CURRENT POSITION

4.1 The current adult social care service comprises three elements:

- a point of first contact for adults who require advice, guidance and information regarding adult social care matters, especially in relation to an assessment of need, safeguarding, Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS) and hospital discharges;
 - a rapid response assessment of need function for adults who require care and support to enable them to leave hospital quickly and safely;
 - short term reablement interventions to promote the independence of adults following illness, accident or an exacerbation of a pre-existing health condition.
- 4.2 Reconfiguring the service and co-locating with the Single Point of Access for FT Community Services and health teams that support hospital discharge is an essential element of the Better Care Fund Plan. The reconfiguration will support greater integration of services across health and social care, reducing duplication and promoting sharing of information at the earliest stage so that decisions are made based on a holistic view of the care and support that's needed. A shared approach to contact and hospital discharge will ensure that a co-ordinated response can be provided that promotes independence and prevents unnecessary admissions to hospital or care home settings.
- 4.3 The service is currently located across two sites, with staff who provide the advice, guidance and information specific to safeguarding, DoLS and hospital discharges working from the Civic Centre. Other staff who undertake the assessments of need and the reablement function are based in the Phoenix Centre, a Thirteen Group property located in the Central Estate.
- 4.4 The part of this building used by the staff from the service is shared with the NHS and they intend to move out shortly which will increase the Council's proportionate costs. Fundamentally, the part of the building used by the staff is no longer considered fit for purpose in that the accommodation is a former Sports Hall. As the volume of activity has increased and services have had to be restructured additional staff have transferred from elsewhere to the Phoenix Centre to meet the presenting challenges. Health and safety concerns have arisen in terms of the toilet facilities and the acoustics are becoming a problem for staff as they attempt to undertake their work.
- 4.5 In relation to operational challenges, in order to provide timely, safe and efficient support to adults recovering from illness, accident or a hospital admission, staff on both sites must work closely with the NHS Single Point of Access (SPA), clinical professionals working in the hospital acute services and NHS professionals who provide residential and community based therapy services. Currently there are significant risks and inefficiencies as a consequence of the separation of these adult social elements, especially in relation to the managerial and supervisory arrangements.
- 4.6 Currently the Team Manager and Principal Practitioners are required to support staff across two sites and, for staff who are dealing with highly complex health and social care issues which often need an immediate response, this is leading to problems in that the Team Manager and the

Principal Practitioners are not always readily available to provide the professional advice necessary. This results in increased anxiety for staff and crucially for service users and their family carers, leading to potential delays in facilitating hospital discharges or responding to requests for an assessment of need.

- 4.7 The co-location of the Council and NHS professionals on the hospital site has significant advantages over an alternate accommodation arrangement in that the adult social care managerial and supervisory staff can be made available at all times to support decision making for each aspect of the operational function; communication between the SPA and the point of first contact for adult social care will be easier as they will be physically based alongside one another; those staff responsible for assessments of need to facilitate hospital discharges will be within walking distance of the Holdforth Unit. As such more assessments can be completed and discharges facilitated without necessarily increasing staffing resources and adult social care reablement staff will be able to work alongside NHS therapists more effectively.
- 4.7 The FT are supportive of the proposal and they have offered to provide accommodation at nil rent subject to the Council contributing towards the operating costs of the building on a proportionate area basis together with a contribution to the costs of refurbishment as detailed in **CONFIDENTIAL APPENDIX 1 (This item contains exempt information under Schedule 12A Local Government Act 1972 (as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006) namely, (para 3) information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).**
- 4.8 Suitable accommodation has been identified on the hospital site and the FT has undertaken significant works of refurbishment to convert the space in to office accommodation.
- 4.9 Heads of terms have been agreed with the FT as set out in **CONFIDENTIAL APPENDIX 1 (This item contains exempt information under Schedule 12A Local Government Act 1972 (as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006) namely, (para 3) information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).**

5. PROPOSALS

- 5.1 It is proposed to enter into a 5 year lease with the NHS Foundation Trust for the occupation of office accommodation within the University Hospital of Hartlepool to facilitate integration, joint working with the NHS and improved outcomes for people with health and social care needs.

6. FINANCE IMPLCATIONS AND RISK

- 6.1 The overall costs are as set out in **CONFIDENTIAL APPENDIX 1 (This item contains exempt information under Schedule 12A Local Government Act 1972 (as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006) namely, (para 3) information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).**

All of the costs will be funded from the Better Care Fund Pooled Budget, a fund created from existing NHS resources that is intended to promote the integration agenda and protect and support adult social care services that have health benefits.

- 6.2 Relocating staff from the Civic Centre will free up space which can then be used for Children's Services staff who will be working collaboratively with other partners to improve the quality of services provided whilst identifying more efficient ways to deliver these services through pooling resources. Working in partnership with other services enables the department to share costs and realise efficiencies as a consequence, which will be reflected in the 2016/17 savings proposals.

7. LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 7.1 The Chief Solicitor will ensure the contract documentation prepared in relation to the lease reflects the intention of the parties and protects the Council's interest.

8. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY CONSIDERATIONS

- 8.1 The co-location of the service with NHS teams is expected to deliver improvements to the hospital discharge process both in terms of experience for the individual and in terms of timescales, supporting people (primarily those aged over 65 with health and social care needs) to receive timely and appropriate care and support to meet their needs.

9. STAFF CONSIDERATIONS

- 9.1 Staff are aware of the proposed changes and will be consulted further as part of the transfer process.

10. ASSET MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS

- 10.1 Operationally the current configuration of accommodation and staff in different locations is inefficient and does not enable the most optimum delivery of service. The Council's strategy has been to consolidate all back office staff in to the Civic Centre which has reduced operating costs

significantly. The Civic Centre has reached maximum occupancy but the release of space from the relocation of the team to the hospital site will release space to accommodate the Multi Agency Children's Hub, thereby achieving a further operational advantage through the co-location of appropriate teams.

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

11.1 None

12. CONCLUSIONS

12.1 The current accommodation occupied by the service is not fit for purpose and significant operational efficiencies and improved service delivery can be achieved as a consequence of the joint occupation of accommodation at the hospital with the FT. Co-location of services will also support the delivery of Hartlepool's BCF Plan.

13. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 13.1 It is recommended that the Finance and Policy Committee;
- Note plans to reconfigure services as part of the Better Care Fund Plan with the aim of promoting integration of health and social care and improving outcomes for vulnerable people.
 - Agree to the Council entering in to a lease of accommodation with North Tees & Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust subject to payment (from the Better Care Fund Pooled Budget) of a proportion of the running costs and contribution towards the refurbishment works as set out in **CONFIDENTIAL APPENDIX 1 (This item contains exempt information under Schedule 12A Local Government Act 1972 (as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006) namely, (para 3) information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).**

14. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATION

14.1 The creation of a co-located service is a key element of the Better Care Fund Plan, bringing together staff to improve outcomes for people accessing health and social care services as well as reducing duplication and creating operational efficiencies. The accommodation of an integrated health and social care team in fit for purpose premises, provided at nil rent, will significantly improve delivery of care in the town for people who require support following a hospital stay, primarily older people and those with complex long term needs.

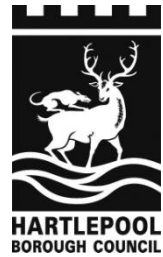
15. CONTACT OFFICERS

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FINANCE AND POLICY COMMITTEE

27th July 2015



Report of: Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods

Subject: CORPORATE PROCUREMENT QUARTERLY
REPORT ON CONTRACTS AND UPDATE ON
COLLABORATIVE PROCUREMENT SERVICES
AGREEMENT

1. TYPE OF DECISION/APPLICABLE CATEGORY

1.1 For information.

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

2.1 To satisfy the requirements of the Council's Contract Procedure Rules with regard to the Finance & Policy Committee:

- Receiving and examining quarterly reports on the outcome of contract letting procedures including those where the lowest/highest price is not payable/receivable.
- Receiving and examining reports on any exemptions granted to these Contract Procedure Rules.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 The Council's Contract Procedure Rules require that the following information be presented to the Finance & Policy Committee on a quarterly basis:

3.2 In addition to tender related information, details of exemptions granted to the Contract Procedure Rules are also reportable quarterly.

Section of Contract Procedure Rules		Information to be reported
Introduction	Para 8 iii & Para 8 vi	Outcome of contract letting procedures
Part G	Para 12 v	
Introduction Part B	Para 8 iii Para 3 v	Basis of award decision if not lowest/highest price payable/receivable
Introduction	Para 8 vi	Contract Name & Reference Number
Part G	Para 12 v	
Introduction	Para 8 vi	Description of Goods/Services being procured
Part G	Para 12 v	
Introduction	Para 8 vi	Department/Service area procuring the goods/services
Part G	Para 12 v	
Introduction	Para 8 vi	Prices (separate to Bidders details to preserve commercial confidentiality)
Part G	Para 12 v	
Part G	Para 12 v	Details of Bidders

4. INFORMATION FOR REVIEW

4.1 Tender information

The table at **Appendix A** details the required information for each procurement tender awarded since the last quarterly report.

4.2 The Committee may within the Contract Procedure Rules request further information or seek further monitoring reports on selected contracts.

- 4.3 In addition the Audit and Governance Committee may request a contract to be monitored under their specific responsibilities relating to the scrutiny of contracts.

- 4.4 Exemption information

Appendix B provides details of the required information in relation to Contract Procedure Rules exemptions granted since the last Corporate Procurement Quarterly Report on Contracts.

- 4.5 The table at confidential **Appendix C** includes the commercial information in respect of the tenders received. **This item contains exempt information under Schedule 12A Local Government Act 1972 (as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006) namely, Appendix C.**

5. UPDATE ON COLLABORATIVE PROCUREMENT SERVICES AGREEMENT

Following the review and reconstitution of the North East Procurement Organisation (NEPO) it was agreed by the 12 stakeholder Local Authorities that NEPO would cease to be managed by a Joint Committee arrangement and instead, would be managed and administered by the Association of North East Councils (ANEC).

This management arrangement has been defined and documented in a 'Collaborative Procurement Services Agreement' and this was circulated to all 12 stakeholder Local Authorities for signature.

The agreement has now been signed by all 12 Local Authorities and ANEC, thereby providing the basis for the operation of the NEPO organisation moving forwards.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.1 That the Committee note and comment on the contents of the report.

7. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1 The Committee is required to review the information supplied to ensure that monitoring in the award of contracts is carried out and evidenced.

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 8.1 There are no background papers.

9. CONTACT OFFICER

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APPENDIX A

Tender Information

Date of Contract Award	Contract Name and Reference Number	Description of Goods / Services being procured	Department / Service area procuring the goods / services	Details of Bidders	Location of Bidder	Basis of award decision if not lowest/highest price payable / receivable	Outcome of contract letting procedures
27 th January 2015	Provision of supported accommodation for offenders or ex-offenders	Supported accommodation to 11 male offenders or ex-offenders who are homeless or in housing need, in a purpose built supported housing scheme. CRN 722B	C&A – Commissioning	Byker Bridge Housing & Support Changing Lives Home Group	Newcastle Gateshead Newcastle	Most Economically Advantageous Tender	Home Group, Newcastle
9 th February 2015	755-2014 Adult Social Care Act Information & Advice System	An off the shelf system for Information, Advice and Guidance for Adult Social Care, that meets the requirements of the Care Act in the short term.	C&A	Focus OLM Systems Ltd Open Objects Oxford Computer Consultants Ltd Shop4support Ltd System Associates Ltd	Bristol Teddington, Middlesex Cambridge Oxford Wigan, Manchester Maidenhead, Berkshire	Most Economically Advantageous Tender	Focus

APPENDIX A

17 th February 2015	604-2014 Mentoring Services for Children, Young People and their Families	Mentoring is a key part of the delivery of the Early Intervention Strategy to enhance the emotional resilience of young people.	C&A	Alliance Psychological Services (Headland Futures Ltd) Managing Futures NE MAIN-Taking Autism Personally	Stockton-on-Tees Hartlepool Middlesbrough	100% Quality	Headland Futures North East
27 th February 2015	602-2014 Activities for 15- 19 Year Olds in Hartlepool	The provision of out of school activities forms part of the Early Intervention Strategy to support children's resilience, confidence, aspirations and wellbeing	C&A	West View Project CIC	Hartlepool	100% Quality	West View Project CIC
3 rd March 2015	758 Supply & Installation of Commercial Vehicle Workshop & Equipment	Workshop equipment for the new location of the Vehicle Fleet Workshop via a mini competition using YPO Garage & Workshop Equipment Framework	R&N	JHM Butt & Co. Ltd Tecalemit Garage Equipment Co. Ltd	Doncaster Plymouth	Most Economically Advantageous Tender	Tecalemit Garage Equipment Co. Ltd

APPENDIX A

30 th April 2015	Provision of supported accommodation and floating support for the homeless	The service will provide supported accommodation for up to 11 service users with multiple needs who are either single or a couple who are homeless in purpose built supported housing scheme. CRN 722C	C&A – Commissioning	Home Group Sanctuary Supported Living Thirteen Care & Support Limited	Newcastle Worcestershire Newcastle	Most Economically Advantageous Tender	Home Group Newcastle
6 th May 2015	774-2015 Supply & Deliver a Mobile Library/Educational Bus	Mobile Library Bus to be fully operational by 20 th June 2015. Therefore carried out a mini competition using Pro 5 YPO Specialist Vehicle Framework	R&N on behalf of Libraries	Leicester Carriage Builders Mellor Coachcraft N.E. Truck & Van Ltd Torton Bodies Ltd	Leicester Rochdale Billingham Telford, Shropshire	Most Economically Advantageous Tender	Mellor Coachcraft

7.1 APPENDIX B

Procurements Exempted from Council Contract Procedure Rules

Dept	Service Unit	Company Name	Company Based at	Estimated Expenditure	Description	Approval
R&N	Regeneration and Neighbourhood Services	Academy Geomatics Ltd	Gateshead	£10,000.00	Site Investigations for the purchase of new Depot Buildings	21.01.2015
CEX	Chief Executives - Benefits	Zebra Training Services Ltd	Wigan	£2,450	Zebra Training Services is a specialist training consultancy on Benefits Administration	03.03.2015
CEX	Chief Executives - Health Safety and Wellbeing	Durham County Council	Durham	£100,000.00	An Occupational Health Advisory Service for a three month period.	04.03.2015
R&N	Highways Traffic and Transport	Aecom	Newcastle	£8,000.00	A direct award contract for a traffic modelling survey, on the grounds of specialism/urgency.	17.03.2015
PH	Public Health - Commissioning and Clinical Quality	Cruse Bereavement Care Ltd	Middlesbrough	£18,000.00	<p>This is to extend the current Bereavement Support contract, which is currently a collaborative service, used by 4 TV LA's</p> <p>They are looking for a 12 month window to review the service with a plan to then act on the findings, possibly resulting in a collaborative procurement exercise, again between the 4 LA's.</p>	24.03.2015.

7.1 APPENDIX B

C&A	PREVENTION, SAFEGUARDING & SPECIALIST SERVICES	Nation Youth Advocacy Service	Birkenhead	£34,560	No quotes provided through the quick quote procedure. NYAS provided a price but it was more than the original budget. No other providers could be found.	Exemption approved by Denise Ogden and Chris Little and Peter Devlin on 17.03.2015.
R&N	Regeneration and Neighbourhood Services	AES Ltd	Billingham	£8,500	This request is for the author/hoster of the Adult Education training website to upgrade their existing site.	Exemption approved by Denise Ogden and Chris Little and Peter Devlin on 13.04.2015.

7.1 APPENDIX B

Extensions to existing Contracts

Dept	Service Unit	Company Name	Description	Approval	Contract Extension Start	Contract Extension End	Estimated Expenditure
C&A	First Contact and Support Hub	Alliance Psychological Services	Extending the Emotional Health and Wellbeing Service contract to allow more time for the service to be fully evaluated	Approved by Denise Ogden, C Little on 17.02.2015	01/07/2015	31/12/2015	£30,000.00
PH	Public Health	North Tees and Hartlepool Foundation Trust	Provision for an extension to the Fall Services contract to use the existing provider for a maximum period of 6 months from April 1st 2015 with an expiry date of 30th September 2015.	Approved by Denise Ogden, P Devlin and C Little on 03.03.2015	01.04.2015	30.09.2015	£71,000.00
PH	Public Health - Commissioning and Clinical Quality	Hartlepool Families First	A 6 month contract extension from April 1st 2015 to Hartlepool Families First in order to continue the provision of the Mobile Health Improvement Service whilst a formal review of the wider NHS Health Check provision takes place.	Approved by Denise Ogden, C Little on 14.03.2015	01.04.2015	30.09.2015	£27,000.00
PH	Public Health - Commissioning and Clinical Quality	South Tees Hospitals Foundation Trust	A Cardio Vascular health service is transferring from the NHS into the TV Public Health Shared Service but there have been some issues with TUPE that delayed the transfer.	Approved by Denise Ogden, Chris Little and Peter Devlin 15.04.2015	01.04.2015	30.05.2015	£6,654.46